

World Bank announces support for Kuwait reforms



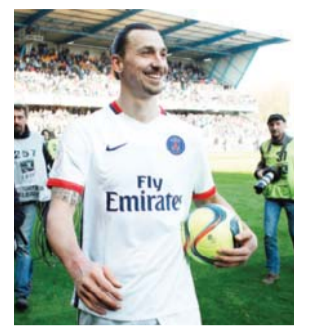
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CENTRAL BANK MAY ACT IF BUDGET DEFICIT ISN'T CUT

MONETARY POLICY MAY HAVE TO BE CHANGED



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CAR BOMBING KILLS 27 IN ANKARA

ANKARA: A car bomb ripped through a busy square in central Ankara yesterday, killing at least 27 people and wounding 75, officials said, the latest in a spate of attacks to hit Turkey. Ambulances rushed to the scene on Kizilay square, a key commercial and transport hub close to the city's embassy area, where the blast reduced several vehicles including a bus to burnt-out wrecks. The attack comes just weeks after the city was hit by a suicide car bombing on Feb 17 targeting the military that killed 29 people, claimed by a dissident faction of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

The provincial governor's office said there were 27 dead and 75 wounded in yesterday's attack. "The blast was caused by a vehicle packed with explosives close to Kizilay square," an official statement said. Medical sources told AFP the wounded had been taken to 10 different hospitals around the city, with a dozen said to be in a very serious condition. Turkey has been hit by a spate of deadly attacks since the middle of last year, most of them blamed on the Islamic State (IS) group, including a double suicide bombing in Ankara in October that left 103 people dead.



ANKARA: People carry an injured person on a stretcher at the scene of a blast yesterday. — AFP

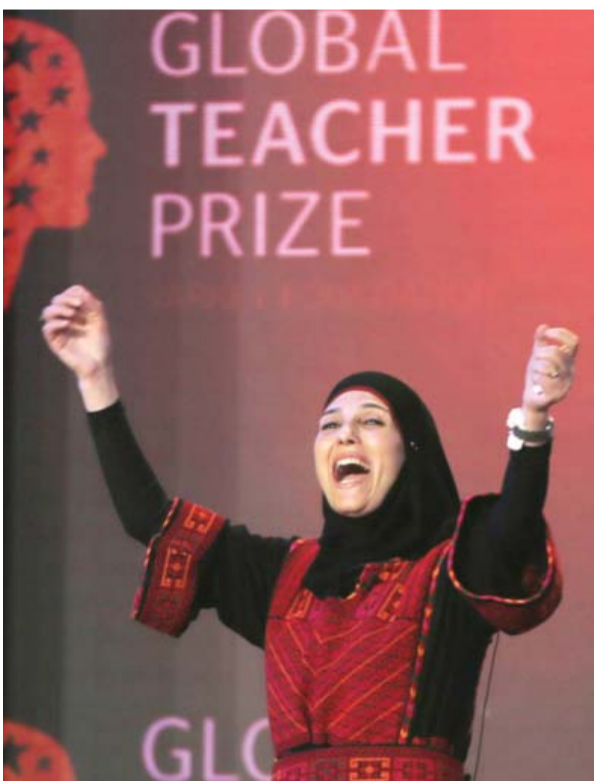
KUWAIT: Kuwait's Central Bank governor has warned that authorities may have to change monetary policy if the government does not act urgently to cut a budget deficit caused by low oil prices. Mohammad Al-Hashel said the legislative and executive branches of the government needed in the next two months to prove to the rest of the world that public finances were sustainable, Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh told state news agency KUNA yesterday.

If this does not happen, "it will reflect negatively on the credit rating of the state of Kuwait because of the negative consequences on financial institutions, and then it may affect monetary policy," Hashel was quoted as saying. The Central Bank governor did not elaborate on how monetary policy might change, but the Kuwaiti dinar, which is pegged to a weighted basket of the currencies of major trading partners, has been under pressure in the foreign exchange market since late last year.

The finance ministry projected in January that because of low oil prices, the government would run a deficit of KD 12.2 billion (\$40.7 billion) in the fiscal year starting on April 1, nearly 50 percent higher than the deficit estimated for the current year, after government contributions to the sovereign wealth fund.

Earlier this month, Moody's Investors Service put the credit ratings of four Gulf oil exporters including Kuwait on review for a possible downgrade, citing the impact of cheap oil. HH the Amir has called for budget cuts and better management of spending, but with the most independent parliament in the region, it has been slower than several neighboring states to introduce austerity policies. — Reuters

PALESTINIAN TEACHER WINS \$1M



DUBAI: Palestinian primary school teacher Hanan Al-Hroub reacts after she won the second annual Global Teacher Prize yesterday. — AP

DUBAI: A Palestinian primary school teacher who grew up in a refugee camp won a \$1 million prize for teaching excellence yesterday, beating out 8,000 other applicants from around the world. Hanan Al-Hroub, who teaches in the West Bank city of Al-Bireh just outside Ramallah, was awarded the second annual Global Teacher Prize during a ceremony in the city of Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum was on-hand to present the prize to Hroub, however her name was announced by Pope Francis in a video message after he talked about the importance of education and teachers, especially for children who grow up amid war.

"I feel amazing and I still can't believe that the Pope said my name," Hroub told AP. "For an Arab, Palestinian teacher to talk to the world today and to reach the highest peak in teaching could be an example for teachers around the world." She said she will use the million-dollar prize money to create scholarships for students who want to go into teaching.

Her win comes at a time of spiking tensions between Israelis and Palestinians. Five months of unpredictable stabbing, shooting and vehicular attacks by ordinary Palestinian civilians have killed 28 Israelis and two Americans. Israeli forces have killed at least 179 Palestinians, the majority said by Israel to have been attackers. Israeli officials blame Palestinian leaders and social media for inciting the violence, while Palestinian leaders say it is the product of frustration and despair after nearly 50 years of occupation.

Continued on Page 13

TRAFFICKED WOMEN TRAPPED IN SYRIA

MURALI BHANJYANG, Nepal: Nepali villager Sunita Magar thought she was heading to a safe factory job in Kuwait, but only when she landed in Damascus did she realize "something had gone very wrong". Frequently beaten with a baton and given only one meal a

day, Magar says she spent 13 months working as a maid for a Syrian household and pleading to be allowed to go home. "I was just in shock, I couldn't stop crying," the single mother-of-two told AFP.

Magar is among scores of poor Nepali and Bangladeshi women

who travelled to the Middle East on the promise of a good job, only to be trafficked into Syria, wracked by five years of civil war. Nepal's top diplomat in the region said nationals from the Philippines, Indonesia and other countries, which, like Nepal and Bangladesh, have large migrant labor populations, stopped working in Syria because of the dangers involved. "Since then traffickers have been targeting Nepalis," said Kaushal Kishor Ray, head of Nepal's diplomatic mission based in Cairo. "The numbers have gone up hugely in recent years, we estimate there must be around 500 Nepali women in Syria," Ray told AFP.

In nearby Bangladesh, Shahinor Begum lies in a Dhaka hospital bed recovering from her seven-month ordeal after being trafficked into Syria as a sex slave. "I was sold to a Syrian man who tortured and raped me every day, sometimes along with his friends," Begum, also a single mother-of-two, said. "I begged for mercy, but they didn't have any. Instead they used to beat me so badly that I broke my arms," she told AFP.

Continued on Page 13



DHADHING, Nepal: This photo taken on Jan 25, 2016 shows Nepalese migrant worker Sunita Magar, who was trafficked to Syria, being greeted by her son Bipin and daughter Elina at their home. — AFP



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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the UN special envoy to Yemen Ismail Weld El-Sheikh. —Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the Arab Scout Parliamentary Union's delegation.

AMIR RECEIVES UN ENVOY, SOMALI FOREIGN MINISTER

KUWAIT SUPPORTS SOMALIA IN FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Seif Palace yesterday First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, accompanied by

the United Nations (UN) special envoy to Yemen Ismail Weld El-Sheikh Ahmad. His Highness the Amir also received Minister of Foreign Affairs in Somalia Dr Abdulsalam Hadliye Omar, and his accompanying delegation.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled meanwhile reiterated Kuwait's support to the Somali Government's efforts in combating and eliminating terrorism.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled made this remark during a meeting with his Somali counterpart at the Foreign Ministry's Headquarters. The Somali minister expressed his appreciation to the Kuwaiti Government and people for their continuous support to his country that has undergone various hardships. He also thanked the Gulf country for hosting a donors' conference for supporting education in Somalia. The meeting between the two ministers tackled bilateral ties and promotion of cooperation in various fields. They also touched on the latest regional and international developments.

Arab Scouts

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received head of Arab Scout Parliamentary Union MP Abdullah Al-Turajji accompanied by the Union's staff. The meeting was held on the occasion of Union's 22nd meeting of the executive committee of Arab Scout Parliamentary Union, which is currently

being held in Kuwait from March 11 to March 14.

His Highness the Crown Prince lauded their efforts in spreading peace and Islamic values as well as utilizing youth's energies and skills in promoting positive concepts within their communities. The meeting was attended by head of His Highness the Crown Prince Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Al-Faisal Al-Saud Al-Sabah.

Earlier, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Crown Prince, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister and Deputy Chief of National Guards Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem, Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad, His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

He also received Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Turajji and the Arab Scout Parliamentary Union's delegation. He also received the Special Advisor of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,

King of Saudi Arabia Dr Saad Al-Shathri, in the presence of Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane. Furthermore, he received Somali Minister Dr Abdulsalam Omar, as well as Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad. —KUNA



First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with the Somali Foreign Minister Dr Abdulsalam Hadliye Omar.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Special Advisor of the King of Saudi Arabia Dr Saad Al-Shathri.

CANADA WOOS KUWAITI INVESTORS FOR \$125BN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Over the next 10 years, Canada is preparing to spend \$125 billion on modern roads, bridges, hospitals and safe drinking water for the public, said Mark Romoff, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Business

embassies, not just in Kuwait, but Qatar and the UAE, are very interested in building greater business connections and partnerships between Canada and each of these countries. We want to strengthen this bond," he added.

Romoff noted that creating infrastructure is necessary to create more jobs and boost economic development. "Spending on infrastructure means more economic prosperity and if you invest in critical infrastructure, then the country will be more productive and globally competitive," he said.

Best time

With the ongoing political crisis in some areas in the Middle East, he said this is the best time to invest in Canada, which is very attractive country for investment and is politically stable with a reliable government. "We've got a very stable financial system and we have a very good government fiscal situation, which means the government can invest more on infrastructure. We have resources and very strong connections with the United States, so our non-energy exports account for over 90 percent of total exports, with an increase of over 25 percent over the last two years. The US economy is strong now, so we are in effect going strong as well," he added.

Investment opportunities

Jayson Myers, President and CEO of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, said investment opportunities in Canada will take them to several European countries, United States and countries in the Americas. "My message to investors is to look at Canada as a strategic platform for business. Canadian businesses are operating globally, like pharmaceutical companies; we also have automotive and electronic companies, new service companies and engineering and manufacturing companies," he said.

Myers admitted the oil and gas sector, which is second largest after Saudi Arabia, has slowed as the price of oil has fallen, and many projects in the oil and gas sectors in Canada are put on hold, postponed or cancelled. "But there are many projects underway and for inventors who would like to try out the oil and gas sector, this is the right time to make investments. Oil sand requires companies willing to invest in the technology to extract oil from sand. Fifteen years ago, this technology didn't exist, but today it's available but very costly. In the coming months, if the cost will be good, it probably will be competitive. We need a pipeline to deliver the oil and also convert that oil so that we could export to major countries," he said.

Education and tourism

In the area of education and tourism, Myers said many education institutions are run by the government, but construction of schools is open, especially in provincial areas of Canada. "Tourism is a very lucrative business in Canada - we have good infrastructure and many beautiful places, and improving some of those will be a welcome endeavor. We also have available investments in government bonds; we have AAA rating, and the rates are fairly low right now. It's a pretty stable fiscal environment, with the lowest debt rate in the world and a stable financial system," he said. Canadian exports to Kuwait stood at \$200 million while Kuwaiti exports to Canada amounted to \$3 billion.

Good returns

According to Romoff, there are many large projects with good financial returns awaiting investors. He explained that the Kuwaiti government has shown a lot of interest in pursuing PPP projects and will probably take part in modernizing infrastructure in Canada.

"We can exchange information on how we can do it in order to get better outcomes. We want Kuwaiti firms to partner with Canadian companies, so that we could, as a team, be more successful in bidding for projects not just in Canada but in other parts of the world. Canadian



Mark Romoff



Jayson Myers

Council for Public-Private Partnership (PPP). Speaking with Kuwait Times on the sidelines of a seminar organized by the Embassy of Canada at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday, attended by Kuwaiti businessmen, Romoff said the budget for infrastructure projects will be announced on March 22. "Over the next ten years, we want Kuwaiti investors to take part in the biggest infrastructure project ever funded by the government. The infrastructure sector is the priority right now in Canada and my job is to explain the Canadian approach to prospective investors in PPP projects," he said.

"I want to show the track records of Canada in the last couple of years with regards to PPPs. This project needs to attract foreign investments, so my hope is to be able to convince Kuwaitis to consider investing in Canada," Romoff added.

WORLD BANK ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR KUWAIT REFORMS

KUWAIT: The World Bank (WB) supports reform steps that have been taken by Kuwait and view them as of utter significance for attaining development objectives, said the WB Office Director in Kuwait. In an interview with KUNA, Dr Feras Raad said the package of measures, declared by Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh, aim to accomplish short and medium-term reforms at the political and financial levels, namely regarding privatization, entrepreneurship, labor market, investment environment and businesses.

Explaining significance of these plans, Raad said they are necessary for re-defining the role of the public sector in the national economy, preparing the State and the society for interaction within a new economic environment that is not based on oil in the long run, also noting that such reforms need to be accomplished hastily, due to record decline of oil prices.

The chief of the local WB bureau expressed support for the State scheme to rationalize subsidies, for such an approach is compatible with the WB principle that governments' support should be for persons who deserve the backing, and not commodities and services. Moreover, subsidies impact negatively on the state budget and its financial sustainability in the long run.

Projected Kuwait budget deficit for upcoming fiscal year stands at \$40 billion; and this a new burden for the government that can only be tackled through borrowing or withdrawing from the general reserves, Raad elaborated.

Unsound customs

Explaining further, he said subsidies contribute to creating "unsound customs in the society namely encouragement of excessive spending," adding that support for oil by-products lead to negative impact on the

public tenders and defaulting. Such legislations, in addition to others on establishing the single gateway for registering companies, upgrading the custom and investment sectors and trimming bureaucracy, will improve the business environment, and help in creating new work opportunities particularly in the private sector.

"The (current) public employment policy is actually a mechanism for distributing the oil wealth to the citizens," Raad opined, also expressing his belief that it lured 90 percent of the national labor force to the government sectors. He called for tackling this defect, urging citizens to work in the private sector and create what he called a new mechanism "to re-distribute the national wealth to the nationals."

On sectors that can be utilized in the diversification approach, he mentioned the commercial and logistical ones, in addition to light industries, small and medium enterprises, namely ventures in modern technology, information and communications.

In contrast to the defects he mentioned, Raad shed some light on successful aspects, such as establishment of oil by-products companies, setting up the next generations fund, projects by the Public Investment Authority which has successfully hiked the general reserves to \$500-600 billion. —KUNA



Dr Feras Raad



KUWAIT: Undersecretary of the Ministry of Youth Affairs Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah visits Ahli United Bank's booth at the GUST job show.

AUB PARTICIPATES IN GUST JOB SHOW

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) participated in the job show held by the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) which lasted for two days, 9-10 March 2016.

Commenting on the occasion, AUB issued a press release confirming that its participation in such events highlights its support for National human resources as part of its strategic interests in the development of the economy. It also reaffirms its desire to increase employment of Kuwaiti youth aspiring to prove itself and realize its capabilities in the banking and financial field through taking advantage of promising job opportunities.

AUB's statement added that through its participation in the valuable Job Shows at Kuwait universities, it has managed to attract a large

number of promising fresh Kuwaiti graduates in various academic fields. This conforms to AUB's aspirations to reinforce the national competencies base capable of supporting AUB's mission and vision. AUB reiterated that such shows provide an excellent communication tool between AUB and graduates as they provide a platform to present the job opportunities that match youth ambitions.

AUB added that it manages through its Human Resources Department a program for vocational job training and development. A number of Kuwaiti graduates have previously been selected to join this program and were trained at various Bank departments to enable them to select freely their appropriate job opportunities in the banking sector.

DEVELOPMENT DRIVE TARGETS BETTER BUSINESS CONDITION FOR WOMEN: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih said yesterday the country's development plan aims to revamp Kuwait women's performance in the business sector and stimulate female entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized enterprises.

Addressing a businesswomen's forum held at the Arab Planning Institute (API), the minister said Kuwait is witnessing swift entrepreneurship growth on part of women who have made significant strides in the building of their own successful business.

Kuwait has promoted women's involvement in all aspects of life involving boards of directors and high-level executive and ministerial posts, in addition to parliamentary representation and entrepreneurship, she added.

Patronized by the Kuwaiti government, the forum is a good opportunity for the conferees to explore effective methods to support businesswomen in the country, the minister pointed out. The forum comes at a time when there is a growing need for more efforts to be exerted in order to carry out economic and financial reforms and to put development plans in place with a view to curtailing the aftershocks of the current economic developments, Subaih said.

The minister underlined the significance of focusing on human development, promoting entrepreneurship, spurring innovation and supporting the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises. Attracting experts and specialists from several world countries, the forum featured seminars and workshops focusing on successful entrepreneurship examples. —KUNA

Legalese

PASSPORTS AND OTHER EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

In Kuwait, we are blessed to have developed laws and a developed legal system as well as a constitution. The Kuwait Labor Law of 2006 is one of the best in the region and even the world - employees only work eight hours per day (some countries go up to 12 hours), receive termination indemnity, three months' termination notice and many other benefits. Yet, there are still some people who do not apply the law as they should and can be unlawful in their treatment of employees. It really is unfortunate that some managers take advantage of the fact that some expats are not aware of their rights and the laws with regards to employment, even though the law states that it is illegal for passports to be held by the employers. So it is no surprise that there is a common concern in Kuwait and the region about the treatment of employees socially. One of the biggest issues is passports, so today I will be answering questions regarding holding an employee's passport.

No law

Question: My manager has requested me to hand in my passport and claims that this is the law in the GCC for private employees. Is this true?

Fajer: Absolutely not. There is no law that forces you to hand in your passport to your employer. In fact, it is illegal for employers to hold the passports of employees, and this is clearly stated in ministry resolution number 143/A/2010 in Article 1: "It is prohibited for private sector employers and oil sector employers to hold travel documents of their employees."

As for other GCC countries, this is not true, even though some GCC countries request that you have permission from your employer before traveling.

Question: Do I need permission from my employer for traveling even if I do have my passport?

Fajer: No, not in Kuwait. If you are off for the weekend, then you can travel around. With that said, I would suggest that you let your employer know if you are traveling.

Punishment

Question: If it is illegal for employers to hold my passport, how come they do not seem afraid? Are there no regulations that punish employers for doing such a thing?

Fajer: Yes, there are regulations that punish violating employers up to KD 200 for each passport held. This may not seem like a lot of money to some employers, so I really do hope that the government reforms these regulations and makes the punishment stricter as they have rightfully done for other employment issues in the past few weeks.

Question: Should my passport always have my work permit or visa in it?

Fajer: Yes, your passport has a printed visa in it, and your visa should mention your employer's name (the company), as well as your address and your visa type. Also make sure your work permit (the white paper from the ministry of labor and social affairs) should have your salary as the actual amount.

Traveling

Question: What can I do to get my passport back? I am traveling in a few days on holiday, yet my employer still does not want to hand me back my passport?

Fajer: I know that sometimes it is hard for an employee to do something against their employer, but you have to know your rights and ask for them. I would suggest you do the following:

- 1) Email your boss or the human resources department in writing, nicely. That way you have something in writing.
- 2) Go to the "Shuoon" (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor), where you can file a complaint. The ministry has set up a complaint department that makes the process of filing for labor rights easier than the process of court.
- 3) You can always email me on ask@fajertelawyer.com and I can email your employer.
- 4) You can try calling the hotline of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. The number is 128. Please email me your experience with them, I would love to hear about it.
- 5) <http://www.mosal.gov.kw/> is the official website of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and might be helpful.

Most importantly, remember to stand up for your rights. The Kuwaiti government has set all the laws so that employees have rights, but you have to ask for them. I know it is not an easy thing to do, but no one else can ask for them on your behalf.

For any legal questions or queries, email ask@fajertelawyer.com.

Letters to Badrya

AGE BARRIERS

Madam,

That was a nice article. I am a victim of this and face a lot of problems as I cannot bring my mother who is alone in India. Thank you for understanding and writing such an article to support expats in Kuwait.

Boney

•••

Madam,

I am an expat resident in Kuwait and welcome your views on the issue of a visit visa ban for people above 65 years of age. I am heartily thankful to you for the article concerning the issue. I am a regular reader of Kuwait Times, and feel really good that people think of humanity. Thanking you and appreciate your time to write on such a topic and bring it to the attention of authorities.

May God bless you.

•••

Madam,

Read your column. Hope the concerned authorities look into this matter.

S Kuriakose

PANEL RECOMMENDS WITHDRAWING LANDS NOT USED FOR SIX YEARS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Chairman of Kuwait's structural plan committee at the Municipal Council Ali Al-Moussa said that the committee recommended activating the council's decision on withdrawing land plots that had been allotted for government bodies and not used for six years. Speaking during the committee's meeting yesterday, Moussa pointed out that the recommendations were made because some government bodies were not serious in executing projects and some of them had been demanding land allocations without submitting actual feasibility studies.

Moussa also stressed that some land plots had been allotted in some areas without checking the structural plan and that the committee was currently working on meeting with concerned officials at various

state bodies to discuss developing the structural plan that had been issued by an Amiri decree and should not be tampered with. Moussa accused Kuwait Municipality



Ali Al-Moussa

of being the first government body that had been violating the structural plan by allocating lands and approving project on sites that were not listed in the plan. "This is a clear violation of the related Amiri decree," he underlined.

Housing in Jleeb

Municipal Council member Nayef Al-Sour warned of the consequences of suspending the issuance of 'house description certificates' for houses in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh and described what has been going on in the area for nine years as a 'farce' in which the citizens who own those houses were the biggest losers. "Jleeb is the only area in the world where the municipality stopped selling and purchasing houses because of earlier unstudied decisions and failed to solve the problem and allow owners to sell their houses," he underlined.

Fatal accident

A citizen was instantly killed and his two companions seriously injured when their vehicle flipped over several times when he tried to avoid hitting a camel that crossed the road suddenly on a northern highway.

Case adjourned

The criminal court yesterday adjourned a case in which a citizen was accused of murdering his ex-wife in Salwa pending passing its final verdict. Notably, an earlier hearing had been adjourned to examine the suspect's mental state at the psychological diseases hospital upon his lawyer's request. The suspect is facing charges of first degree murder as he had readied a metal object and waited for his victim in a place he knew she would go and stabbed her several times, leading to her death.



KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary of the Interior Ministry for Traffic Major General Abdullah Al-Muhanna is seen during the inauguration ceremony of the 32nd Gulf Traffic Week.

GULF TRAFFIC WEEK REFLECTS PAN-GCC COORDINATION: OFFICIAL

KUWAIT: The 32nd Gulf Traffic Week is an unequivocal sign of pan-GCC coordination, progress and prosperity, said a senior security official. While welcoming visiting Gulf delegations, Assistant Undersecretary of the Interior Ministry for Traffic Major General Abdullah Al-Muhanna said yesterday that the ministry attaches much attention to the traffic issue due to its paramount significance to the

entire society.

This year's traffic week features several activities and events pertinent to road safety and protection which is mainly based on the avoidance of traffic violations, he was quoted in a statement by the ministry's information office.

Muhanna emphasized that traffic safety regulations and laws should be observed in order to keep

the safety of road users. Meanwhile, the chief of the ministry's public relations and security media Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash said the Gulf Traffic Week reflects integration among the GCC countries, urging motorists to respect traffic rules so as to avoid road accidents. He said his department works with other bodies at the ministry in order to promote sound traffic behaviors. —KUNA

OVER 1,500 ARRESTED IN SHUWAIKH CRACKDOWN

By Hanan Al-Saadoun



KUWAIT: More than 1,500 people were arrested during a security campaign held last Saturday at Shuwaikh Industrial area, and led by Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for General Security Affairs Major General Abdel Fattah Al-Ali. Police inspected papers of a total of 3,911 persons during the campaign. Out of those, 1,566 people were sent to concerned authorities and deportation centers. They include 257 arrested for violation of residency regulations, 170 with expired visas, 552 without valid IDs, 12 wanted on felonies, 186 absconders, 28 wanted for civil cases, 271 marginal labor, and 13 wanted on drugs charges. Police also arrested seven persons on prostitution and 11 on liquor trade charges, while 15 vehicles were impounded.

Meanwhile, another campaign was launched in Sulaihiya and resulted in sending 108 persons for deportation. They include 18 arrested for violation of the labor law, 33 in violation of residency regulations, eight wanted on civil and criminal cases, 22 arrested without valid IDs, two for possessing drugs, 15 marginal workers, and three persons who were caught being under the influence of alcohol.



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KUWAIT: Health Ministry's Undersecretary Dr Mohammad Al-Khashti tours an exhibition held on the sidelines of the first Gulf conference on total care for the elderly. — KUNA

GULF CONFERENCE ON ELDERLY HEALTH CARE BEGINS IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: The first Gulf conference on total care for the elderly, slated for March 13 - 15 in Kuwait, got underway in Kuwait yesterday. The event turns the spotlight on the rights of the elderly in receiving optimum health care under all conditions.

Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obeidi, in a statement addressed on his behalf by Undersecretary Dr Mohammad Al-Khashti, affirmed during the inauguration that the conference is aimed at swapping expertise, paving way for overhauling programs and updating strategies for the elderly care, in harmony with international regulations.

Kuwait, in this respect, has worked out "the national strategy for medical care for the elderly," along with an executive plan, under the umbrella of a supreme commission, headed by the minister. The Kuwaiti strategy is based on plans of the World Health Organization, designed to enhance medical care for people of various ages, provide health insurance for seniors as well as adhere to global sustainable development objectives (till 2030).

He expressed hope that the conferees would come up with recommendations for overhauling the health sector, namely with respect of "facing challenges concerning the

geriatric medical care, which warrants effort from all of us."

Three aspects

Meanwhile, Dr Toufic Khoja, the general director of the executive office of the GCC health ministers, said in a statement addressed on his behalf by Dr Sueliman Al-Shemari, a family medicine specialist, that the care for the old covers economic, psychological and social aspects. Citing WHO's figures, he said the world population whose age is 60 increased from 11 to 22 percent between 2000 and 2050. Number of this segment will

increase from 900 million, in 2015, to 1,400 million by 2030 and 2,100 million by 2100. The figure may soar to 3,200 million by 2100.

He lauded Minister Al-Obeidi for adopting launch of His Highness thr Amir's award for distinguished contributions in geriatric care, noting that such initiatives affirm the State of Kuwait's special concern for this "dear segment." He also lauded the Ministry of Health for its major role in citizens and expatriates' medical welfare.

Dr Ibtisam Al-Hwaidi, the general director of medical services for the elderly, the organizer of the event, said the 3-day event aims at

shedding light on the seniors' right for full and integrated medical services, enhancing public awareness of the necessity of such care and swapping expertise in the field.

The conference will focus on relevant challenges, enhancing role in this respect by various organizations and authorities at the public and NGO's levels, she said. Meanwhile, Ghalia Al-Mutairi, head of the information bureau of the Ministry of Health, said that the department published a booklet including guidelines for the elderly on how to proceed with living in a healthy manner. The booklet was distributed at the conference venue. —KUNA

WHO OFFICIAL LAUDS KUWAIT'S EFFORTS TO FACE ZIKA VIRUS

KUWAIT: World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Ala Alwan has praised Kuwait for taking measures to face the Zika virus. In a press conference on Saturday, Alwan stressed that the Middle East is free of the virus, referring to the precautionary moves taken by the region's countries.

According to the WHO official, Kuwait has acquainted the organization with the measures it took, especially enhancing monitoring systems for early detection, and boosting the role of laboratories. He called for scrutinizing passengers from Latin America where Zika is widely spread.

Zika disease is caused by a virus transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes. People with Zika usually have symptoms that can include mild fever, skin rashes, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise

or headache. These symptoms normally last for 2-7 days.

Meanwhile, Alwan said that Kuwait and other Gulf states are among the world's countries with highest rates of diabetics, warning that the rate in Kuwait is most likely to steadily rise in case lifestyle continues as it is. Addressing the conference, the Ministry of Health Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Dr Majda Al-Qattan told the conference that Kuwait had submitted a paper to the last meeting for the Gulf states with the WHO, on the country's precautionary measures on Zika. She stressed the importance of consolidating health systems, considered the "health security," which is integral to national security, Qattan said. She referred to the College of Health Sciences established in 2013 to set a new vision on public health and qualifying medical cadres. — KUNA



OOREDOO'S SHAMEL TVC GETS OVER ONE MILLION VIEWS IN 72 HOURS

KUWAIT: A TV commercial for Ooredoo's new Shamel post-paid packages recorded over one million views within 72 hours of its launch. Produced by Senyar Marketing, the commercial tracks the history of mobile phones in Kuwait from the 1980s through 1990s all the way to the millennium and the present time.

Commenting on the new packages, Ooredoo Corporate Communications Director Mijbil Alayoub said: "We have designed the new Shamel post-paid packages after conducting local market analysis and customer reviews. We seek to offer customers the best services with high value. We are confident that Shamel new packages will appeal to our customers and offer them great value and flexibility, helping us to continue our drive to enrich people's lives."

New exclusive benefits

The new benefits will give customers more flexibility, allowing them to freeze contracts up to three months a year, while traveling, without paying any fees. New Shamel customers can also enjoy unlimited local voice calls on Ooredoo, including all packages. They can also transfer contracts at any time and carry forward unused Internet data to the following month, which will provide customers with more freedom to use the web. Ooredoo helps new Shamel customers to stay up to date with the latest technology, offering them extra handsets on monthly instalments, irrespective of advance commitment.

Innovation in style

Unprecedented benefits

Commenting on the TVC, Alayoub added: "The branding team, led by senior manager Fatima Al-Mukhaizeem, designed in cooperation



Mijbil Alayoub



Fatima Al-Mukhaizeem

with Senyar the TV commercial in a unique way that encapsulates the decades-old history of mobile phones in Kuwait since 1980s until the present. When we thought of renewing Shamel packages, we had in mind the idea of offering unprecedented benefits for our customers in Kuwait. During the past four decades and since the launch of mobile phone services, contracts remained unchanged despite technological major improvements and modifications in the industry. Therefore, we offered the new Shamel packages with a first-of-its-kind service in Kuwait."

Ooredoo's Senior Manager for Branding Fatima Al-Mukhaizeem said: "Television commercials have become an important and much-anticipated event. We try to translate the values of our brand in a way that fits within the Kuwaiti spirit, to reiterate our brand's presence within

society. We're hoping that this TVC will resonate with our audience and appeal to them."

Clothing, furniture and colours in the TV commercial were inspired by 1980s and 1990s. The commercial was performed by the rising stars Dhari Abdul-Redha and Ilham Ali, with a cameo role for social media influencer Musaed Al Mutairi.

Ooredoo launched Shamel post-paid packages for the first time after adopting the new international trademark Ooredoo in 2014, offering integrated packages, including handsets and Internet data as well as local and international voice calls.

For more information and details about the new Shamel offers, please visit any of Ooredoo branches, authorized dealers in Kuwait, the company's website www.ooredoo.com.kw or contact customer service by dialing 121.

KUWAIT PLEDGES SUPPORT TO EDUCATING POOR WORLDWIDE

NEW DELHI: Kuwait's Ambassador to India Fahad Ahmad Al-Awadi pledged Kuwait's support to efforts carried out to educate the poor and empower the underprivileged across the world. His statement came during a panel discussion on 'Inspiring to Inspire', hosted by Ambassador Al-Awadi and his spouse, Tasneem Alabd Aljadir, at their residence in New Delhi, in association with the Indian NGO Gunjan Foundation.

The event saw participation of leading personalities including Arab Ambassadors, eminent Indian figures and VIPs including judges, businessmen, women of exceptional achievements, apart from professors and artists.

Ambassador Awadi told the gathering that Gunjan Foundation "deserves a great deal of appreciation and banquets for the yeoman services that are being undertaken to strengthen and upgrade the conditions of underprivileged section of the society" under the leadership of its founding president Sushma Singhvi who has helped to educate hundreds of poor students to get proper education.

He also underlined that the Kuwaiti Government and people are also engaged in similar activities both inside and outside the country adding that the United Nations recognized the efforts of Kuwait and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as the global body honored him in 2014 as the 'Humanitarian Leader'.

Meanwhile, Singhvi thanked the Kuwait Embassy saying that it has always stood with the organization in its humanitarian efforts. She also thanked Tasneem Alabd Aljadir for her personal efforts to organize the event.

The participants in the panel discussion

underlined the importance of the combined efforts, role of NGOs, business persons and individuals in educating the new generation and building a bright future for them. They also stressed the importance of strengthening democratic values, freedom of expression, and religious and cultural diversity in addition to educating and empowering the underprivileged sections to bring peace and security.

Cultural festival

Meanwhile, Kuwait took part in the World Culture Festival, organized by the Art of Living Foundation headed by Sri Ravi Shankar, which kicked off this weekend in New Delhi. The Kuwaiti delegation, including Assistant Director General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Dr Bader Al-Duweesh, Shaimaa Hashem from the music department and Faisal Al-Naibari from the media department, participated upon directives of Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah in recognition of the event's cultural significance.

The Festival featured artists from across the world and saw the attendance of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several other leaders. The event is taking place in the shadow of a raging controversy over alleged flouting of environmental damages on the banks of the Yamuna River.

The Art of Living Foundation's 35th anniversary has drawn some 3.5 million visitors to see thousands of performers in elaborate arrangements, as the Festival resembled a small township spread over 400 hectares, with tents as far as the eye can see. The main stage alone covered more than 2.8 hectares. — KUNA



NEW DELHI: Kuwait's Ambassador to India Fahad Ahmad Al-Awadi is seen during a panel discussion on 'Inspiring to Inspire'. — KUNA

AMBASSADOR ENCOURAGES KOREAN MEDICAL ENTERPRISE IN KUWAIT

SEOUL: The State of Kuwait's Ambassador to South Korea, Jassem Al-Bedaiwee, urged South Korean companies, namely medical firms, to launch enterprise in Kuwait where authorities have recently provided new incentives and lucrative regulations for external investments.

Speaking at a round-table held by the Korea Times newspaper, Ambassador Bedaiwee said the State of Kuwait has mapped out strategies aimed at facilitating entry of foreign companies into the Kuwaiti market. As to potential medical enterprises, he indicated that the Koreans need to advertise their services in this sector because majority of the Kuwaitis are un-educated about this domain in the Asian nation. In 2014, only 79 Kuwaiti patients chose to be treated in South Korea. Now, there are two Kuwaiti physicians in the country for training and a South Korean hospital is forecast to open in Kuwait soon.

On hurdles for enhancing medical cooperation, he mentioned lack of direct air flights, Kuwaitis' unawareness of the medical services in the nation and their traditional preference of seeking treatment in western nations.

Participants in the discussion panel concurred that the Kuwaiti market is lucrative noting that State spending on medicines reached \$1 billion in 2015 and rose to \$1.03 billion this

year. Expenditure on medical services in Kuwait climbed from \$5.54 billion last year to \$5.83 billion early this year, in tandem with the population growth. —KUNA



SEOUL: Kuwait's Ambassador to South Korea Jassem Al-Bedaiwee speaks during a discussion session of the health sector in the Middle East. — KUNA

In Brief

AMIR PATRONIZES POLICE OFFICERS' GRADUATION

KUWAIT: Under the patronage and attendance of His Highness the Amir and the Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, a ceremony will be held at Saad Al Abdullah Academy for Security Sciences today to celebrate the graduation of the 42nd batch of non-commissioned officers, 27th batch of specialized officers of the Police Academy and 8th batch of women specialized officers of the Women Police Academy. —KUNA



CROWN PRINCE PATRONIZES ENERGY CONFERENCE

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah patronizes the Sixth Conference for Energy Research and Development due today. His Highness the Crown Prince has designated Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa to represent him at the inauguration ceremony, scheduled at Crowne Plaza Hotel. —KUNA



FM RECEIVES LESOTHO AMBASSADOR CREDENTIALS

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the credentials of the newly-appointed ambassador to Lesotho to Kuwait. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled wished the envoy success in carrying out his duties. The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Affairs at the Foreign Minister's office Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah and Assistant Minister for Protocols Ambassador Dhari Ajran Al-Ajran. —KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A man walks by a gate at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry's building in Kuwait City. The gate is designed to resemble house doors in pre-oil era Kuwait.— Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



KFH's team at the job fair

KFH TAKES PART IN JOB FAIR AT GUST

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) took part in the 18th job fair held at Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in presence of Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, as part of the bank's keenness to support the efforts of qualifying national cadres while offering them suitable job opportunities.

A Human Resources team was present at KFH's booth at the job fair in order to answer job seekers' queries and educate them on KFH's sectors and departments and its nature of work. It is worth noting that KFH takes interest in its employees and focuses on fresh graduates. KFH is a pioneer in attracting Kuwaiti manpower where it managed to create high caliber Kuwaiti bankers and investors. Bank received several awards in the field of human resources and Kuwaitization.

KFH's booth was heavily visited by university students who wanted to explore their potential in joining KFH and the banking sector in general.

KFH allows Kuwaitis to hold senior positions and gain experience in various sectors, such as

the banking, commercial, real estate, investment, and IT sectors. KFH's participation confirms the priority bank puts on enhancing its role, in collaboration with the concerned

authorities, to reinforce efforts toward providing job opportunities for Kuwaitis, qualifying them, and honing their skills in accordance with international standards.

SABAH AL-AHMAD CENTER, YOUTH MINISTRY BOND TO SERVE YOUTH

KUWAIT: Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity has affirmed significance of partnerships with the youth affairs ministry as part of the approach of integration among State departments.

Omar Al-Bannai, the center general director, said in a press release yesterday that the partnership between the center and the ministry serves the youth as well as the State, indicating that tangible results of the mutual cooperation were visible after holding the festival, "the youth lens," which concluded on Saturday. The center took part in displaying a collection of innova-

tions, created by young citizens. The festival, organized by the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, aims at encouraging youngsters to publicize their artistic works, musical or cinematic productions.

Meanwhile, Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, the ministry's Undersecretary, said the workshop is intended to be a bridge of interaction among the State various sectors and establishments and aiding the young in their employment bids. She affirmed that the ministry was committed to adopt and market any initiative or innovation by the junior citizens. — KUNA

HOUSING MINISTER VISITS SOUTH KOREA TO LEARN ABOUT 'SMART CITY' TECHNOLOGIES

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser Hassan Abul said that his upcoming visit to South Korea is to gain knowledge on 'smart city' technologies. The minister told the press yesterday that his five-day visit to South Korea stems from Kuwait's desire to engage in housing cooperation and learn about the latest technologies in managing and preserving the sustainability of smart cities.

The Kuwaiti delegation includes representatives from Public Authority for Housing Welfare, the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA). In 2014, Kuwait and South Korea signed a mem-

orandum of understanding to exchange expertise on infrastructure and transportation. In 2015, the two countries also signed an agreement on cities' development.

A smart city is an urban development vision to integrate multiple information and communication technology (ICT) solutions in a secure fashion to manage a city's assets - the city's assets include, but not limited to, local departments information systems, schools, libraries, transportation systems, hospitals, power plants, law enforcement, and other community services. The goal of building a smart city is to improve quality of life by using technology to improve the efficiency of services and meet residents' needs. —KUNA

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- INTO
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- Northumbria University
- Queen Mary, University of London
- Staffordshire University
- Teesside University
- The University of Nottingham
- University of Birmingham
- University of Bradford
- University of Bristol
- University of Glasgow
- University of Reading
- University of Strathclyde

United States

- Adelphi University
- American University
- Auburn University
- University of Kansas
- Florida International University
- Green River College
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Al-Anbaa

A STORY OF A HOMETLAND

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

That is what the eye saw at the start of last week when a story of a homeland was told over the waves of the Arabian Gulf, in a panorama on Kuwait Towers, a Kuwaiti symbol. The story began when the Amiri Diwan invited Kuwaitis and residents to go and see a "story of a homeland" on March 5 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's assumption of power.

The majority of those who gathered to see "a story of a homeland" thought that they will see just fireworks that will light up the skies of Kuwait, but when the hour struck 8 pm on Saturday, the time of the start of the celebration, we found Kuwait Towers being transformed into a beacon that narrated the story of the homeland through pictures displayed on the towers accompanied by well-coordinated fireworks along with the tunes of patriotic songs that accompanied the drama of the events depicted through the pictures that were put on one of Kuwait's symbols.

Away from the pens that did not follow the story and did not go along with the events, and away from those whose writings were limited to the economy and budget against the celebration, there remains one thing, which is that the show was outstanding, and it is to my country's credit that it is seen as a distinguished image through what the show had of innovations. The story was not limited to just pictures and the artwork did not stop at fireworks, rather the person who did the work used the light of the fireworks as an assisting factor to serve the dramatic content on display.

The show began with Kuwait's life before oil, then took us to the constitution and our golden age, Kuwait's invasion and the torching of oil wells, and the entire world helping Kuwait to get out of its crisis and restoring its sovereignty for its people, then the start of the rule of "our father", HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, may Allah protect him, and His Highness's achievements, so he deserved the title of "humanitarian leader", ending the show in an honorable fashion for Kuwait's people in various fields.

A final word: To all those who contributed to the work, starting with the Amiri Diwan, security, information and the crowds, we tell you: "Thank you".

— Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Jarida



Al-Qabas

AN EMBARRASSING EVENT

By Qais Al-Usta

Each time our wise government speaks about the implementation of the law, one of its ministers comes out to carry his duty in a way that can be only described as a violation of the law. The education minister appoints a current member of parliament as president of the scouts union. We are not constitutional experts, but how will an MP supervise a minister who appointed him in a post? And did his excellency forget that there is an article that speaks about separation of authorities while maintaining cooperation, which is article 50 of the constitution?

I, for myself, admit that I am unable to analyze the current government's performance, not because it superseded the levels of Sweden, Norway and Denmark governments, but because it is in a stage of ineptness that was not experienced by any of the previous governments! And despite this, it still going on, with an

Assembly that does not hold it to account, and no MP that grills, and everything is going towards the same conclusion.

I believe that we as citizens deserve a better government; but at the same time we voted for an Assembly, most of which negotiated over our rights, and one way or another ignored these rights, maybe for personal interests. We now have ministers who are not good at speaking to a laughable level, and we have ministers who issued decisions and rules they should be held accountable for. We have ministers who appointed their relatives and friends from the diwaniya and chalet - even their "super" voters appointed in senior positions and memberships in highly important boards of directors, and our esteemed Assembly does not hear, see or speak.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

I believe that we as citizens deserve a better government

60,000 HOUSING UNITS TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN 5 YEARS: ABUL

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul stressed that the South Mutlaa City would be one of Kuwait's most beautiful cities, especially since previous eras in other residential areas had been avoided there. Abul added that thanks to the instructions of HH the Amir and the cooperation between the government and the parliament, housing problems had been fundamentally resolved by distributing 12,000 housing units last year, which is the largest number of housing units ever distributed in Kuwait's history.

Further, Abul said that the housing authority has started working on planning and distributing new cities including projects in South Mutlaa and South Saad Al-Abdullah, which are scheduled to provide a further 60,000 housing units within five years. He added the first related contract would be signed with international companies to start building the infrastructure at Mutlaa City within a few weeks.

In addition, Abul hailed the parliament's decision to suspend prior monitoring of the authority's projects for five years, noting that this would cut short the paperwork needed by at least 30 percent and accelerate achievement. Moreover, Abul stressed that the new projects would help



Minister Yasser Abul

shorten the time citizens have to wait before getting a government-provided house. He also underlined that the current housing projects would not be affected by the government's austerity plans. — Al-Qabas

NEW FREE ZONE IN ISLANDS' DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

KUWAIT: The government has approved a project study to develop Kuwaiti islands and is currently working on putting it, entirely or partially, into practice. The project aims at establishing an integrated free zone between the islands of Boubyan, Failaka, Warba, Meskan and Ouha and allow a "liberal" lifestyle there that would be governed by independent flexible executive and legislative measures different from those applied in mainland Kuwait.

The study also demands establishing new management bodies according to rules different from those currently used in Kuwait and policies that totally avoid incompetence, bureaucracy and corruption. According to the study, the project will include touristic and recreational areas, a media and film production city, a sports city that would attract international competitions, Venice-like water canals, commercial facilities, an international travel center, medical centers and bazaars. The project is expected to add \$35 billion to the annual GDP, annually attract \$1.5 billion in foreign investments and annually attract 3-5 million tourists. The project will also accommodate 400,000 people (80 percent of whom will be expats) in addition to museums and sanctuaries. According to plans, at least 90 percent of this project that is due to be executed in 20 years will be built by the private sector. — Al-Qabas

Crime

Report

Deportee commits suicide inside cell

KUWAIT: An Indian man committed suicide by hanging inside his deportation prison cell, according to investigations. Interior Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Reform Establishments and Sentences Execution Department ordered an investigation into the incident and determine what caused the expat to put an end to his life inside the prison. A security source said the victim took the opportunity when all inmates were asleep. He used bed sheets as a noose to hang himself.

Man forges license

An Egyptian man was sent to the public prosecution charged with forgery. A security source said information was received about the expat who recently arrived in Kuwait and got a driving license although he does not meet the conditions. The license had the information of his brother but with his picture on it. He said when he failed to get a license, he used his brother's details, who left the country.

Thieves caught

Policemen foiled an attempt by three Egyptians to store construction material in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh after stealing it from houses under construction. The three were stopped when they were driving a pickup truck, and police noticed that they were nervous. The three stole the material from houses under construction in Jaber Al-Ahmad. They were detained and further legal action is being taken.

Search for harasser

A citizen sought the help of police against a harasser who chased her all the way to the police station before escaping. The citizen, in her thirties, told Salmiya police that while driving, another driver chased and attempted to stop her, but she ignored him. He followed her until she entered the police station's parking lot, when he escaped, she said. The woman gave police the license plate number.

Wedding photos uploaded online

A citizen accused a local studio of publishing photos of her daughter's wedding on social media. She told Maidan Hawally police that she had contracted a famous studio to film the wedding. She said the wedding took place two months ago, but she was surprised lately with pictures of women and her daughter, the bride, uploaded on social media. The wedding hall officials had banned mobile phones, and two women only were allowed to film, so she accused the studio of publishing them. — Al-Rai

News

in brief

Kuwait urges Hezbollah to adopt Arab policies

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah urged Hezbollah to abandon its current policies in order to be able to "coexist as a political party in Lebanon that supports its nation in the context of the Arab action and in support of the Arab consensus." Jarallah meanwhile said that Kuwait supports Saudi Arabia's stance exhibited by its delegation which walked out of a recent Arab League meeting in protest of statements made by Iraq's Foreign Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari. — Al-Rai

Female teachers rent allowance adjusted

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education started adjusting the contracts of female expatriate teachers to change the monthly rent allowance from KD 60 to KD 150. This comes after the Civil Service Commission (CSC) made a decision based on a constitutional court verdict which ordered paying female teachers an equal allowance to their male counterpart. The ministry also asked the CSC to pay a KD 150 monthly rent allowance to bedoon (stateless) female teachers. — Al-Jarida

Smart meters ready next year

KUWAIT: Companies are competing to win a tender to provide smart meters which the Ministry of Electricity and Water has recently placed through the Central Tenders Committee (CTC). The plan is for the prepaid meters to be ready in service by next year. The ministry plans to sign contracts with more than one provider in order to give consumer the option to choose the company that they want, minister Ahmad Al-Jassar said. — Al-Anbaa

COMMERCIAL EXCHANGE WITH KUWAIT €1.7 BILLION LAST YEAR: FRENCH AMBASSADOR

KUWAIT: French Ambassador to Kuwait Christian Nakhle highlighted the strong ties and relations his country has with Kuwait, noting that bilateral relations with Kuwait have been developing in various fields. Nakhle added that visas issued to Kuwaitis to visit France increased by 274 percent over the past five years and that 2015 alone witnessed 50,000 visas issued to Kuwaitis. Visas are usually issued to Kuwaitis within 48 hours from application, and within a week or two for non-Kuwaitis provided all needed documents are presented with the application.

Commercially, Nakhle stressed that commercial exchanges with Kuwait have been remarkably growing, up to €1.7 billion in 2015 including €1.1 billion in French exports to Kuwait including plane equipment, metals, electric devices, perfumes, cosmetics, fabrics and food and agricultural products. He added that Kuwait exported oil products worth €754 million to France. — Al-Qabas

PUBLIC SERVICES ON COURSE FOR PRIVATIZATION: SUBAIH

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih said all services under the control of the state will be offered to the private sector within the program of privatizing the state's economic sectors. Subaih said the state will start the privatization program with government services followed by education and health. She said the private sector will be given the authority to manage and operate hospitals, in addition to managing the process of treatment abroad.

She said the state is studying the establishment of a special system of medical tourism in Kuwait, especially since the geographical location and general climate of Kuwait allows for this type of tourism due to its stable weather compared to surrounding countries. She said activation of the

private sector with the government privatization programs will create jobs opportunities for citizens that were not put forward before, and this will reflect positively on the national economy in general.

As for the project to develop the islands, Subaih said the idea of the project came from the Supreme Planning Council which studied it from all aspects and approved it, then sent it to the Cabinet, which expressed great interest in it. She said the project needs two things - the first is special legislation for it, and the second is international partnerships, as negotiations are ongoing with foreign investors to find the extent of their willingness to develop this mega project.

As for Mubarak Al-Kabeer port, Subaih said there are no obstacles or



Minister Hind Al-Subaih

problems with the Iraqi side, and the matter is in the hands of the ministry of public works, which will present it to the operator after completing the regular procedures. She said the Mubarak Al-Kabeer project goes under the Silk City authority and has its own law. — Al-Anbaa

NEW RULES BAN EMPLOYEES FROM DISCUSSING OIL SECTOR TOPICS

KUWAIT: At a time when the new administrative rules of Kuwait Petroleum Company (KPC) and its companies were approved during the latest meeting of the Higher Petroleum Council, it seems the rules that were omitted from the list before its final approval is an administrative "catch" that would cause uproar in the entire oil sector, especially since the new list had rules and amendments that ban employees from discussing anything about the oil sector during their work or after retirement.

As a reminder, a meeting was held by the HPC on Jan 10, and 14 important items were approved after several months of postponements. Oil sources said the subcommittees of HPC prepared the financial rules before presenting them to HPC for approval. Many strict rules were removed such as banning all employees from discussing oil sector matters on social media, whether by current employees or those who retired.

The sources said KPC rules (before amendment) included an item on rewards and incentives, as it stipulates that the authority of HPC be withdrawn in approving lists of financial rewards and incentives, increase in workers' salaries in the oil sector, and this contradicts the decree of establishing HPC as it is the authority concerned with this matter alone. — Al-Anbaa



KUWAIT: A large number of visitors stopped by a cultural exhibition organized by the Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) at the Murooj Mall as part of its ongoing 'Ya Zain Turathna' (out beautiful heritage) cultural campaign.

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India's hardline Hindus ditch trademark shorts Page 11



PARIS: (From left) The EU Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini, Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, US Secretary of State John Kerry and British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond speak following a meeting between the US and its European allies on the situations in Libya, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. — AFP

US, FRANCE WARN SYRIAN REGIME AHEAD OF TALKS

WARRING SIDES PREPARE FOR NEW PEACE PLANS

GENEVA: The United States and France warned the Syrian regime yesterday against trying to disrupt the fragile ceasefire as the warring sides prepared for fresh peace talks to end the brutal five-year conflict. The UN-brokered indirect negotiations are due to start Monday in Geneva, the latest international push to try to end a war that has killed more than 270,000 people and forced millions from their homes.

After talks with European allies in Paris, US Secretary of State John Kerry hit out at comments by his Syrian counterpart that removing President Bashar Al-Assad would cross a "red line" in the negotiations. French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault went further, describing Walid Muallem's comments as a "provocation" and a "bad sign" for the attempts to find peace.

Kerry warned Syria and its allies Russia and Iran against "testing boundaries" or less-

ening their compliance with a fragile February 27 truce brokered by Washington and Moscow that has largely held despite each side accusing the other of violations. While analysts say much has changed since the last round of talks collapsed in February, the fate of Assad and the holding of elections with 18 months remain huge obstacles to peace.

Muallem said in Damascus Saturday: "We will not talk with anyone who wants to discuss the presidency... Bashar Al-Assad is a red line." Kerry said the Syrian minister was "clearly trying to disrupt the process... clearly trying to send a message of deterrence to others." But the fact is (Assad's) strongest sponsors Russia and Iran have both adopted... an approach which dictates that there must be a political transition and that we must have a presidential election at some time," he added.

'Moment of truth'

Kerry urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to bring the Syrian regime into line, saying he should be concerned that Assad had used his foreign minister "to try and act as a spoiler, to take off the table something that president Putin and Iran had committed to". "So this is a moment of truth, a moment where all of us have to be responsible."

Kerry hailed the fact that the ceasefire had led to a reduction of violence of up to 90 percent, and made possible the delivery of emergency supplies to some 150,000 civilians in besieged areas.

"Despite this progress, we all of us here remain deeply concerned by the Assad regime's practice of removing badly needed medical supplies from those supplies and in particular the surgical kits," he said.

Kerry said the coalition had pushed the Islamic State jihadist group out of 20 percent of

the territory it once controlled in Syria and that 600 IS fighters had been killed in the last three weeks. He highlighted the importance of the Geneva process in tackling the unprecedented refugee crisis in Europe, saying that if the ceasefire did not hold "we will be back here next year or even the year after next facing a Middle East with even more refugees, even greater numbers of dead and displaced, even more suffering."

Transitional period

Syrian government negotiator Bashar Al-Jaafari arrived yesterday in Geneva, where delegates from the main opposition group, the High Negotiations Committee (HNC), are already preparing. The HNC has repeatedly called for Assad's departure as a prerequisite for any deal.

"We believe that the transitional period should start with the fall, or death, of Bashar Al-

Assad," chief opposition negotiator Mohammad Alouash said Saturday. "It cannot start with the presence of the regime, or the head of this regime still in power." UN peace envoy Staffan de Mistura has said the Geneva meetings, opening on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the start of the conflict in March 2011, would not last more than 10 days.

Assad's fate has long been a major stumbling block, with Russia rejecting any suggestion he should go, while the United States wants him to step down. In the latest violence to threaten the ceasefire, Al-Qaeda fighters and allied jihadists clashed with a rebel faction known as Division 13 overnight in northwestern Syria after storming its weapons depot, the group said. According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group, the fighting left at least six combatants dead, four of them identified as Division 13 fighters. — AFP

DEADLY CLASHES IN YEMEN'S ADEN AS LOYALISTS PRESS TAEZ OFFENSIVE

ADEN: At least 17 suspected Al-Qaeda militants and two policemen have been killed in two days of clashes in Aden, the temporary base of Yemen's government, security sources said. The clashes, which resumed early yesterday, came as loyalist forces pressed an offensive to retake third city Taz in the southwest of Yemen which has been under siege for months by Houthi rebels.

The fighting in Aden raged in the jihadist stronghold of Mansura, a residential area which loyalist forces backed by aircraft from a Saudi-led coalition have been trying to recapture since Saturday. Coalition fighter jets and Apache helicopters carried out air strikes overnight that hit at least three vehicles and a local council office occupied by the jihadists, security sources said.

"At least 17 Al-Qaeda fighters and two policemen have been

killed since Saturday," a security official said, adding that most of the jihadists were killed in air raids. Dozens of gunmen in balaclavas carrying the Al-Qaeda flag deployed to push back police trying to enter the central Aden neighborhood, witnesses said.

The police said in a statement that fighting against the "armed terrorist gangs in Mansura will continue to ensure the safety of residents" in Yemen's main southern city. Security sources estimate that around 300 heavily armed Al-Qaeda fighters are entrenched in Mansura. Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group have taken advantage of the conflict between Iran-backed Houthi insurgents and pro-government forces to reinforce their presence in the south, including in Aden.

Meanwhile, pro-government forces clashed with Houthi rebels yesterday as they tried to break a siege of Taz after retaking the

city's southern and western suburbs on Friday, loyalist military sources said. Coalition aircraft provided support and hit a military convoy that was trying to bring reinforcements to the rebels, the sources said.

At least 94 people have been killed in the offensive since Friday, including 24 rebels, nine loyalist forces and four civilians, the sources added. Officials are hoping to break the siege in order to deliver desperately needed humanitarian aid to the nearly 200,000 residents trapped in Taz.

More than 6,100 people have died-half of them civilians-since the coalition launched air strikes against the Shiite rebels and their allies in March 2015, according to the UN. US Secretary of State John Kerry on Saturday said that he and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir had agreed to work towards a ceasefire in Yemen. — AFP

TURKEY SLAPS CURFEW ON 2 KURDISH TOWNS

DIYARBAKIR: Turkey yesterday slapped a curfew on two border towns in the Kurdish-dominated southeast ahead of a looming military "clean-up" operation as it eased a lockdown in Diyarbakir. Turkish troops have been waging a major-and controversial-offensive against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) since December, imposing strict 24-hour curfews in a number of towns and cities in the southeast.

Ankara has repeatedly imposed curfews for military operations in southeastern urban centers, and yesterday said restrictions would be slapped on two more towns-Yuksekov, near the Iranian border, and Nusaybin, on the frontier with Syria. The aim was to "restore order and security" following an increase in "terrorist activity", local authorities said. Ankara has vowed to wipe out the PKK, classed as a terrorist organization by Turkey and its Western allies, and said "clean-up" operations in Yuksekova, Nusaybin and Sirmak, a third Kurdish city, are imminent.

Under lockdown

As the new restrictions were announced, Turkey eased the curfew in part of Diyarbakir, the biggest Kurdish majority city, which has been under lockdown since December. From 8:00 am (0600 GMT) yesterday, residents of part of the city's historic Sur district were allowed back onto the streets, where some buildings have been badly damaged in the operation, an AFP correspondent said. Residents forced from the area by the clashes and the curfews returned to inspect their damaged homes, carrying belongings in suitcases and pushcarts.

Other parts of Sur, a UNESCO world heritage site, remain under curfew to allow the authorities to "capture terrorists" and "clear explosives and booby-traps", according to the local governor. The police and army launched an operation in the narrow streets of Sur in early December aimed at retaking control of areas seized by armed PKK activists, who dug trenches and put up barricades.

Critics say the clashes have caused major damage and forced nearly 50,000 people in Sur from their homes since the start of December. Up to 70,000 people were living in the area before the violence erupted. Army high command said this week its operation in Sur had killed 279 members of "the separatist terrorist organization", the PKK, but gave no toll for security forces. Local media have put the figure in the dozens.

The pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) says dozens of civilians have also been killed. Violence flared last summer between Kurdish rebels and government forces after a deadly bombing in a Kurdish majority town, shattering a 2013 ceasefire reached after secret talks between PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan and Ankara. Over 40,000 people have been killed since the PKK took up arms in 1984 demanding an independent state for Kurds. Since then the group has narrowed its demands to greater autonomy and cultural rights. — AFP

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TRUMP INVIGORATED DESPITE MOUNTING TENSIONS, RALLIES

HEATED RHETORIC FANNING DANGEROUS FLAMES

CLEVELAND: An invigorated Donald Trump will appear at a handful of rallies yesterday despite a climate of growing tension, as his White House rivals warn that the Republican's heated rhetoric is fanning dangerous flames.

The brash billionaire, who is leading the race for his party's presidential nomination in spite of incendiary rhetoric and hostile remarks towards immigrants and Muslims, is scheduled to jet between three rallies in Illinois, Ohio and Florida. The states are among five that will hold nominating races in next Tuesday's crucial round of votes, which also includes Missouri and North Carolina.

The key elections are expected to further widen the Republican field, with Florida Senator Marco Rubio and Ohio Governor John Kasich both facing make-or-break tests in their home states. Although Trump is ahead in national polls and his party's delegate count, he was sorely defeated Saturday in nominating contests in the US capital of Washington, DC and Wyoming by rivals Rubio and Ted Cruz respectively.

The defeats do not majorly undermine Trump, however, whose rallies have increasingly become the scene of clashes between supporters and protesters offended by his abrasive speech. On Friday, the violence peaked as Trump called off a rally in Chicago where scenes of chaos erupted as people threw bottles and punches. At least five people were arrested.

But Trump dismissed the notion Saturday that his extreme statements on immigrants and Muslims had exacerbated tensions, placing the blame squarely on "organized thugs" as he returned to the theme over and over on the campaign trail.

Without mentioning Trump's name directly, US President Barack Obama gave a mocking rebuke of the Republican at a Democratic party fundraising event in Dallas on Saturday. "We are great right now," Obama retorted, in remarks that played on Trump's campaign slogan of "Make America great again."

"What the folks who are running for office should be focused on is how we can make it even better-not insults and schoolyard taunts and manufacturing facts, not divisiveness along the lines of race and faith. Certainly not violence against other Americans," Obama said.

'Political arson'

Democratic frontrunner Hillary Clinton issued a stern warning as well. "If you play with matches, you're going to start a fire you can't control. That's not leadership, that's political



KANSAS CITY: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump describes how he was ready to punch a person who rushed to the stage during an election rally earlier in the day, as he speaks to a crowd. — AP

arson," Clinton said. Early Saturday a demonstrator tried to rush on stage during Trump's rally in Dayton, Ohio, leading the candidate to make unverified claims that the man was linked to the Islamic State group.

"So, the judge let him go. And then one of my people said, wow. They found his name, and it was probably ISIS or ISIS related. Do you believe it? Certainly, he's not in love with our country, that I can tell you, okay?" Trump said.

According to the Dayton Daily news website, the man in question is a 22-year-old anti-racism activist named Thomas Dimassimo, who was filmed last year taking part in a protest that involved students standing on American flags, holding signs saying, "Not my flag." In support of his claim, Trump tweeted a link to a video of the flag protest, dubbed over with Islamic chants in what appeared to be a crude hoax intended to suggest ties to extremism.

Trump hosted two huge meetings Saturday in the heartland state of Ohio and one in Kansas, which passed without major troubles, but in a climate of palpable tension with groups of protesters picketing the various venues. In Cleveland, protesters gathered outside the cavernous exhibition center hosting Trump's rally holding signs that read "Dump Trump!" and "Donald Trump: Making America Hate Again."

Half a dozen police on horseback watched from a distance a heated verbal exchange between several black protesters and mostly white Trump supporters who yelled in their faces: "Get a job! Get a job!" The evening rally in Kansas City was repeatedly disrupted by protests. "Get 'em out," Trump said. "I hope they arrest these people, because they're really violating all of us, okay?" he said, vowing to press charges. — AFP

MERKEL'S PARTY FACES HAMMERING AT POLLS AS POPULISTS EYE SURGE

BERLIN: Chancellor Angela Merkel's party braced for a backlash at key state polls yesterday over the German leader's liberal refugee policy, while the right-wing populist AfD prepared to scoop up the protest vote from angry voters.

More than 12 million voters headed to the ballot box to elect three new regional parliaments in the southwestern states of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate, as well as eastern Saxony-Anhalt in the so-called Super Sunday polls. The elections are the biggest since Germany registered a record influx of refugees, and are largely regarded as a referendum on Merkel's decision to open the country's doors to people fleeing war.

"These elections are very important... as they will serve as a litmus test for the government's disputed policy" on refugees, Duesseldorf University political scientist Jens Walther told AFP. Surveys in the run-up to the vote showed that support for Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its junior coalition partner Social Democratic Party (SPD) dropping while the populist Alternative for Germany (AfD) was steadily gaining momentum and expected to record a surge in backing in all three states.

The CDU was bracing for one of its poorest showings in years, particularly in its traditional stronghold of Baden-Wuerttemberg, with a poll published Thursday by ZDF public television showing support plummeting by 10 percentage points to 29 percent-putting it for the first time behind the Greens-while the AfD snatched 11 percent.

Guido Wolf, the CDU's leading candidate in the southwest, has described it as the "most difficult election campaign" the party has had to run. In Rhineland-Palatinate, where the fortunes of the CDU had been rising with the latest poll giving it 35 percent, the party is seen struggling

to defeat the Social Democratic Party, scoring 36 percent.

The AfD meanwhile was hoping to crack the 10 percent mark. In Saxony-Anhalt, where the CDU still commands a large lead with 32 percent, AfD has a stunning 18 percent, at the heels of the second-placed Left Party, at 21 percent.

'A lot to lose'

Merkel has been under intense pressure to change course and shut Germany's doors after 1.1 million refugees-many of them Syrians-arrived in Europe's biggest economy last year alone. But she has resolutely refused to impose a cap on arrivals, insisting instead on common European action that includes distributing refugees among the EU's 28 member states.

As dissent grew over her stance, AfD has capitalised on the darkening mood. Founded in 2013 as an anti-euro party, AfD has since morphed into one that sparked a storm in January after suggesting police may have to shoot at migrants at the borders.

Although the upstart party has seats in five regional parliaments and is represented in the European Parliament, it has so far made its biggest gains in former communist eastern states that still lag western Germany in jobs and prosperity. But its inroads into western states have sparked alarm in a Germany mindful of its Nazi past. Ingeborg Klumpp, a 74-year-old pensioner, went to vote in Stuttgart in the hope that "with my little cross on the ballot paper, I will contribute to the fact that people won't vote for the AfD". "The campaign of hatred they ran these last weeks was horrible," she said. On the eve of the vote, Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere joined calls from both the political mainstream as well as civic and religious groups, urging the electorate to shun AfD. — AFP



BADEN-WUERTEMBERG: A woman wearing a traditional "Bollenhut" costume casts her ballot in Kirnbach, southern Germany during regional state elections. — AFP

CONDOLENCES



C.V.K.LONAPPAN (67)

He was Ex Crimenco staff (KNPC) passed away on 12th March 2016, funeral will be today, 14th March 2016 in INDIA, Parappukkara St. John's church at 4 PM.

Wife Mrs. Lilly Lonappan (Adan Hospital ICU)

COMMENTARY FROM THE CUBAN EMBASSY IN KUWAIT PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S VISIT TO CUBA

By Granma | internet@granma.cu

The President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, will make an official visit to Cuba this coming March 20-22. This will be the second time a US President comes to our archipelago. Previously having done so was Calvin Coolidge, who landed in Havana in January of 1928. He arrived aboard a warship to attend the 6th Pan American Conference, which was held at that time under the sponsorship of a local figure recalled as infamous, Gerardo Machado. This will be the first time a President of the United States comes to Cuba in full possession of her sovereignty and with a Revolution in power, headed by its historic leadership.

This event is part of the process initiated in December 17, 2014, when the President of Cuba's Councils of State and Ministers, Army General Ra'1 Castro Ruz, and President Barack Obama simultaneously announced the decision to reestablish diplomatic relations, broken by the United States almost 54 years ago. It is part of the complex process of normalization of bilateral ties, which has barely begun, and has advanced on the only grounds that are possible and just: respect, equality, reciprocity, and the recognition of our government's legitimacy.

This point has been reached, in the very first place, as a result of the Cuban people's heroic resistance and loyalty to principles, the defense of national independence and sovereignty. The current process undertaken with the United States has been possible also thanks to unwavering international solidarity, in particular from the governments and peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Since the announcements of December, 2014, Cuba and the United States have taken steps toward improving the bilateral context. On July 20, 2015, diplomatic relations were officially reestablished, along with the commitment to develop them on the basis of respect, cooperation, and observance of the principles of international law.

Two meetings between the Presidents of the countries have taken place, in addition to the

exchange of visits by ministers and other contacts between high ranking officials. Cooperation in various areas of mutual benefit are advancing, and new opportunities for discussion have opened up, allowing for dialogue on issues of bilateral and multi-lateral interest, including those about which we have different conceptions.

The US President will be welcomed by the government of Cuba and its people with the hospitality which distinguishes us, and will be treated with all consideration and respect, as befits a head of state.

This will be an opportunity for the President to directly observe a nation immersed in its economic and social development, and in improving its citizens' wellbeing. This people enjoys rights, and can exhibit achievements which are only dreams for many of the world's countries, despite the limitations derived from our condition as an underdeveloped, blockaded country - which has earned us international recognition and respect.

He will also have the opportunity to meet a noble, friendly, dignified people with an elevated sense of patriotism and national unity, who have always struggled for a better future, despite the adversities we have been obliged to face.

Worth recalling are the words of the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Comandante en Jefe Fidel Castro Ruz, on September 11, 2001, when he affirmed, "Today is a day of tragedy for the United States. You know very well that hate for the U.S. people has never been sowed here."

This is the people who will receive President Obama, proud of their history, their roots, their national culture, and confident that a better future is possible. A nation that assumes with serenity and determination the current stage of relations with the United States, that recognizes the opportunities, as well as the unresolved problems between the two countries.

The President of the United States' visit will be an important step in the process of normalization of bilateral relations. It must be remembered that Obama, as

James Carter did previously, has decided to work toward normalization of ties with Cuba making use of his executive powers, and has consequently taken concrete action in this direction.

Nevertheless, a long, difficult road lies ahead to reach normalization, which will require the solution of key issues which have accumulated over more than five decades, and entrenched the confrontational character of relations between the two countries. Such problems are not resolved overnight, or with a Presidential visit. To normalize relations with the United States, it is imperative that the economic, commercial, financial blockade - which causes the Cuba people hardship, and is the principal obstacle to our country's development - be lifted.

The US President has taken steps to modify the implementation of some aspects of the blockade, which is positive. Reality continues to show that the blockade is being maintained, and is rigorously enforced, with a notable extra-territorial reach, which has a chilling effect on companies and banks in the United States and other countries. The Cuban people hope that the US President's visit will serve to consolidate his will to be actively involved in a thorough debate in Congress for the lifting of the blockade, and, in the meantime, that he continues to use his executive prerogatives to modify as much as possible its application, without the need for legislative action.

Cuba reiterates its full disposition to maintain respectful dialogue with the government of the United States, and develop relations of civilized coexistence. Coexisting does not mean being obliged to renounce the ideas in which we believe and have brought us thus far, or our socialism, our history, our culture.

The profound conceptual differences between Cuba and the United States on political models, social justice, international relations, world peace and stability, among others, will persist. What our ties with the United States should accomplish is that the two countries respect their differences, and create a relationship which is beneficial for both peoples.



BANGALORE: This file photo taken on January 9, 2016, shows the band of India's Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) as they take part in the "Shrung Ghosh Path Sanchalan" (Route March by Brass Band) by RSS cadets. — AFP

INDIA'S HARDLINE HINDUS DITCH TRADEMARK SHORTS

NEW DELHI: A hardline Indian Hindu movement announced yesterday it was abandoning its trademark khaki shorts to try to modernize the dress code, 91 years after adopting the austere military-style uniform.

Foot soldiers of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) are often seen after dawn across India engaged in physical drills and uttering religious chants-dressed in pleated shorts, white shirts and black hats. But RSS general secretary Suresh Bhaiyyaji Joshi acknowledged the organization, the ideological fountainhead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party, must keep in step with a modern, changing world.

"We have decided to replace khaki half-pants with brown pants. We are not rigid and take decisions according to the times," Joshi told reporters at a three-day meeting of the group's top decision-making body. The RSS announced last year it was considering the decision.

The rare sartorial tweak made headline news yesterday in India where the RSS says it has several million members, including at one stage Modi himself. The RSS styles itself as a cultural organization devoted to protecting India's Hindu culture. But critics accuse it of being an anti-Muslim pseudo-fascist organization with a history of fuelling religious tensions.

RSS members carrying bamboo sticks often carry out daily "shakhas"-a combination of physical training, yoga and religious chanting. The RSS has been banned three times since its inception in 1925, including after a former member assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1948. It was also banned after the 1992 demolition of a mosque in Ayodhya which led to nationwide riots. Members have spoken out against concessions to religious minorities. They also oppose homosexuality and the special constitutional status of Muslim-majority Kashmir. — AFP

NEPAL BEGINS PROCESS TO DELIVER GRANTS NEARLY A YEAR AFTER QUAKE

KATHMANDU: Nepal authorities opened banking channels yesterday to start distributing reconstruction cash to earthquake victims, almost 11 months after the tremor killed nearly 9,000 people and destroyed more than half a million homes. Tens of thousands are still living in tents and the government has been strongly criticized for delays in disbursing aid despite donor pledges of billions in assistance. The National Reconstruction Authority, which is meant to oversee the rebuilding, partnered with local banks in the quake-hit northern Dolakha district to kick-start the disbursement of funds in six villages. "We have signed grant contracts with local

banks to begin distribution of cash," authority spokesman Suresh Adhikari said.

"Funds will be transferred beginning tomorrow and the beneficiaries will receive the money in a few days." Victims of the quake which struck on April 25 last year have so far received just \$150 in compensation per household, while the government has promised an additional \$2,000 for rebuilding homes-to be disbursed by the reconstruction authority. In the first installment, the quake victims will receive only a quarter of the amount. Adhikari said over 5,000 households have been identified in the area and about 3,000 of them have opened bank accounts. — AFP

News

in brief

Wild bear kills three in India before being shot

NEW DELHI: A bear killed two villagers and a wildlife officer sent to tranquilize it before being shot dead in a forest in central India, police said yesterday. The sloth bear mauled the villagers late on Saturday, sparking a police hunt for the beast after fearful locals in Chhattisgarh state demanded its capture.

Police shot and killed the female bear after it also fatally attacked the wildlife official who had been sent to trap and tranquilize it, said Rajesh Kukareja, deputy police chief of Mahasamund district. "The bear was very aggressive and killed the officer at the spot. We had no option but to shoot it," Kukareja said. "It was on a rampage, attacking everyone," he said. Tribal villagers found the bodies of the two men after they failed to return from a trip to the forest to pick edible flowers, triggering a search for them. Mahasamund is home to numerous animal species, including hundreds of black sloth bears, according to its website.

Pakistan rains leave 28 dead

ISLAMABAD: The death toll from torrential rain in Pakistan rose to 28 yesterday after more homes collapsed in the southwest and northwest, officials said. They said 17 people lost their lives over the past three days in the southwestern province of Baluchistan, while six died in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in the northwest and five in adjacent tribal areas. Four women and six children were among the dead. More than 50 people were injured in both regions. Officials in the central province of Punjab said they were still estimating damage there. "At least 17 people have died due to roofs and walls collapsing or being struck by lightning," Zahid Saleem, chief of Baluchistan's disaster management authority, told AFP.

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FILIPINO KIDNAPPER OF SOLDIER, PRIEST SLAIN

MANILA: The leader of a southern Philippine gang behind the kidnapping of an Australian ex-soldier and an Irish priest was shot dead by security forces yesterday, the military said. Waning Abdusalam was killed after he resisted arrest by a combined military and police team in the strife-torn island of Mindanao, said military spokesman Major Filemon Tan.

The suspect was gunned down in the

town of Naga in Zamboanga Sibugay province. He may have had links to the Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim extremist group known for kidnapping foreigners and Christians, said Tan. The Abu Sayyaf, founded with seed money from Al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden, has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States. It has been blamed for the worst terror attacks in Philippine history.

Tan said Waning had been involved in the kidnapping for ransom of numerous people in Mindanao, including several Filipinos as well as Irish missionary Father Michael Sinnott in 2009 and Australian Warren Rodwell in 2011. While Sinnott was released after about a month through the intercession of a larger Muslim rebel group, Rodwell spent 15 months as a hostage and was only freed after ransom was paid.

The Abu Sayyaf was blamed for the Rodwell kidnapping. Kidnapping for ransom is frequent in the southern Philippines, where Muslim separatist insurgents and bandits have been active for decades. Early this month suspected Abu Sayyaf militants holding two Canadians and a Norwegian set a one-month deadline for millions of dollars in ransom to be paid. In a video posted on a local jihadist group's Facebook page,

the emaciated victims warned they would be killed unless the ransom was paid. Canadian tourists John Ridsdel and Robert Hall, Norwegian resort manager Kjartan Sekkingstad and Filipina Marites Flor were seized from yachts at a marina in the southern Philippines in September. The Philippine government has stressed its position of not paying ransom. Police said they are continuing efforts to rescue the hostages. — AFP



BEIJING: In this March 3, 2016, file photo, delegates listen to a speech during the opening session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference at Beijing's Great Hall of the People. — AP

CHINA TERROR CONVICTIONS NEARLY DOUBLED IN 2015

MUSLIM REGION OF XINJIANG MAIN CONTRIBUTOR

BEIJING: Convictions for state security crimes including "violent terrorism" nearly doubled in 2015, figures from China's top court showed yesterday, following a "strike hard" campaign to quell unrest in the largely Muslim region of Xinjiang and crackdowns on civil society.

Chinese courts convicted 1,419 on charges related to "endangering national security and violent terrorism" in 2015, Zhou Qiang, head of the Supreme People's Court, said in a report to the annual session of the Communist-controlled National People's Congress (NPC). Last year, the country reported that its courts had convicted 712 on broadly similar charges of "violent terrorist attacks" and "splittism"—attempts to advocate independence for regions of China. The national security convictions occurred as the courts "actively took part in anti-terror, anti-sepa-

ratist and anti-cult struggles", Zhou said.

Human rights activists convicted

Chinese courts sentenced 1084 people for "violent terrorist crimes" and another 335 for other crimes related to "endangering national security". The report did not detail crimes included in the second category, but Chinese legal expert Susan Finder said that "if you look at the list of national security crimes, human rights activists would have been convicted of some of them." China aggressively increased pressure on civil society last year, carrying out mass detentions of civil rights lawyers and campaigners. The moves came as the country passed a new national security law that experts feared would expand the government's power to prosecute political dissidents.

The majority of the convictions, however, seem to be related to Beijing's launch last year of a "strike hard" campaign in Xinjiang aimed at stopping unrest that has claimed hundreds of lives. In recent years, violence in the region has led to hundreds of deaths that Beijing attributes to Islamic extremism and foreign influence, but which activists say are a response to draconian restrictions on the area's religious and cultural life. Since starting the campaign in 2014, the government has jailed hundreds, put scores to death, and perhaps killed hundreds more in police actions that have been widely decried by human rights campaigners. And the "high pressure policy" is set to continue, Xinjiang's Communist Party boss Zhang Chunxian told reporters this week.

Force to extract confessions

Overall conviction rates for the country remained close to 100 percent in 2015, yesterday's report showed, even as Beijing vows legal reforms aimed at reducing wrongful convictions. A total of 1,039 accused were found innocent by Chinese courts in 2015, Zhou said, compared to 1.232 million who were found guilty—a conviction rate of 99.92 percent, almost exactly the same as the previous year.

The use of force to extract confessions remains widespread in China and rights groups say suspects often do not have an effective defense in criminal trials, leading to regular miscarriages of justice. Courts are politically controlled, with activists who come to trial virtually certain to be found guilty. Public anger has mounted over miscarriages of justice, and in recent years courts have reversed death sentences in a handful of cases. In February alone, five men were acquitted of murder charges for which they had been wrongly jailed more than two decades earlier.

Chinese courts "corrected" 1,357 verdicts in 2015, the report said, but only explained the outcome of three cases. Zhou said the country should draw lessons from the acquittals and "improve the mechanisms which can effectively prevent and correct false and wrong cases in a timely manner". The Communist Party has pledged to ensure the "rule of law with Chinese characteristics" and said it will lessen the influence of local officials over courts. — AFP

EX-VP AL GORE VISITS HAIYAN GROUND ZERO

TACLOBAN: Climate change activist and former US vice president Al Gore made a surprise visit Saturday to an impoverished Philippine city ravaged by one of the strongest storms on record. The Nobel Peace Prize winner lit candles at a mass grave in Tacloban for thousands killed by Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, a picture tweeted by Climate Reality showed.

The US non-governmental organization is holding a seminar on adapting to climate change in Manila next week, where Gore is scheduled to speak. "We hope his visit reminds the world of what happened after Yolanda," 51-year-old typhoon survivor Demetria Raya said, referring to the local name for Haiyan. The mother of three said she met Gore Saturday in a seaside village near Tacloban airport where her home once stood, before it was wiped out by the storm.

"He asked if I want to rebuild my house here. I said no. This place reminds me of my ordeal, how the waves washed away everything," said Raya, who now lives in a temporary shelter several kilometers away. More than two years after Haiyan, Tacloban and surrounding areas have yet to recover, with many living in shanty towns without running water and electricity. Survivors often still bear emotional scars. Haiyan swept through central islands of the Philippines in November 2013, with giant waves wiping out entire communities and leaving 7,500 people dead or missing.

Since the disaster, high-profile personalities including the Pope and French President Francois Hollande have visited Tacloban to call attention to the effects of climate change. Experts are studying the link between climate change and the increasing strength of storms battering the nation. — AFP

AUSTRALIAN REPORTERS DETAINED FOR QUESTIONING MALAYSIAN PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Two Australian journalists were detained and barred from leaving Malaysia after they had tried to "aggressively" question Prime Minister Najib Razak about a corruption scandal, police said yesterday.

The duo were detained after they crossed a "security line and aggressively tried to approach the prime minister" who was visiting a mosque in Kuching on the island of Borneo, according to a police statement. "Both of them were subsequently arrested for failing to comply with police instructions not to cross the security line," read the statement.

The journalists, who work for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's Four Corners investigative program were detained on Saturday night after the incident but were released Sunday without charge. "ABC 4Corners team arrested in Malaysia last night after trying to question PM Najib Razak over corruption scandal," the program's executive producer Sally Neighbor tweeted yesterday.

Reporter Linton Besser and camera operator Louie Eroglu had approached Najib on the street before their arrest, the broadcaster added. Neighbor said their passports, which were initially seized, had been returned to them but they "can't leave Malaysia". "We will discuss with the Attorney General's Chambers [whether] to charge them," Malaysia's national police chief Khalid Abu Bakar was quoted as saying by local news agency Bernama.

"Police are responsible for the prime minister's security. So we do not want anything untoward happening to him," he said, adding that the journalists were barred from leaving the state while investigations were underway.

Scandal-hit premier

Footage posted online by The Star showed Besser asking questions at a tense press conference in Kuala Lumpur earlier on Saturday relating to the still-murky 2006 murder of a Mongolian woman. Two of Najib's bodyguards were convicted of the murder and sentenced to death.

Najib, who was defence minister at the time, has strongly denied any involvement in the murder and has said he did not know the woman. But government critics have long alleged that the two bodyguards, members of an elite unit that guards top ministers, were scapegoats in the killing of Altantuya, who was at the centre of allegations of massive kickbacks in the \$1.1 billion 2002 purchase of French Scorpene submarines. Najib, 62, has also been under fire over allegations that billions of dollars were stolen from a state firm he founded, and over his own acceptance of a murky \$681 million overseas payment. He and the state firm have vehemently denied any wrongdoing.

In the allegation's wake, the prime minister has curbed investigations into the scandals and purged his ruling United Malays National Organization (UMNO) of critics, essentially shutting off any internal party challenges. Whistle-blowers have been arrested, while media outlets reporting on the allegations have been muzzled, raising concerns over rights and freedom of speech. Leaders from across Malaysia's political spectrum joined forces on March 4 to call for the removal of the scandal-hit premier. — AFP

CHINA TO SET UP INTERNATIONAL MARITIME JUDICIAL CENTRE

BEIJING: China will establish an international maritime judicial centre, a report from the country's top court said yesterday, as it seeks to shore up territorial claims to the South and East China Sea at the centre of a growing regional dispute.

The decision comes as an international tribunal prepares to decide a case related to the country's claims in the South China Sea, where it has built a series of artificial islands capable of hosting military facilities. Beijing has refused to participate in the arbitration brought by the Philippines in hopes of settling competing territorial claims in the region, where China has made sweeping assertions of sovereignty.

The new maritime judicial centre will help China "implement its strategy of becoming a powerful maritime country", Zhou Qiang, head of the Supreme People's Court, said in a report to the annual session of the Communist-controlled National People's Congress (NPC) legislature. The centre, Zhou said, will "resolutely defend" China's "national sovereignty, maritime rights and interests, and other core interests".

The country already has a system of maritime courts, which have adjudicated more than 225,000 cases since 1984, the Supreme Court's spokesperson said last year. Zhou's comments provided no details about how the new centre would differ from the existing institutions. China has long-standing disputes over maritime territory in the East and South China Sea, where it has aggressively pursued its claims through an increasingly muscular military posture. In recent years, the waters of the South China Sea have become the stage for a tussle for dominance between Beijing and Washington, the world's two largest economic and military powers. China has never clearly defined its claims to the strategic region through which about a third of the world's traded oil passes.

The Philippines and several other littoral states have competing claims in the region, as does Taiwan. Manila's decision to take its dispute with China to an international tribunal based in the Hague has infuriated Beijing, which insists the matter is outside the court's remit. A ruling on the matter is expected before May. — AFP



BEIJING: Chinese bus ushers leap as they pose for a photograph at Tiananmen Square during a plenary session of the National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People. — AP

PYONGYANG SLAMS SEOUL'S CYBER ATTACK ACCUSATIONS

SEOUL: North Korea yesterday blasted Seoul's accusation that Pyongyang had launched a series of cyber attacks targeting South Korean government officials, calling the allegation a "bullsh***" fabrication. Seoul's National Intelligence Service (NIS) last week accused North Korean agents of hacking into the smartphones of dozens of key South Korean officials, stealing phone numbers and texts.

The accusation follows claims earlier this year from the NIS that North Korean hackers sent phishing emails to the South's state railway authorities in preparation for cyber terror attacks on traffic control systems. The North's state-run Rodong Sinmun newspaper lashed out at the hacking accusations, saying they were cooked up by Seoul to shore up support for controversial surveillance legislation.

"This is such shameless bullshit from the enemy forces who are obsessed with confrontation and political slander," read an editorial published yesterday. It added that Seoul was trying to use the "fabricated" threats to rally support for an anti-cyber terror bill that would grant the NIS greater surveillance powers on the Internet. The controversial bill, which critics say could be used against political opponents, is pending in the National Assembly.

Seoul has blamed North Korean hackers in the

past for a series of cyber-attacks on military institutions, banks, government bodies, TV broadcasters and media websites as well as a nuclear power plant. The US also said the North was behind a crippling cyber-attack on Sony's Hollywood film unit over its controversial North Korea-themed satirical film "The Interview" in 2014. Pyongyang has denied involvement in the attacks and accused South Korean of

spreading fabrications aimed at slandering its leader. Military tensions on the divided Korean peninsula have been on the rise since the North carried out its fourth nuclear test in January, followed by a long-range rocket launch last month. On Saturday, the North pledged to launch a "blitzkrieg" in the Korean peninsula, as the United States and South Korea launched their largest-ever joint landing drill. — AFP



BUSAN: Nuclear-powered aircraft super-carrier USS John C Stennis heads to join the Key Resolve military exercise between the United States and South Korea at Busan port. — AP

EGYPT JUSTICE MINISTER SACKED AFTER REMARK

CAIRO: Egypt's Prime Minister Sharif Ismail yesterday sacked the justice minister after he said in a television interview that he would arrest even "a prophet", a statement from the premier's office said. Ahmed Al-Zind sparked outrage on social media after his remarks on Friday that he would imprison anyone "even if it's a prophet, God's peace and blessings be upon him," using the Islamic saying of reverence spoken by Muslims only when referring to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Upon realizing what he had said, Zind immediately stopped and said: "I ask for forgiveness from God." He later clarified in a separate interview that his remark was a mere "slip of the tongue". He further said any "wrongdoer, whatever his identity - even judges" would be jailed if found guilty. Yesterday, Ismail's office said Zind had been removed. "Prime Minister Sharif Ismail decided to dismiss justice minister Ahmed Al-Zind from his post," the statement said, but without giving the reason for the decision.

Zind's remarks had triggered outrage on social media networks immediately after the interview, with angry tweets continuing to pour in yesterday. Cairo-based Al-Azhar, a prestigious learning center of Sunni Islam, even issued a warning. Angry Egyptians launched the Twitter hashtag "trial for Zind" as they lashed out at the minister, who only in January had angered human rights groups after he called for the "mass killing" of outlawed Muslim Brotherhood supporters. "At least he should be sacked and then put on trial. This issue is not a joke," said one tweet yesterday. "God will take revenge," said another.

Zind clarified in a separate telephone interview earlier with private network CBC television on Saturday that his remark was a mere "slip of tongue". They were "meant in a hypothetical sense ... but the Muslim Brotherhood supporters seized on them". Al-Azhar warned against insulting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). "All those involved in public discourse and in the media must respect the name of the Prophet," it said in a statement without naming Zind. "He should not be subjected to any insult even if it's unintentional."

In January, Zind said in an interview with the same Sada Al-Balad channel that he "would not be satisfied until 10,000 Brotherhood members were killed for every martyr" from the armed forces and the police. Human Rights Watch said his remarks encouraged the "slaughter" of political opponents. Egyptian authorities have cracked down on the Muslim Brotherhood movement after the army ousted Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013. Hundreds of Brotherhood supporters have been killed and thousands more jailed in the crackdown, while several of its leaders including Morsi have been sentenced to death or lengthy jail terms. — Agencies



DUBAI: (Top) Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, UAE Vice President and Ruler of Dubai (center) makes a victory sign after Palestinian primary school teacher Hanan Al-Hroub (right) won the second annual Global Teacher Prize yesterday. (Above left) Pope Francis, who spoke of the importance of education and teachers in a video message to the audience, introduces the winner. (Above right) Hollywood actor Matthew McConaughey (right) stands next to Bollywood actor Abhishek Bachchan as he speaks during the ceremony. — AP

TRAFFICKED WOMEN TRAPPED IN SYRIA

Continued from Page 1

Accompanied by labor agents, the 28-year-old and several other women left Bangladesh on the promise of working as maids in Jordan. But they too were taken to Syria, where fighting between the regime and rebel forces has left more than 260,000 dead and displaced more than half the population. Begum eventually developed kidney disease, prompting traffickers to contact her ageing mother to demand money for her safe return home.

Lieutenant Colonel Golam Sarwar said his team from Bangladesh's elite Rapid Action Battalion are investigating her case and two others - although families of 43 other women have lodged similar complaints. "Bangladesh is apparently a soft target for the traffickers," Sarwar told AFP. Criminal networks target nationals from Nepal and Bangladesh in part because their governments have little diplomatic influence in the region and no embassy in Syria.

A Nepal government ban on migrant workers travelling to Syria has failed to stop the traffickers, an International Labour Organization (ILO) official said. "Nepal's government thinks a ban is the easiest solution, it basically allows them to wipe their hands of the issue," said Bharati Pokharel, ILO national project coordinator in Kathmandu. "India has much more diplomatic clout than Nepal or Bangladesh and traffickers are aware of this. They know Nepal is weak and that they will face no legal action for their activities," Pokharel told AFP.

Illiterate, trusting and desperate to dig herself out of poverty, Magar didn't hesitate when a labor broker approached her with a promise of a well-paid job in Kuwait. The 23-year-old says she didn't realize she had been duped until the plane landed in Damascus. "I was always exhausted, always hungry, always afraid," Magar said of working 20 hours a day for no pay and sleeping on her employer's penthouse balcony. At night, she listened to Nepali songs to try to drown out occasional sounds of gunfire and bombs and chase away thoughts of suicide.

When a massive earthquake hit Nepal last April, Magar stepped up pleas to her employers, who had confiscated her passport, to return home. They contacted the broker who then demanded payment from Magar's family to ensure her release. Her mother then highlighted the case to local newspapers, kicking off a social media campaign. Expat Nepalis as far afield as Finland and Hong Kong raised \$3,800 to pay off her employers. Magar, who finally arrived in Kathmandu in August, counts herself among the lucky few to have escaped.

Rohit Kumar Neupane's aunt was trafficked to Damascus last spring. She alerted her family via Facebook a few months later, prompting Neupane to repeatedly seek help from government officials without success. A foreign ministry official said Neupane's request had been forwarded to its overworked embassy in Cairo, which covers nine countries including Syria. "Frankly, we are not in a position to manage these cases from Cairo...what we need is precautionary action to prevent them from coming to Syria in the first place," said diplomat Ray.

But an apparent nexus between local labor brokers involved in trafficking and corrupt Nepali officials means they operate freely, according to experts. "Even in the rare instance that a case is filed, it will just drag on with no possibility of resolution or a guilty verdict," said Krishna Gurung, project coordinator at Kathmandu's Pourakhi emergency shelter house for female migrant workers.

In her village of Murali Bhanjyang in central Nepal, Magar has little hope of seeing the traffickers brought to justice. "I still have nightmares about that time...I start crying in my sleep," she said. "Sometimes it feels like none of this is real, like I am back on that balcony in Syria, dreaming of Nepal." — AFP

PALESTINIAN TEACHER WINS \$1M

Continued from Page 1

As Hroub accepted her award, Palestinians in the audience waved their country's flag and some chanted, fists pumping in the air, "With our souls, our blood, we sacrifice for you Palestine." In her acceptance speech, she reiterated her mantra of "No to violence" and stressed the importance of dialogue. "The Palestinian teacher can talk to the world now. Hand in hand we can affect change and provide a safe education to provide peace," she told the AP.

Hroub was among 10 finalists flown to Dubai to attend the ceremony. The nine other finalists hail from Australia, Finland, India, Japan, Kenya, Pakistan, Britain and two from the United States. Hroub had them stand on stage with her to roaring applause after her speech.

The Global Teacher Prize was established two years ago to recognize one exceptional teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession, employs innovative classroom practices and encourages others to join the teaching profession.

Hroub's official biography says she grew up in a Palestinian refugee camp in Bethlehem, where violence was a regular occurrence. Her biography says she went into teaching after her children witnessed a shooting on their way home from school. That experience pushed her to think more about traumatized children and how classrooms can help. She developed a book called "We Play and Learn" focusing on the importance of playing, trust, respect, honesty and literacy. The inaugural prize last year went to Nancie Atwell, an English teacher from rural Maine. — AP

CAR BOMBING KILLS 27 IN ANKARA

Continued from Page 1

Coming so soon after the February bombing, yesterday's attack will raise fresh questions about Turkey's ability to manage the twin security threat posed by IS and Kurdish rebels, as Ankara presses the European Union to speed up its membership process in return for help with the migrant crisis. The Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK), linked to the PKK, said it carried out the February bombing in Ankara as revenge for operations by the Turkish military in the southeast of the country and warned foreign tourists not to visit the country.

A two-year ceasefire between the government and Kurdish rebels collapsed in the middle of last year and since December security forces have been waging a major campaign against the PKK in the southeast of

the country. Strict 24-hour curfews were imposed in a number of Kurdish-dominated towns and cities to allow the military and police to pursue the fight against fighters who had dug trenches and put up barricades.

Yesterday's attack came hours before curfews were due to take effect in two more towns in the southeast as a prelude to fresh military operations. Authorities said restrictions would be slapped on Yuksekova, near the Iranian border, and Nusaybin, on the frontier with Syria, to "restore order and security" following an increase in "terrorist activity". Ankara has vowed to wipe out the PKK, classed as a terrorist organization by Turkey and its Western allies, and has said "clean-up" operations in Yuksekova, Nusaybin and Sirnak, a third Kurdish city, are imminent. — AFP

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Washington Watch

US, COLOMBIAN MILITARIES EYE A POSTWAR FUTURE

By Thomas Watkins

Now that a historic peace accord with leftist FARC guerrillas could be signed within weeks, Colombia's government is eager to ensure ties to the US military endure in a post-conflict future. President Juan Manuel Santos this week rolled out the red carpet for the Pentagon's top officer, General Joe Dunford, honoring him with three ceremonies during a brief visit to Bogota. The question looming over the fanfare is how the relationship between Colombia and its top military partner will evolve after Bogota and the FARC finally strike a deal ending five decades of conflict.

Since 1999, a US program called Plan Colombia has seen about \$10 billion in military aid flow to Colombia's security services, fortifying the state against well-armed and well-funded drug cartels and rebel groups, chief among them the FARC. US military academies have trained Colombian troops, and major arms deals have ensured the Colombian military is a well-equipped, modern fighting force. Speaking to reporters after his trip Thursday, Dunford said Colombia's leaders stressed the importance of military ties.

"Their main message today was, 'Hey look, you can't look past us, it's not over,'" Dunford said on a flight from Colombia to the US military's Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) in Florida. "Please don't think now you can take your eye off of Colombia, the most important part of the campaign is winning the peace, and that starts with the accord, it doesn't end," Dunford recounted his Colombian partners as saying.

'Peace Colombia'

US President Barack Obama last month announced a \$450 million plan to fund Colombia's peace process, highlighting a new focus on post-conflict realities. A March 23 deadline had been set for the peace talks to conclude, designed to bring to an end a five-decade conflict that has killed more than 260,000 people and displaced 6.6 million others. But Santos on Thursday said more time was needed. Hailed in Washington as a bipartisan success story, Plan Colombia was launched by president Bill Clinton and continued by his Republican successor George W. Bush.

Colombia had been so plagued by drug violence and corruption that officials say it was almost a failed state, and they credit Plan Colombia with an instrumental role in its turnaround. "If you look at where Colombia was in the mid-1990s and you look at where they are today... they are a solid democracy in South America, they are a force for stability in the region and they are now also contributing broadly in the international community... so yes, it was worth it," Dunford said.

But the policy has also been fiercely criticized inside Colombia and by rights groups, who say it made interethnic conflict bloodier and left a trail of abuses. Obama wants to recast Plan Colombia as "Peace Colombia". Cash would still be available for the military and counternarcotics, but the focus will shift to demobilizing rebels and reintegrating them into society, as well as clearing mines from vast tracts of remote land and boosting humanitarian assistance.

Colombia plans on increasing from 14 to 196 the number of military platoons - each with about 40 troops - dedicated to removing mines from an area the size of Texas and Oklahoma combined. SOUTHCOM expert William Clark said the mines are hard to find because they are not usually made of metal. "These are improvised mines, these are plastic bottles with chemicals - with a syringe and a pressure plate - so when you step on it, the chemicals mix and explode," Clark said.

The United States is also casting a wary eye over recent increases in cocaine production, and the fate of some 7,000 FARC fighters after peace takes hold. Some will join drug trafficking groups, but Colombia has developed a reintegration program in which FARC fighters - many of whom were kidnapped as children and know only guerrilla life - receive an education and job training. "Quite frankly, they don't know how to operate in a modern society. But they do know how to kill for what they want and they are extremely efficient at it," SOUTHCOM spokesman Master Sergeant Joshua Hobson said. "That's why building partner capacity is so important to us." — AFP

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HOW SYRIAN CONFLICT HAS CHANGED THE WORLD

By Philip Issa

The Syrian conflict has had outsized impact on global politics. Five ways the world has changed:

RISE OF ISLAMIC STATE

It was in the vacuum of the deteriorating Syria conflict that a little-known and horrifically violent branch of Al-Qaeda grew into the foremost terror group on the planet. In 2014, the Islamic State group completed its takeover of the eastern Iraqi city of Raqqa and went on to conquer Iraq's Mosul. It eventually took over an area straddling the countries' border the size of Britain - absorbing weapons, wealth, and personnel along the way. The expansion went largely unchecked by the Syrian government, busy fighting opponents in its more populated regions closer to the Mediterranean coast.

IS has sparked deep anxieties in the region and around the world by slaughtering minorities, institutionalizing sex slavery, vanquishing state armies, and killing opponents in gruesome spectacles of violence. It destroyed heritage sites, such as temples in the ancient city of Palmyra, and fueled the global antiquities trade. The group has waged terror attacks from France to Yemen and has established a beachhead in northern Libya that could outlast its so-called "caliphate" in Syria and Iraq. Perhaps most confounding, thousands of young men and women from Europe - not all of Muslim origin - have flocked to join it.

RESURGENT RUSSIA

"There is one man on this planet who can end the civil war in Syria by making a phone call, and that's Mr Putin," British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said recently. Russian President Vladimir Putin has established a renewed Middle East foothold after watching for years as the United States called shots in the region. Last September, after showering arms, advisers, and economic assistance on President Bashar Assad to insufficient effect, Putin sent his air force to pound the Syrian government's opponents. The

recent ebb in violence is largely because Russia dictated it. Russia's designs for Syria are still veiled, but whoever leads Syria next will largely owe their chair to Putin. Before Syria, there was Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014, precursors to the current intervention, where Putin was unafraid to show the lengths he would go to protect perceived Russian interests. Now, Russia is positioned as a major broker in the region with significant oil and gas wealth. Expect political movements of all stripes to ask how Russia can serve their interests.

EUROPE DESTABILIZED

When Europe fashioned its open border agreements late last century, it did not anticipate over a million migrants - mostly refugees from Syria - in one year alone, as happened in 2015. Thousands have died trying to cross by sea, posing a moral challenge for the continent.

The stream, which continues unabated, has brought on both generosity and xenophobia, ultimately shaking the open-border arrangement to the core. Europeans are now erecting barriers along the migrants' Balkan route from Greece to Germany, after initially allowing entry to hundreds of thousands. Multitudes fester in squalid conditions in southeastern Europe. Many face legal limbo around the continent, waiting for asylum applications to be processed or residing without permits.

The Islamic State attack on Paris in November, though largely perpetrated by French and Belgian nationals, sparked security recriminations across Europe and boosted nationalist politicians. Echoes could be heard as far away as the United States, where Republican frontrunner Donald Trump shocked many by proposing a ban on Muslims entering the country. Europe is now exploring a deal to send all migrants arriv-

ing in Greece back to Turkey, in exchange for admitting pre-selected refugees from Syria. On top of its currency crisis, the mass migration has strained Europe's unity to the limit.

NEIGHBORS SUBVERTED

Europe's migrant crisis is dwarfed by the wave of displacement that has washed into Syria's neighbors. Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan alone host around 4.4 million refugees from Syria; in Lebanon, they make up more than one-fifth of the population. Syrian refugees have brought capital and labor and produced mixed economic outcomes in their host societies, depending on what figures are consulted. The Syria conflict has also ensnared militias and state actors across the region, destabilizing fragile neighbors like Lebanon and reawakening ethnic tensions in Turkey, where the Syria conflict has provoked concerns of a civil war with the Kurds.

IRAN ASCENDANT

The Syria conflict has rebalanced regional axes of power. Predominantly Shiite Iran's sphere of influence now extends from Beirut to Tehran, with dependent governments in Baghdad and Damascus. The commander of the elite Quds Force of the vaunted Revolutionary Guards, Gen. Qassem Soleimani, has visited Russia and is often seen directing deployments in Syria and Iraq. Iran has militias in both countries said to operate outside sovereign command structures. In Lebanon, Iran is powerfully represented by Hezbollah, the party-militia hybrid that expelled Israel from the south of the country in 2000. It has sent thousands of fighters to prop up Assad in Syria. Israel glumly watches its nemesis training with modern artillery alongside Russian and Iranian contingents, and fortifying its position along the Jewish state's northern border. Hezbollah steadily marginalizes Saudi-backed opponents in Lebanon's government. Saudi Arabia, the regional Sunni powerhouse, is struggling to maintain support for the mainly Sunni rebels it backs in Syria while also fighting Iran-supported Shiite rebels in Yemen. — AP



In this file photo taken on Sept 23, 2012, a Free Syrian Army soldier stands on a damaged Syrian military tank in front of a damaged mosque, which was destroyed during fighting with government forces in the Syrian town of Azaz on the outskirts of Aleppo. — AP

FOUR LIVES DERAILED BY SYRIA'S BRUTAL WAR

A promising student, a humble merchant, a skilled craftsman and a young builder - these are just four of the millions of lives thrown into turmoil by Syria's brutal five-year war. The peaceful protest movement that broke out on March 15, 2011 has morphed into a conflict that has changed the trajectory of Syria's people. AFP tells the stories of four lives turned upside-down by war.

The Maths-Loving Student

Covered in grease and engine oil, Othman Al-Najjar, 12, wriggles out from underneath a car in the mechanic shop he works in south of Damascus. Since he fled a flashpoint suburb east of the capital in 2014, he and his older brother Rashed have become the primary breadwinners for their family, earning the equivalent of \$5 a week. But Othman had dreamt of a different future. "I would have liked to be an architect. I used to like maths a lot in school, and I wish I could have finished my studies," he says. "My whole life changed after the war."

The scrawny boy wipes down an engine part before returning it to the car he is working on. According to the UN's children agency, millions of Syrian children are out of school and live in poverty. "Before everything started, I used to study and play. But now, my face is constantly pressed against car engines and covered in oil and grease," he tells AFP.

The Father and Merchant

In the divided northern city of Aleppo, rebel fighter Yasser Nabhan carefully rolls his military fatigues over his prosthetic right leg in the opposition-held Sayf al-Dawla neighborhood. Syria's war has transformed Nabhan from a suc-

cessful textile merchant, to a rebel sniper, to a handicapped administrative assistant. "I used to sell fabric in the souk, one of the oldest in the world," and lived with his wife and four daughters, Nabhan recalls. "Those were some of the most beautiful days of my life," he says.

Nabhan says he took up arms gradually, spending his days at his shop then picking up a sniper rifle in the evenings to shoot pro-regime militiamen. But after a fierce battle southeast of Aleppo city, he experienced what he calls a "paradigm shift". "I was wounded by a roadside mine in clashes with the regime in Khanasser in 2013. My life changed, I lost my leg and was permanently handicapped," he tells AFP.

Nabhan now heads the public relations team of an Aleppan rebel group. His family fled to Turkey four months ago, and Nabhan feels lonely, but free. "I can't describe this feeling. I could never leave my city - the freedom that I feel here is something I could never get anywhere else in the world."

The Builder-Turned-Photographer

In Damascus' Sayyida Zeinab neighbourhood, Muntazar says his life was changed by the war in a way unlike many Syrians. The 25-year-old sits comfortably behind a small desk, where his camera, a set of batteries, and his laptop are carefully laid out. "I used to work in construction in the village of Zahraa in Aleppo, but my work completely stopped when the village was besieged," he tells AFP. To fill his days, Muntazar began taking photos of regime loyalists on the frontlines and was soon hired by pro-government media.

"The crisis has been horrible for many people, but fate improved my situation. I now earn many times what I used to when I was a con-

struction worker," he says. "My hands and clothes were always covered in dirt, but now my hands are satisfied with capturing pictures and memories... How times have changed." — AFP

The Craftsman in Exile

Across the border in Lebanon, Khaled Halabi puts the finishing touches on a handcrafted oud, a pear-shaped stringed instrument made of wood. The handsome 31-year-old hails from a long line of renowned artisans: An oud his grandfather made for legendary Egyptian singer Umm Kulthum sits in a private collection in Cairo. But Halabi's career has turned out drastically different than that of his ancestors. "We used to make between 50 and 75 ouds per

month in our factory near Damascus," Halabi tells AFP. "Our products were very high-quality compared to the rest of the Syrian market. But when the crisis started, we were no longer able to reach the factory," he says.

Halabi moved to Beirut with his wife and daughter in 2014, joining more than one million Syrians seeking relative safety across the border. He and his business partner, Khalil, craft at most 10 ouds per month, which Halabi says is barely enough to cover his basic expenses. "The war has hardened us. We had everything... Here, we can't think long-term," Halabi says. "We would all prefer to go back to our country. If we had just a tiny idea of what Syria's future will be like, we would return immediately." — AFP



Yasser Nabhan plays football with children in Syria's northern city of Aleppo's Saif al-Dawla district on March 11, 2016. — AFP

LARA GUT SEALS WORLD CUP TITLE

LENZERHEIDE: Lara Gut is surely now the overall World Cup champion after placing third in a combined event yesterday, won by her Switzerland teammate Wendy Holdener. Gut skied down a foggy super-G course to earn 60 World Cup points and build a lead of 355 over Viktoria Rebensburg of Germany, who did not race yesterday. There are four races left in finals week at St. Moritz - offering 400 points for four wins - but Rebensburg never raced in World Cup slalom and does not plan to start next weekend. Gut, who was ninth-fastest in the morning slalom run, gave only a low-key celebration in the finish area after taking the provisional race lead. She punched both fists low at her sides without smiling. Switzerland has waited 21 years to have the world's best all-around women's Alpine skier, since Vreni Schneider's third career title in 1995. The 24-year-old Gut became favorite two weeks ago, when American Lindsey Vonn's season was ended by a knee injury. Vonn remains second in the standings ahead of Rebensburg. Home fans in the 4,200 crowd got just what it wanted Sunday with a double celebration. — AP

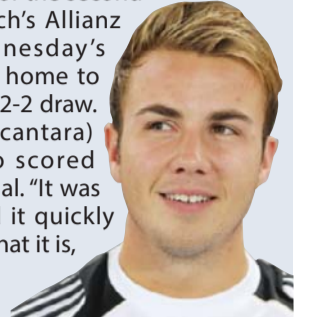


KLITSCHKO-FURY REMATCH SET FOR JUNE

BERLIN: Wladimir Klitschko's management has confirmed there are negotiations to hold his world heavyweight rematch against Britain's Tyson Fury in Austria with a date of June 4 still to be confirmed. Hamburg-based Klitschko lost his WBA, IBF, IBO and WBO belts to Britain's Fury on points in Duesseldorf last November as the Ukrainian suffered his first defeat in more than a decade. Klitschko's management say Klagenfurt's Woerthersee Stadium, a 32,000-capacity venue which hosted European championship football matches in 2008, is the most likely option to stage the bout. "Yes, that's right. We are in negotiations, but for confidential reasons, we can't give out any more information at this stage," Nicola Pattberg of the Klitschko Management Group (KMG) told Austrian paper the Kleine Zeitung. London's Wembley Stadium and Munich's Allianz Arena have already both been ruled out as potential venues, according to reports. Klitschko, who turns 40 on March 25, regularly holds his training camps in the Austrian alps. — AFP

GOETZE SUFFERS ELBOW INJURY ON RETURN

BERLIN: Bayern Munich's World Cup winner Mario Goetze suffered an elbow injury on his return after five months out, but still hopes to face Juventus in Wednesday's key Champions League clash. The 23-year-old started his first match since October in Bayern's 5-0 Bundesliga romp against relegation-threatened Werder Bremen on Saturday, playing the first 54 minutes on his return after being sidelined by a groin strain. But the attacking midfielder suffered a painful elbow injury in the build-up to Bayern's first goal by Thiago Alcantara after only nine minutes. He spent most of the second half icing the joint on Bayern's bench at Munich's Allianz Arena. Goetze now hopes to be fit for Wednesday's Champions League, last 16, second leg clash, at home to Juventus after the first leg in Turin finished with a 2-2 draw. "It happened in the build-up when Thiago (Alcantara) scored the opening goal," said Goetze, who scored Germany's winning goal in the 2014 World Cup final. "It was quite bizarre, I felt something in my elbow and it quickly swelled up." "It was a bit painful, we'll have to see what it is, but I don't think it's anything serious." — AFP



SALWA CUP KICKS OFF ON WEDNESDAY

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Table Tennis Federation 12th Professional Tournament "Salwa Cup", will kick off under the patronage of HH the Amir on Wednesday March 16th with the participation of 34 countries, 100 men and 85 women, at the late Khalid Yousuf Khalid Al-Marzouq hall at Salwa Sports Club in Qurain area.

The Higher Organizing Committee (HOC) was formed under the chairmanship of Sheikh Duaij Fahad Al-Duaij, Sheikha Naeema Al-Ahmad vice chairperson, Nawaf Al-Duwaish, Talal Al-Mihteab, Sanad Al-Ajmi tournament director, Humoud Al-Daihani, Khalifa Jali, Ali Al-Kandari and Abdelwahab Al-Kandari members.

Competitions will start Wednesday and will continue until March 20, as top ranked world players will participate in

the tournament with its prizes totaling \$330,000.

Salwa Cup championship is the first to give prizes to the super serie for professionals in the International Table Tennis Federation.

Salwa Cup Tournament tops the list of international championships, followed by Qatar, Germany and China. The tournament will see the participation of 40 top ranked by the ITTF.

Salwa Cup is divided into six categories: Men and women singles, men and women doubles, and under 21 for women and men.

The tournament will be officiated by 15 Kuwaiti and 25 international referees, and will be according to the knock out system of all categories.

Activities will continue from 10 am until 10 pm.



SUCCESSFUL POWER BOAT RUN IN KUWAIT

SUCCESS OF EVENT IS A STEP FORWARD FOR MORE FUTURE EVENTS

KUWAIT: In an exciting atmosphere, the power boat run 2016 concluded its activities on Saturday evening, the run started from Marina to Kout, with the participation of more than 15 boats including the champions of Kuwait headed by Dr Tarek Al Kazemi the head of the higher organizing committee of power boat run 2016.

The 45 minutes event witnessed great attendance of audience and fans of the sport, there was also a notable security for the event - both air and sea security, the mass media covered the event from all aspects, the event concluded by a festival

ceremony for the participants and the working committees. All thanks and gratitude to the efforts of Dr Tarek Al Kazemi - the head of higher organizing committee and the manager of the event Yasser Moustafa Khan, and the head of the technical committee Yousef Al Roubayan, and those who contributed in a way or another in the success of the event.

From his side, Dr Tarek Al Kazemi said that the organization of this event for the second subsequent year is consider an obvious indicator for the success of Kuwait in hosting and organizing the event, more-

over, the increase in the participating teams is considered another positive indicator for the success of the event, in a direct step to put Kuwait strongly on the map of this sport, which is linked directly to the Kuwaiti heritage.

In the conclusion of his statement, All Kazemi thanked the sponsors for their support, and the ministries of the state including ministry of Interior - he also mentioned the prominent role of General Adel Al Hashash - media manager - in the success of this event for the second subsequent year.



SPIETH BATTLES BACK BUT HAAS GRABS US PGA LEAD

MIAMI: Top-ranked defending champion Jordan Spieth fought into contention but it was fellow American Bill Haas who grabbed the lead after Saturday's third round of the US PGA Valspar Championship.

Reigning Masters and US Open champion Spieth, frustrated after opening with a 76, fired a bogey-free four-under par 67 Saturday to reach two-under 211, six shots off the pace of Haas, who also had a 67 on the Copperhead course at Innisbrook.

"I'm still in this golf tournament," Spieth said. "I will need something like seven-under tomorrow, which is feasible. So to think after the first round that

I go Saturday night and be able to sleep with a chance to win the golf tournament, I'm very pleased with that."

Haas birdied the par-5 first and par-3 fourth then began the back nine with back-to-back birdies. He answered a bogey at the par-3 13th with a chip-in birdie at the par-3 15th to grab his seventh career 54-hole lead, his first since winning last year at Palm Desert, California.

"I made some nice putts early and some loose shots on the back nine I was able to get away with," Haas said. "Overall somewhat solid. Very pleased to shoot four-under."

Canada's Graham DeLaet, seeking

his first US PGA title, was second on 206 after a 68 while Americans Charley Hoffman and Ryan Moore shared third on 208, a US trio of Steve Stricker, Patrick Reed and Charles Howell were on 209 and South African Charl Schwartzel was on 210.

Then came Spieth in a pack of 10 players on 211. The 22-year-old Texan said he wouldn't rule out flirting with the course record of 61 even though the layout has been stingy this week.

"I don't even think we need to do that tomorrow and we're definitely capable of it," Spieth said. Spieth found all but two fairways after reaching only seven in the first two rounds and his

greens in regulation has progressed from six to 10 to 12. "My misses were still on the greens today," Spieth said. "I drove the ball a bit better. To be honest with you, it really felt like it was a 6-, 7-under round."

AGGRESSIVE ON THE GREENS

Spieth opened with a tap-in birdie, added a 31-foot birdie at the 12th and sank a 51-foot eagle putt at the par-5 14th hole.

"I was leaving everything short, which you'll see a lot this week here, but started to be a little more aggressive today on the greens, hitting my longer putts harder and it was stress-

free pars for the majority of the round," Spieth said. "Really nice to have no blemishes."

Spieth, who won the Hyundai Tournament of Champions in January, was happy at his fightback from a poor start.

"Very well could have packed it in and had some more rest this week," Spieth said. "But we did a great job of sticking to it and understanding that if we're patient with our birdies out here and we just limit those bogeys and don't take too many chances we can shoot rounds of 3-, 4-under and maybe you get one at 6 (under) tomorrow and I have a chance to win." — AFP

SHANE VAN BOENING WINS 9 BALL TOURNAMENT

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Under the patronage of Fahad Khalid Al-Ghunaim, and in the presence of a large crowd including heirs of the late Khalid Al-Ghunaim, the 30th late Al-Ghunaim 9 ball tournament was concluded with American Shane Van Boening defeating Poland's Mateusz Sniegocki 13-9 following a strong and exciting match during which the two players gave a very good show.

Fahad, Talal and the rest of Al-Ghunaim family honored world champions ladies and juniors, as well as organizing committees, following the great success of the tournament. Tournament sponsor, Head of the Higher Organizing Committee Fahad Al-Ghunaim said he was happy for the tournament's success and bringing together

world with Gulf champions in Kuwait. He said the championship will grow and more women will participate in the next tournament. Al-Ghunaim thanked all committees, Director of Hot Shot Hall Sabah Al-Jabawi, which is considered the best hall in the Middle East. He also thanked all participating players, then honored the professional players, juniors champ Abdallah Al-Shiha, second place winner Mohammad Al-Muhanna and Abdallah Al-Enezi. Shahad Al-Kahder was the women's champ, followed by Dalal Al-Mathen and Dina Khader. The ladies said they were happy to participate in the 1st women's championship, and thanked Al-Ghunaim for giving them the opportunity, while demanding those responsible for sports in Kuwait to provide them with a premises and pool tables for practice.



LIN DAN EYES GOLD IN RIO AFTER ALL-ENGLAND TITLE

BIRMINGHAM: Lin Dan, already regarded by many as the greatest player of all time, made another entry into the record books with an overwhelming performance to recapture his sixth All-England Open title yesterday.

Lin's 21-9, 21-10 victory over his compatriot Tian Houwei was a thrilling rebuttal to critics who reckoned that, now aged 32 and with a mere handful of titles in the past three years, the Chinese legend is really only a past master.

Instead Lin suggested a record third Olympic men's singles gold medal could well be possible in Rio de Janeiro in five months' time. "I wanted to show everyone that at 33 I will still be able to do it," he said. It was four years since Lin last won the All-England, but his total of men's singles titles here now has only been surpassed by Rudy Hartono, the great Indonesian, who won eight.

That though was more than 40 years ago and in the pre-professional era. If this is Lin's last appearance here at the world's oldest international tournament, it was a suitably excellent way to say good-bye.

Mischievously skilful, tenaciously contentious, and consistently fluent he ensured the outcome was never in doubt. Almost within moments he was 7-1 up and was playing with an intensity of focus greater than anything previously this week.

Tian tried to hustle him a little and got back to 7-11 but it was almost impossible to escape the web created by the patient accuracy of Lin's clears, lifts and net shots.

Lin also made very few mistakes despite often playing to tight margins, before picking his moments superbly to make a quick change of direction or a sudden attacking thrust.

He used the smash or the fast drop only rarely, but it was often enough to make a constant attacking threat and infrequent enough to remain a surprise.

By the second game his confidence in ultimate victory was very evident, and twice he produced moments of arrogant magic in which he managed to make Tian turn and run.

The younger man made his last serious push at 4-13 in the second game, increasing the pace slightly and taking a few more risks in trying to force attacks through.

He reduced the deficit to 10-15, but these were the last points he was able to win. A rare but fantastic piece of retrieving by Lin was followed by a dramatic transforming kill and a piece of theatrics as he turned to the crowd and threw his arms wide open.

He may have enjoyed that moment as much as anything since triumphing at the London Olympics three and a half years ago.—AFP



BIRMINGHAM: China's Lin Dan (L) and China's Tian Houwei poses with their trophies after the All England Open Badminton Championships men's singles final match in Birmingham, central England, yesterday. Lin Dan won 21-9, 21-10. — AFP



DALLAS: Stephen Johns #28 of the Dallas Stars controls the puck against Jori Lehtera #12 of the St. Louis Blues in the second period at American Airlines Center on Saturday in Dallas, Texas. — AFP

BLUES WIN 5-4 IN OT TO PULL INTO TIE WITH STARS ATOP WEST

DALLAS: Alex Pietrangolo scored 2:11 into overtime after Jamie Benn pulled Dallas even late in regulation and St. Louis ended up tied with the Stars atop the Western Conference after the Blues' 5-4 win Saturday night. It was the second straight night that the top spot in the West was on the line in Dallas after the Stars beat Chicago 5-2 with both teams tied atop the conference Friday night. The Stars forced overtime with a 6-on-4 advantage in the final 2 minutes of the third period when Benn redirected Tyler Seguin's shot past Jake Allen. The point for Dallas left both teams with 13 points with 12 games remaining. The Blackhawks have 88 points with 13 games to play. Dallas' Jason Spezza had two goals for a six-game goal streak, the longest of his career.

SHARKS 5, CAPITALS 2

Joe Pavelski scored a tiebreaking power-play goal in the opening minute of the third period and Martin Jones stopped a key penalty shot to help San Jose beat Washington. Joe Thornton, Patrick Marleau and Brenden Dillon also scored to help San Jose move within one point of Anaheim for second place in the Pacific Division. Brent Burns added an empty-netter to seal the win. Jones made 23 saves, including a poke check on the penalty shot against Jay Beagle with 13 seconds remaining in the second period. Because Brent Burns' slash was a penalty shot and not a minor penalty, the Sharks were able to start the third period on the power play. T.J. Oshie and Justin Williams scored for the Capitals, who missed an opportunity to become the first team to clinch a playoff berth. Philipp Grubauer made 23 saves as Washington ended a three-game California swing with three points.

PANTHERS 5, FLYERS 4

Aleksander Barkov scored the winning goal in a shootout to lift Florida over Philadelphia. Reilly Smith scored twice in regulation, and Barkov and Jonathan Huberdeau also scored for the Panthers. Roberto Luongo stopped 22 shots and Jaromir Jagr had two assists as Florida won its second straight after a three-game skid. Nick Bjugstad also scored in the shootout for the Panthers. Luongo stopped both Sam Gagner and Nick Cousins in the tiebreaker. Shayne Gostisbehere, Michael Raffl, Ryan White and Cousins scored in regulation for the Flyers. Gagner had two assists and Steve Mason made 25 saves as the Flyers lost for the first time in four games. Gostisbehere tied the score with 1:55 left in regulation when his shot from the point got through traffic and found the back of the net.

RED WINGS 3, RANGERS 2

Brad Richards tied the game with 31.8 seconds left in the third period, and then Darren Helm scored in overtime to give Detroit a victory over New York. Henrik Lundqvist made 40 saves in his first game since March 3, but Detroit finally broke through against the New York goalie. Helm also scored in the third period for the Red Wings. Derek Stepan and Chris Kreider scored for the Rangers, who also got Rick Nash back after an extended absence. The Red Wings tied it in the final minute of regulation when Richards scored on a power play. Detroit had its goalie pulled at the time, and the Rangers twice came within inches of scoring into the empty net. Ryan McDonagh shot the puck all the way down the ice at the open net, only to have it hit the left post. Moments later, Viktor Stalberg's attempt slipped just past the right post.

DEVILS 2, KINGS 1, OT

John Moore circled the net and scored with 15.2 seconds left in overtime and New Jersey beat Los Angeles for its second straight victory over a Western

Conference power. Tyler Kennedy scored early in the first period for the Devils, who followed up their win at San Jose with a defense-dominated victory over the Pacific Division leaders. New Jersey has lost eight of 12 overall, but has begun its three-game California road trip in style. Keith Kinkaid made 22 saves in his second straight win over the Kings. Jonathan Quick stopped 22 shots for Los Angeles, but couldn't stop Moore from skating out in front and beating him with a short-angled shot for the defenseman's first goal since Jan 2.

SABRES 3, HURRICANES 2, OT

Jack Eichel scored his second goal on a breakaway at 4:59 of overtime, lifting Buffalo to the victory. Evander Kane had two assists and Chad Johnson made 28 saves for the Sabres, who snapped a two-game losing streak. Marcus Foligno also scored. Victor Rask and Phillip Di Giuseppe scored for Carolina, which had won two in a row. Cam Ward made 21 saves. The Hurricanes (31-26-12) are 10th in the Eastern Conference with 74 points. Eichel, the No. 2 pick in last year's NHL Draft, slipped a short backhand between Ward's pads for the winning goal, his 22nd of the season.

BRUINS 3, ISLANDERS 1

David Pastrnak scored two goals and Tuukka Rask made 25 saves, leading Boston to the win. Loui Eriksson added a goal and two assists for the Bruins, who have won their last five games against the Islanders. Pastrnak's point-blank wrist shot beat Thomas Greiss for a 2-1 lead with 8.9 seconds left in the second period. He slid his 12th goal of the season under Greiss with 2:34 remaining in the third. New York captain John Tavares scored his 200th career goal, becoming the 11th player in franchise history to reach the mark.

WILD 4, CANADIENS 1

Mikael Granlund scored twice, Devan Dubnyk made 30 saves and Minnesota beat Montreal. Nino Niederreiter opened the scoring for Minnesota and Erik Haula added an empty-netter. Mark Barberio scored for Montreal in the first period. Mika Condon stopped 18 of 21 shots. The Wild entered in ninth place in the Western Conference and improved their chances of clawing into the postseason.

JETS 3, AVALANCHE 2

Mark Scheifele had a goal and an assist to extend his point streak to seven games and Winnipeg erased a two-goal deficit to beat Colorado. Adam Lowry

scored the winner 9:01 into the third period after Drew Stafford tied it less than 2 minutes earlier. Ondrej Pavelec stopped 35 shots. Matt Duchene scored his 29th of the season for the Avalanche and added an assist on Erik Johnson's second-period goal. Semyon Varlamov made 27 saves.

COYOTES 4, OILERS 0

Mike Smith made 44 saves in his return from a 40-game injury absence and Antoine Vermette had two goals and an assist to help Arizona beat Edmonton. It was the 29th shutout of Smith's career and his second this season. He returned after having surgery to repair a core muscle injury. Viktor Tikhonov and Alex Tanguay also scored for the Coyotes, who have won two straight on the road on the heels of a franchise-record 10-game losing streak as the away team. Cam Talbot stopped 25 shots for the Oilers, who have lost two of their last three.

CANUCKS 4, PREDATORS 2

Bo Horvat had a goal and an assist and Vancouver won 4-2 Saturday night to snap Nashville's franchise-record 14-game point streak. Sven Baertschi, Derek Dorsett and Daniel Sedin also scored for Vancouver, and Ryan Miller made 35 saves. Alexandre Burrows and Radim Vrbata chipped in with two assists each. Mike Fisher and Colton Sissons scored for Nashville, which got 24 stops from Pekka Rinne. Roman Josi added two assists for the Predators, who entered on a 9-0-5 run and had not lost in regulation since Feb. 9, the longest active run in the NHL. Despite the loss, Nashville still occupies the first wild-card spot in the Western Conference, seven points up on Minnesota and Colorado. Vancouver, meanwhile, is eight points back of the Wild and Avalanche.

SENATORS 4, MAPLE LEAFS 0

Craig Anderson made 29 saves for his fourth shutout of the season and Ottawa beat Toronto to sweep the season series. It's just the second time Ottawa has swept the Battle of Ontario when the teams have played at least three times, Elias told the NHL. The other came in 2000-01, when the Senators went 5-0-0 against Toronto. Mika Zibanejad, Cody Ceci, Zack Smith and Mark Stone scored for the Senators. Jean-Gabriel Pageau added three assists. Garrett Sparks, making his third straight start for the Leafs, stopped 13 shots. Sparks used to work for Anderson at his goaltending school in Chicago. Ottawa snapped a three-game losing streak and saved face after an ugly 6-2 loss to the Florida Panthers on Thursday night. — AP

NHL Results/Standings

Boston 3, NY Islanders 1; Buffalo 3, Carolina 2 (OT); Detroit 3, NY Rangers 2 (OT); Minnesota 4, Montreal 1; Ottawa 4, Toronto 0; Florida 5, Philadelphia 4 (SO); Winnipeg 3, Colorado 2; St. Louis 5, Dallas 4 (OT); Arizona 4, Edmonton 0; Vancouver 4, Nashville 2; New Jersey 2, Los Angeles 1 (OT); San Jose 5, Washington 2.													
Western Conference					Florida								
Central Division					Tampa Bay								
Dallas	41	20	9	227	203	91	Detroit	34	23	11	173	181	79
St. Louis	41	20	9	183	172	91	Ottawa	32	30	8	202	218	72
Chicago	41	22	6	195	168	88	Montreal	32	31	6	187	194	70
Nashville	34	22	13	189	177	81	Buffalo	28	33	9	167	190	65
Minnesota	32	27	10	182	172	74	Toronto	22	34	11	159	201	55
Colorado	35	31	4	188	198	74	Metropolitan Division						
Winnipeg	28	35	5	176	203	61	Washington	49	14	5	219	160	103
Pacific Division							NY Rangers	39	22	7	194	176	85
Los Angeles	40	22	5	180	154	85	NY Islanders	37	21	8	190	166	82
Anaheim	37	21	9	167	159	83	Pittsburgh	35	24	8	183	170	78
San Jose	38	24	6	203	179	82	Philadelphia	32	23	12	174	180	76
Arizona	30	32	7	185	211	67	Carolina	31	26	12	170	186	74
Vancouver	27	28	12	164	192	66	New Jersey	33	29	7	153	171	73
Calgary	28	35	5	182	213	61	Columbus	28	32	8	180	211	64
Edmonton	27	37	7	169	209	61	Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).						
Eastern Conference							Atlantic Division						
Boston	39	23	8	213	188	86							

COSTA DIDN'T BITE ME, SAYS EVERTON'S BARRY

LONDON: Everton midfielder Gareth Barry stated yesterday that Chelsea striker Diego Costa did not bite him during the Merseyside club's 2-0 FA Cup quarter-final victory on Saturday.

"Seen a lot of talk about the incident involving me and Diego Costa in the game last night," Barry wrote on the

Fanzai app. "For the record Diego did not bite me." Costa was shown a second yellow card in the 84th minute of the game at Goodison Park after reacting to a foul from Barry by leaning his head into the Everton midfielder's face.

He then lowered his mouth to Barry's neck and made as if to bite him, only to

apparently change his mind. The pair ended up embracing.

In a statement released late on Saturday, Chelsea said that Costa had "expressed regret" over the incident, but was adamant that he had not bitten Barry. "Diego spoke to club officials after the game and expressed regret over his

reaction to the challenge from Gareth Barry that led to his red card," said a Chelsea statement on Twitter.

"But Diego was also very clear that he did not bite him at any point during that altercation," Barry was himself sent off moments later after being shown a second yellow card for a kick on Cesc

Fabregas. England's Football Association is awaiting referee Michael Oliver's assessment of the incident involving Costa and Barry in his report on the game. Everton prevailed courtesy of a brilliant late brace from former Chelsea striker Romelu Lukaku, taking them into the semi-finals. — AFP

NEVILLE'S VALENCIA SUFFER DEFEAT, SEVILLA UP TO FIFTH

MADRID: Valencia boss Gary Neville's troubles continued as he branded his side's performance "unacceptable" in losing their local derby 1-0 to Levante yesterday.

Meanwhile, Sevilla maintained their hopes of Champions League football next season with a thrilling 4-2 win over Villarreal.

Neville has now won just three of 15 La Liga games in charge with Valencia rooted in mid-table mediocrity in 12th, just eight points above the relegation zone.

Former Manchester United striker Giuseppe Rossi's solitary goal revitalised Levante's chances of beating relegation as they moved to within three points of safety despite remaining bottom of the table.

"I take responsibility for the defeat, but that was an indefensible performance, unacceptable and not good enough," said Neville. "I apologise to the fans of Valencia because the very basic premise of a football match is that you run, fight and tackle as hard as the opposition." Valencia's season now hinges upon overturning a 1-0 first-leg deficit at home to Athletic Bilbao in the Europa League on Thursday. Rossi hit the post, whilst Diego Alves made fine saves from Deyverson and Zouhair Feddal as Levante dominated the first-half. The second-half was shorter on goalmouth action, but despite Neville's pre-match warning

that they had to improve, Valencia were made to pay once more for poor defending at set-pieces as Rossi swivelled to volley a long-throw into the far corner 25 minutes from time.

Neville also insisted before the game that he will fulfil his duties as an England coach during a 10-day international break later this month. That decision is likely to come under further scrutiny in the coming week with his future at the Mestalla far from secure.

At the other end of the table, Sevilla moved to within five points of Villarreal in fourth as they came from behind to register a 16th straight win at home.

Vicente Iborra finished off a brilliant counter-attack to give Sevilla the lead.

However, Cedric Bakambu continued his fine form with a double to give Villarreal a 2-1 half-time lead.

Victor Ruiz's own goal restored parity for the hosts before Yehven Konoplyanka's stunning long-range strike regained the lead. Sevilla had to see out the final 10 minutes with 10 men as Ever Banega was shown a second yellow card.

But Unai Emery's men struck again on the break in stoppage time as Jose Antonio Reyes rolled into an empty net after Alphonse Areola saved Kevin Gameiro's initial effort. — AFP



UDINE: Udinese's Portuguese midfielder Bruno Miguel Borges Fernandes (C) scores a goal during the Italian Serie A football match between Udinese Calcio and AS Roma yesterday, at Dacia Arena in Udine. — AFP

ROMA BEAT UDINESE 2-1, FIORENTINA HELD BY VERONA

MILAN: Roma maintained its bid for a Champions League spot with a 2-1 win at Udinese in Serie A yesterday but Fiorentina's hopes were dealt a blow as it was held to a 1-1 draw by bottom club Hellas Verona.

Roma remained third, two points behind Napoli which will be looking to close the gap to leader Juventus to three points when it visits Palermo later.

Fiorentina is five points further back in fourth place, and just above Inter Milan thanks to having won both matches between the two teams. AC Milan remains sixth after it drew 0-0 at Chievo Verona.

At the other end of the table, Carpi beat Frosinone 2-1 in a relegation six-pointer. Carpi moved a point behind Frosinone and provisionally two behind Palermo, which occupies the last safe spot. Verona is eight points from safety.

Also, Genoa fought back from two goals

down to beat Torino 3-2. Former Torino striker Alessio Cerci converted two penalties but did not celebrate against his old side.

Lazio hosts Atalanta. Roma was looking to bounce back from the disappointment of its Champions League exit in midweek and record an eighth successive league victory to boost its bid to qualify for next year's competition.

Edin Dzeko has come in for a lot of criticism of late but he fired his side in front in the 15th minute after a deft through ball from Mohamed Salah. Udinese came out fighting after the break and halftime substitute Duvan Zapata headed off the left post moments after the restart.

Roma thought it had sealed the result in the 74th when Alessandro Florenzi showed great control to flick a chipped Miralem Pjanic pass round a Udinese defender and fire into the far bottom corner.

However, Bruno Fernandes scored to set up a

nervy final five minutes for Roma. There were ugly scenes at the final whistle as Udinese fans tried to invade the pitch in protest at the team's poor run. The players tried to calm them down and threw their shirts into the crowd, but they were thrown back at them.

Fiorentina was expected to move two points above Inter, which beat Bologna 2-1 on Saturday. Mauro Zarate returned from a three-match ban to give Fiorentina the lead shortly before halftime as his effort from a Cristian Tello cross was deflected in, completely wrongfooting Verona goalkeeper Pierluigi Gollini.

Verona leveled four minutes from time, when Eros Pisano was left unmarked at the back post to head in a corner. Both sides could have won it at the death as Luca Siligardi curled millimeters past the post for Verona, while Gollini pulled off a fantastic save to deny Nikola Kalinic from point-blank range. — AP



LEVERKUSEN: Hamburg's Cleber Reis, right, and Leverkusen's Chicharito challenge for the ball during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Bayer Leverkusen and Hamburger SV in Leverkusen, western Germany, yesterday. — AP

TEN-MAN LEVERKUSEN END WINLESS STREAK

BERLIN: Ten-man Bayer Leverkusen had an own-goal to thank for ending their four-match winless streak in the Bundesliga in yesterday's 1-0 victory over Hamburg.

Hamburg's Sweden midfielder Albin Ekdal slid the ball into his own net after 18 minutes at the BayArena to hand Leverkusen victory.

Despite the three points, it was a frustrating afternoon for Roger Schmidt's Leverkusen, who failed to finish a stream of chances and ended with ten men.

Their Mexico striker Javier Hernandez failed to add to his 14 league goals this season as 'Chicharito' headed wide of the post with just 45 seconds gone.

Leverkusen had Croatia right-back Tin Jedvaj sent off in the dying stages after being shown two yellow cards in quick succession.

The first was for time wasting and the second was for mocking referee Christian Dingert.

On Saturday, Thomas Mueller and Thiago Alcantara netted twice as leaders Bayern Munich warmed up for Wednesday's Champions League last 16 clash at home to Juventus with a 5-0 win over Werder Bremen.

With second-placed Borussia Dortmund playing Mainz on Sunday, Pep Guardiola's team took the chance to reopen an eight-point gap at the top.

It took Bayern just nine minutes to take the lead at Munich's Allianz Arena as Thiago scored his first league goal since February 2014.

Robert Lewandowski, the league's top scorer with 24 goals, came off the bench to claim Bayern's fourth as Bremen were routed. Wolfsburg suffered a Champions League hangover with a 1-0 defeat at rele-

gation-threatened Hoffenheim.

Wolfsburg reached the last eight in Europe for the first time in the club's history as Tuesday's 1-0 win at home to Gent sealed a 4-2 win on aggregate in the last 16.

But Dieter Hecking's side were stunned by second-from-bottom Hoffenheim as Andrej Kramaric, on loan from Leicester City, scored after just three minutes.

It could have been more as Kevin Volland had a second-half penalty saved. The defeat leaves Wolfsburg four points outside the top six while Hoffenheim remain three points from safety.

Hoffenheim's win pushed bottom side Hanover 96 closer to relegation as they suffered a 2-0 defeat at home to Cologne with Leonardo Bittencourt scoring both goals.

Eintracht Frankfurt's new coach Niko Kovac suffered a 3-0 defeat on his Bundesliga debut at Borussia Moenchengladbach to stay in the relegation places.

Gladbach's Lars Stindl, Raffael and Mahmoud Dahoud scored the goals as Gladbach climbed to fourth.

A foul on South Korea midfielder Koo Ja-cheol in the dying stages of Augsburg's 2-2 draw at Darmstadt led to his side converting a penalty to take a crucial point.

Augsburg are deep in the relegation battle as one of three teams on 27 points and just above the relegation places. Australia striker Mathew Leckie scored only his second goal of the season as he headed home from close range in mid-table Ingolstadt's 3-3 draw at home to Stuttgart. On Friday, Hertha Berlin cemented third place in the table with a 2-0 win over nearest rivals Schalke thanks to goals from Niklas Stark and Vedad Ibisevic. — AFP

KANE SCORES TWICE TO BOOST SPURS' HOPES

BIRMINGHAM: Harry Kane scored his 21st and 22nd goals of the season to inspire Tottenham Hotspur to a routine win at hapless Aston Villa that boosted their Premier League title ambitions. The England striker ended Villa's resistance just before halftime with his 17th goal in his last 20 league appearances and then struck again just after the break, assisted on each occasion by a superb delivery from Dele Alli. The victory for Spurs consigned bottom-placed Villa to a 20th league defeat

of the season while Mauricio Pochettino's side moved two points adrift of leaders Leicester City at the top of the table. Second-placed Spurs also extended their lead over their north London rivals Arsenal, in third place, to six points. Leicester have the chance to restore their five-point lead when they host struggling Newcastle United on Monday. For Villa, though, relegation looks a certainty as they lie eight points adrift of 19th-placed Newcastle at the foot of the table. — Reuters



BIRMINGHAM: Aston Villa's French-born Beninese striker Rudy Gesteira (R) attempts a shot on goal during the English Premier League football match between Aston Villa and Tottenham Hotspur at Villa Park in Birmingham, central England yesterday. Tottenham won the match 2-0. — AFP

Sports

Successful
power
boat run
in Kuwait

15

Roma beat
Udinese 2-1,
Fiorentina held
by Verona



MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016

MURRAY ADVANCES, KERBER SENT PACKING AT INDIAN WELLS

Page 18



TROYES: Paris Saint-Germain's Swedish forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic (C) vies with Troyes' French defender Matthieu Saunier (L) and French goalkeeper Matthieu Dreyer (R) during the French Ligue 1 football match between Troyes and Paris Saint-Germain yesterday at the Aube Stadium in Troyes. — AFP

PSG DEMOLISH TROYES TO CLINCH FRENCH TITLE

PARIS: Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored four second-half goals as Paris Saint-Germain clinched its fourth straight French league title in style, pulverizing last-place Troyes 9-0 yesterday to become champion with a record eight games to spare.

Forward Edinson Cavani scored twice, while midfielders Javier Pastore and Adrien Rabiot also scored and the other was an own goal.

PSG has lost just once this season - away to Lyon last month - and leads second-place Monaco by 25 points. Cash-rich PSG, bankrolled by funds from Qatari investor QSI, has dominated so much that it has lost only once in any domestic competition over the past calendar year.

PSG is on course to defend its domestic treble and the club's astonishing goal difference of plus 62 - 77 goals scored, 15 conceded - is more than four times better than the next-best Lyon's.

Ibrahimovic leads the scoring charts with 27 league goals and is on track to beat his career best tally of 30 - set three seasons ago with PSG. He is PSG's all-time leading scorer

with 141 goals, including 102 in the league in just 115 games.

Monaco drew 2-2 at home to Reims on Friday night to hand the initiative to PSG, and it did not take long to put matters beyond doubt with three goals inside the first 20 minutes. The first goal came in the 14th from an error by Troyes defender Matthieu Saunier, whose back pass landed at the feet of Cavani and he beat goalkeeper Matthieu Dreyer at the second attempt.

Four minutes later, Ibrahimovic brilliantly back-heeled the ball through the midfield to Pastore, who then dribbled past two defenders before expertly dinking the ball over Dreyer. Rabiot stroked home into an empty net a minute later after Cavani's shot was saved. Ibrahimovic had been occasionally frustrated in the first half, but set matters straight with a hat trick inside 11 minutes in the second half. One minute after the restart, he controlled a pass on the edge of the area, held off a defender and slammed the ball low past Dreyer. He was celebrating again on 52 minutes, volleying in a cross from winger Angel di Maria from an awkward angle for 5-0.

His next was even better as he met left back Layvin Kurzawa's cross from the left with a first-time swerving shot into the right corner from the edge of the penalty area.

Ibrahimovic would have tapped in a fourth goal with 30 minutes left, but Saunier beat him to it as he turned Kurzawa's cross into his own net, earning a sympathetic pat on the head from the imposing Ibrahimovic.

After Troyes defender Lossemy Karaboue was sent off for hauling down Cavani, the Uruguay striker scored at the second attempt after his penalty was saved.

Ibrahimovic ran onto a pass and finished confidently in the 88th and Brazilian winger Lucas missed a chance for 10-0.

PSG has won six French titles altogether, but this was by far the easiest. The club has only been tested in Europe, where it lost 1-0 away to Real Madrid in the group stages for its only other defeat this season.

PSG now needs to turn its domestic dominance into European success as it prepares for the Champions League quarterfinals. Coach Laurent Blanc's side at least has plenty of time to prepare for the first leg next month. — AP



LONDON: Arsenal's Mesut Ozil, center, goes down under a challenge from Watford's Sebastian Prodl, right, during the English FA Cup quarterfinal soccer match yesterday. — AP

ARSENAL DUMPED OUT OF FA CUP BY CLINICAL WATFORD

LONDON: Holders Arsenal were knocked out of the FA Cup with a 2-1 home defeat by Watford in the quarterfinals yesterday ending their quest to win the trophy for the third straight season and increasing the pressure on manager Arsene Wenger. Goals from Odion Ighalo and Adlene Guedioura after the break put Watford in control while a late strike from Danny Welbeck was all the hosts could muster despite several chances, leaving them set to end the season without any silverware.

Arsenal were aiming to become the first side since Blackburn Rovers in the 1880s to win the Cup for three years in a row but instead they slumped to a third consecutive home defeat in all competitions for the first time since November 2002.

Having to overhaul a 2-0 deficit at European champions Barcelona in their Champions League last 16 return leg next week and standing eight points behind Premier League leaders Leicester City with only nine games left, the FA Cup was Arsenal's most realistic chance of a trophy this season.

Watford went ahead when a throw-in was flicked on by Troy Deeney to Ighalo, who held off defender Gabriel, swivelled and drilled a low shot past David Ospina from close range.

A glorious goal from Guedioura extended the lead. The tireless Deeney held off Gabriel and laid it back to Guedioura, who fired an unstoppable first-time shot into the top corner.

Welbeck's 88th minute goal sparked a wave of Arsenal pressure, and a minute later the England forward missed a golden chance to equalise and force a replay,

firing just over the bar when a little composure would surely have resulted in a goal. Wenger must now lift his team, who could be 11 points adrift in the title race if Leicester beat Newcastle United on Monday. But he denied confidence was low, despite a run that has yielded one win in their last seven games in all competitions.

ALWAYS DIFFICULT

"It's always difficult, but it's our job to prepare for the next game," Frenchman Wenger told reporters.

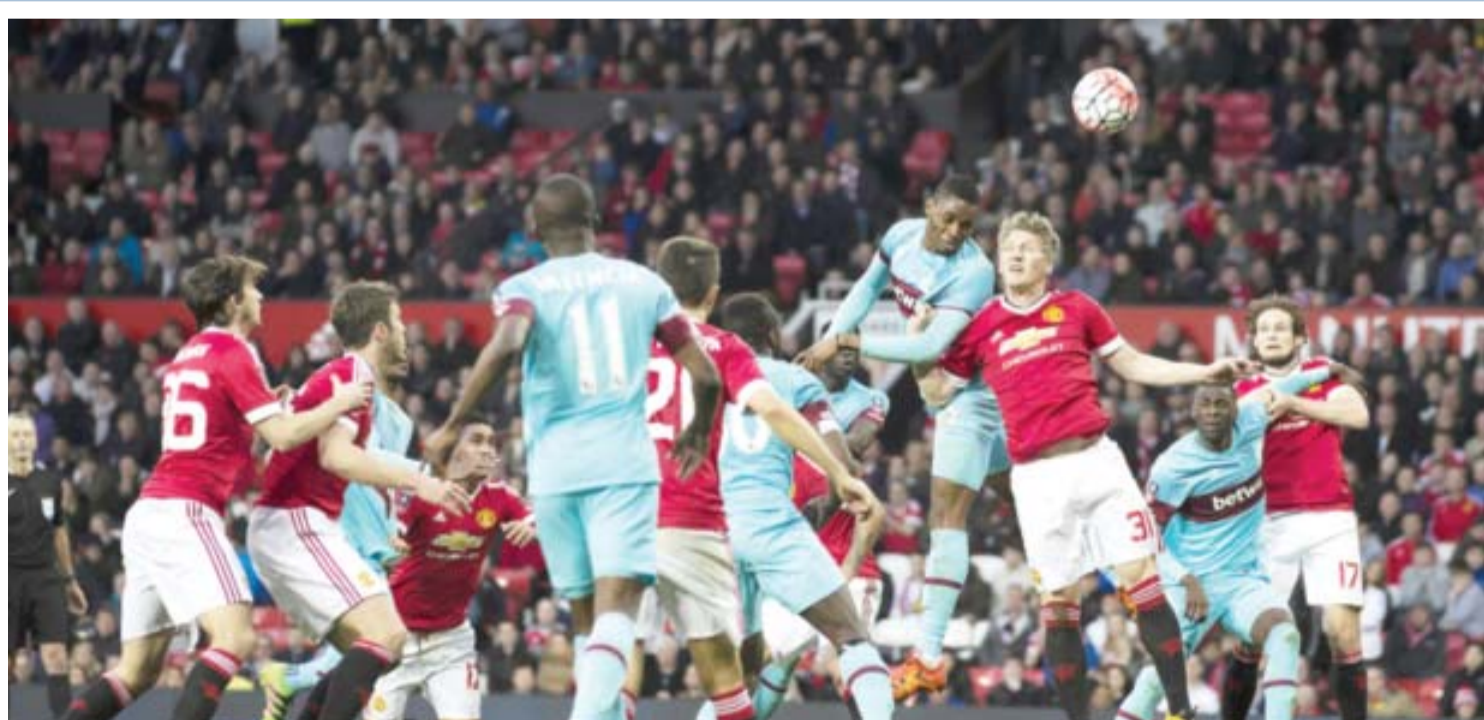
"It's nothing to do with confidence. Recent results haven't shown that, but we've played against good teams. We have shown that we can respond, always, and this team has a great spirit and a very strong attitude.

"We have a very good opportunity on Wednesday night (at Barcelona) to show that we are up for it. We want to make the impossible possible."

If Arsenal's season is imploding, Watford's is going beyond even their most optimistic fans' wildest expectations.

They are 14th in the table with 37 points, having virtually guaranteed Premier League football next season, and are now two games away from winning the FA Cup for the first time.

"This is an amazing season for Watford," manager Quique Flores told reporters. "I think this is the most important (win) of my career," he said, adding that his players celebrated in the dressing room by blasting out music. I don't know (what the music was), but it's not so good. Not for my age," the 51-year-old Spaniard said. — Reuters



OLD TRAFFORD: Manchester United's Bastian Schweinsteiger, third right, fights for the ball against West Ham United's Diafra Sakho during the English FA Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Manchester United and West Ham United at Old Trafford Stadium, Manchester, England, yesterday. — AP

MARTIAL KEEPS UNITED'S HOPES ALIVE AFTER PAYET MASTERPIECE

OLD TRAFFORD: Manchester United striker Anthony Martial kept their FA Cup hopes alive when he struck eight minutes from time to salvage a 1-1 draw with West Ham United in yesterday's quarter-final tie at Old Trafford.

West Ham playmaker Dimitri Payet looked to be sending the 11-times Cup winners tumbling out of the competition with a wondrous, curling free kick in the 68th

minute. But with time running out, United's young French starlet Martial hooked Ander Herrera's cross back into the net from the narrowest of angles.

Just like holders Arsenal's exit earlier yesterday in a 2-1 home defeat by Watford that heaped more pressure on manager Arsene Wenger, a United exit would have raised more questions about the future of boss Louis van Gaal.

With United 2-0 down from the first leg of their Europa League lat 16 tie against Liverpool and 13 points adrift of Leicester City in the Premier League title race, Martial's strike has offered blessed relief for Van Gaal. United will now have a replay at what will be the last Cup tie to be staged at West Ham's Boleyn Ground in the Londoners' final season there before they move to the Olympic Stadium. — Reuters

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016

ECB cuts the rate,
rocks the boat again

Page 25

The budget underpins
India's positive outlook

Page 26



African giants battle for
economic supremacy

REPERCUSSIONS AND AVAILABLE OPTIONS AS OIL PRICES PLUNGE

Page 22

Pages 23



GENEVA: Visitors gather at the Seat booth, during the last day of the Geneva International Motor Show in Geneva yesterday. — AP

IMF BACKS UNCONVENTIONAL MONETARY POLICIES

EMERGING MARKETS SEE SHIFT IN GLOBAL ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

NEW DELHI: Unconventional monetary policies of central banks in Europe and Japan received an endorsement from the International Monetary Fund yesterday, even as policymakers from emerging markets warned that such policies were increasing risks for the global economy. The debate over the merits of unconventional policies comes days before major central banks such as the US Federal Reserve, the Bank of England and the Bank of Japan unveil their interest rate decisions.

At the conclusion of a three-day IMF event in New Delhi, the fund's chief, Christine Lagarde, said countries should continue with unconventional monetary policies if they were accompanied by structural reforms and low inflation.

"Monetary policy is needed but (it) cannot be the only game in town," Lagarde said. Speaking at the same event on Saturday, India's central bank chief Raghuram Rajan, a vocal critic of such policies, had said that the costs of them were increasing even as the benefits seemed to be diminishing. He

called on global central banks to adopt a system for assessing the wider impact of their actions, including unconventional monetary policies now in use. The European Central Bank recently eased monetary policy further by cutting all its main interest rates, expanding asset purchases and launching a loan program which could see it pay banks to lend to firms and households.

The Bank of Japan has also taken interest rates into negative territory for the first time while the US Federal Reserve is expected to tighten monetary policy only gradually after years of near-zero rates and quantitative easing. Rajan proposed that a group of academics should measure and analyse the "spillover" effects of monetary policies and indicate which should be used and which avoided. He suggested a traffic light system, grading policies green, orange or red. The monitoring system could be implemented through an international agreement along the lines of the Bretton Woods currency accord or via the IMF, he added.

Although Lagarde avoided commenting on the merits of the proposal, the Indian central banker's idea struck a chord with policymakers from other emerging markets. Sukudhew Singh, deputy governor at Bank Negara Malaysia, said the proposal was worth looking at. "We need to first assess how these policies are affecting, what kind of distortions are being created," he told Reuters. "Only then, we can look for remedial measures." While negative interest rates in Europe and Japan are bringing yield-chasing investors into emerging markets, their policymakers fear further interest rate increases in the United States could ignite massive outflows.

NO GUARANTEES

When Rajan took over as Reserve Bank of India governor in September 2013, India and other emerging economies such as Indonesia and Brazil were battling a currency crisis sparked by fears the US Fed would begin tightening policy, exposing their crippling current-account shortfalls.



NEW DELHI: Lagarde delivers her speech during the closing remarks of the conference "Advancing Asia - Investing for the future" in New Delhi yesterday. —AFP

That experience has made them strong critics of the kind of stimulus measures adopted by developed economies in recent years. Chatib Basri, who was Indonesia's finance minister then, said the 2013 currency crisis could be repeated in 2017 unless imbalances created by ultra-easy monetary policies were addressed.

Since mid-2013, several emerging economies including India have taken steps to shore up their forex reserves, improve public finances and narrow big current account deficits in a bid to shield themselves from any external shock. But big sell-offs recently in their financial markets have called into question the conventional wisdom that "getting your house in order" guarantees safety.

"Frustration that Raghu (Rajan) and emerging markets policymakers feel really comes down to the shift in global economic circumstances," said Eswar Prasad, a Cornell University professor. "These classical answers don't work anymore." — Reuters

UK'S OSBORNE TO CUT SPENDING FURTHER TO PROTECT BUDGET PLAN

LONDON: British finance minister George Osborne said yesterday he would announce further cuts to public spending this week to protect his austerity plan from a weakening of the economy, but said they would not be drastic. Osborne said the world was facing its most uncertain time since the 2008-2009 financial crisis due to China's slowdown, the oil price fall, interest rate changes in some countries and political instability in the Middle East.

"In short, the hopes of a stronger global recovery have evaporated," he wrote in the Sun on Sunday newspaper before an annual budget announcement on Wednesday.

Osborne said a decision by Britain to leave the European Union in a referendum in June would also add to uncertainty. "An exit from the EU would create an economic shock, it would cost jobs, damage living standards and it would represent a big leap in the dark," he said in an interview on BBC television.

A candidate to replace Prime Minister David Cameron as head of the Conservative Party, Osborne has sought to establish a reputation for fiscal discipline by aiming to turn Britain's budget deficit into a surplus by the end of the decade.

But that plan may be knocked off course by a slowdown in Britain's economy which grew by 2.2 percent in 2015, weaker than growth of 2.4 percent pencilled into the gov-

ernment's latest budget projections. With opinion polls showing voters divided almost 50-50 over whether to stay in the EU, Osborne appears to have shied away from taking radical measures in his budget. Plans to overhaul the pension system, which could have raised billions of pounds to help fix the budget deficit, have been put on hold.

Osborne said yesterday his budget statement would include action to ensure Britain stuck to his plan to fix its still weak public finances.

He said the extra spending cuts were equivalent to 50 pence in every 100 pounds that the government spends by the end of the decade. "I think we can find those savings. It's not a huge amount in the grand scheme of things," he told the BBC.

Osborne declined to comment when asked whether he might seek to raise more tax revenue by ending a freeze on the level of duty levied on fuel sales, an option widely seen as feasible given the plunge in oil prices which has helped motorists.

Many economists have questioned Osborne's pursuit of a budget surplus and have warned that cutting spending now might aggravate the slowing of Britain's economy. Capital Economics, a consultancy, said last week that Osborne might announce spending cuts for the later part of the decade so as not to hurt growth in the short term. — Reuters

GULF BOURSES EDGE UP

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Stock markets in Dubai and Doha rose yesterday, with most activity concentrated in volatile mid-cap stocks, while Abu Dhabi's index fell as investors booked profits.

Dubai's index jumped 1.4 percent in the first hour. GFH Financial Group, a mid-sized Islamic investment firm, was the most traded stock, rising 1.1 percent. Dubai Parks, the amusement park builder, surged 7.1 percent in unusually heavy trade. "So far institutional investors have taken the back seat, carefully monitoring the swings in the smaller, more volatile stocks," said a Dubai-based trader. In Abu Dhabi, the benchmark fell 0.5 percent. Developers Eshraq Properties and RAK Properties each shed more than 1.0 percent. Blue chips Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank and Etisalat dropped 4.6 and 0.8 percent respectively, but the largest listed lender by market value, First Gulf Bank, added 1.5 percent.

Qatar's index edged up 0.3 percent as Ezzan Holding added 1.9 percent. Barwa Real Estate and Mazaya Qatar Real Estate each rose more than 0.5 percent. Petrochemical shares buoyed Riyadh's stock index early yesterday after oil steadied over \$40 a barrel, while Egypt's stock market headed for a seventh straight day of gains after the government took steps to help manufacturers. Riyadh's index was up 0.5 percent in the first hour of trade. The petrochemical sector added 0.9 percent, with Saudi Basic Industries 0.7 percent higher.

Saudi Arabia Fertilizers (SAFCO) said it was considering taking full control of chemical fertiliser pro-

ducer National Chemical Fertilizers Co (Ibn Al-Baytar) by buying out SABIC's 50 percent stake. SAFCO's shares rose 1 percent. Retail shares, which were dumped last week after Jarir Marketing, one of Saudi Arabia's biggest retailers, said its first-quarter sales could plunge as much as 30 percent year-on-year, regained some strength. Jarir rose 1.3 percent.

Cairo's main index added 0.9 percent in the first hour. Last week the index rallied 7.8 percent and broke above its February peak, a bullish technical signal. On Wednesday Egypt's central bank said it was removing caps on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for companies importing essential goods, while the government said it would reduce the price at which it offers natural gas to steel plants to \$4.5 per one million thermal units, from \$7.

Ezz Steel rose 1.5 percent to 8.25 Egyptian pounds on Sunday after soaring 20 percent on Thursday in its heaviest trade since November 2013. Brokerage Prime Holding estimated fair value for the stock at 15.01 pounds under the new gas price structure, and classified it a "buy".

GB Auto climbed 2.2 percent to 2.38 pounds. Analysts polled by Thomson Reuters have a median target price of 5.05 Egyptian pounds for the stock. On Thursday independent equity research firm Alphamena rated the stock a "buy" with a target of 3.76 pounds. Beltone Financial surged 4.2 percent, recouping some of Thursday's 10 percent loss. Over the past three weeks its price has more than quadrupled in response to its buyout of CI Capital. — Reuters

HACKERS TRIED TO STEAL \$951M FROM BANGLADESH BANK

DHAKA: Bangladesh's central bank confirmed yesterday that cyber criminals tried to withdraw \$951 million from its US bank account, as the country's finance minister said he first got to know of one of the biggest bank heists in history through the media.

Unknown hackers breached the computer systems of Bangladesh Bank, and

transferred \$81 million from its account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to casinos in the Philippines between Feb. 4 and Feb. 5.

Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith said the central bank did not inform him about the heist, and that he learned of it only a month later when news first appeared in the media. — Reuters

CENTRAL BANK BONANZA FROM WASHINGTON TO TOKYO

GLOBAL ECONOMY WEEK AHEAD

FRANKFURT: Central banks take center-stage in the coming week as policymakers from Washington to London and Tokyo battle slowing global growth, heightened market volatility and deflationary pressures.

Coming after the European Central Bank's massive stimulus package, the US Federal Reserve must resolve conflicting economic drivers while the Bank of England will take a cautious line ahead of a defining vote on European Union membership.

A standout in an otherwise wobbly world economy, even the United States is facing growing headwinds, primarily from trade and weak emerging markets.

my, even the United States is facing growing headwinds, primarily from trade and weak emerging markets. That is likely to stay the Fed's hand on Wednesday and push out its next hike, possibly to June, even as it maintains a tightening bias.

"Overall, the message from the Fed will likely be a pause to assess uncertainties and gather more evidence, but no shift in strategy, or medium term view: act soft, talk tough," BNP Paribas said in a note. While the Fed has hinted at four 25-basis-point rate hikes this year, markets see just one increase in the second

half, leaving an unusually big gap between market expectations and the central bank's guidance.

Fuelling the doves' case, the Cleveland Fed's Financial Stress Indicator briefly showed its highest warning level in recent weeks, pointing to significant risk. Business surveys have also pointed to growing worries while exports are facing challenges from a strong dollar. But unemployment continues to fall, housing activity is high, the labor market is tightening and household consumption is rising, all indicating that the real economy is per-

forming broadly as the Fed has predicted. Data also suggest that the labor supply will be below demand, suggesting increased competition for labor and higher wages, a strong argument to keep increasing rates, economists said. "The difference between a hawkish Fed and a dovish Fed is the degree to which they open the door to a June, or much less likely, April hike," Citi economist Steven Englander said.

"They have no incentive to pre-announce a June hike," Englander said. "It makes more sense for them to begin warning the market a month or so before they intend to hike so that it is largely priced in before it occurs and has less chance of being derailed by events that they can't control."

growth slowing, wage growth weak, and uncertainty high, in large part due to the impending referendum on EU membership, the MPC will be in no mood to talk up the prospect of rate hikes," UniCredit said.

The Bank of Japan is also likely to stay on hold, still scrambling to soothe market jitters caused by January's surprise decision to adopt negative interest rates. Markets are rife with speculation the BOJ will expand monetary stimulus in the coming months to reflate a stagnant economy after January's move failed to boost stock prices or arrest an unwelcome rise in the yen.

But many central bank policymakers are reluctant to ease again soon unless external shocks jolt global financial markets enough to derail Japan's fragile economic recovery, sources familiar with the bank's thinking told Reuters earlier. Comments from BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda that it is time to scrutinise the effects of negative rates also point to a steady hand.

The Swiss National Bank is likewise expected to stay pat on Thursday while minutes from the Reserve Bank of Australia are likely to acknowledge a surprising improvement in the outlook after recent GDP data beat expectations by a wide margin.

"Unless there is a serious deterioration in the local growth outlook generally, and particularly the labour market, and/or a meltdown in the global growth outlook, say a tanking in Chinese growth, then the RBA will be content to leave the cash rate at 2 percent over 2016," Commonwealth Bank said. —Reuters

FROM LONDON TO TOKYO

The Bank of England, announcing its decision on Thursday, a day after the new budget is delivered, is also sure to stay on hold, potentially sounding a dovish tone and acknowledging potential economic hurdles. The meeting's minutes, published along with the decision, are likely to show a unanimous vote for flat rates for second month in a row after lone dissenter calling for a hike rejoined the fold last month. Although some policymakers have flirted with the thought of stimulus, data on Wednesday is expected to show wage growth picking up speed after slowing in recent months, dampening any rate-cut talk.

"While the recent quite sharp fall in trade-weighted sterling and the large percentage rise in oil prices will push up on inflation, with

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Sunday 13 March 2016

Index table with columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low

Volume, Value (KWD), Number of Trades table

Trades table for various securities including MARIN, IKARUS, IPG, NAPESCO, ENERGYH, GPI, ARAR, Oil & Gas, KFOUC, DPCC, ALKOUT, ALQURAIN, Basic Materials

Trades table for various securities including SOKOUK, KRE, URC, NRE, SRE, TAM, AREEC, MASGALIH, ARABREC, ERESO, MADANEC, INJAZZAT, INVESTORS, IRC, ALTIJARIA, SANAM, AAYANRE, AQAR, ALAQARIA, MAZAYA, ADNC, THEMAR, TIJARA, TAAMEER, ARKAN, ARGAN, ABYAR, MUNSHAAT, FIRSDUBAI, KBT, REAM, MENA, ALMUDON, MARAKEZ, REMAL, MSHAER, Real Estate

Table of various stocks including KCEM, REFRI, CABLE, SHIP, PCEM, PAPER, MRC, ACICO, GGMC, HCC, KPAC, KBMM, NICBM, EQUIPMENT, NCCI, GYPSUM, SALDOOKHI, AGLTY, EDU, CLEANING, CITYGROUP, KGL, KCPC, HUMANSOFT, NAFAS, SAFWAN, GFC, MAYADEEN, CGC, MITCC, UPAC, ALAFCO, MUBARRAD, LOGISTICS, SCEM, GCEM, QCEM, FCEM, RKWC, SPEC, Industrials, KGH, NSH, PAPCO, CATT, DANAH, POULT, FOOD, Consumer Goods, MHC, ATC, YIACO, Health Care

Table of various stocks including KCIN, KHOT, SULTAN, CABLETV, EYAS, IFAHR, OULAFUEL, MUNTAZAHAT, JAZEERA, SOOR, FUTUREKID, ALNAVADI, ALRAI, ZIMAH, UFIC, Mezzan, Consumer Services, ZAIN, OORDDO, HITSTELEC, VIVA, Telecommunications

Table of various stocks including NBK, GBK, CBDK, ABK, ALMUTAHED, KIB, BURG, KFAN, BOUBRYAN, AUD, ITHMR, WARBABANK, Banks, KINS, GINS, AINS, WINS, KUWAITRE, FTI, WETHAQ, DKIKWT, Insurance

Table of various stocks including SOKOUK, KRE, URC, NRE, SRE, TAM, AREEC, MASGALIH, ARABREC, ERESO, MADANEC, INJAZZAT, INVESTORS, IRC, ALTIJARIA, SANAM, AAYANRE, AQAR, ALAQARIA, MAZAYA, ADNC, THEMAR, TIJARA, TAAMEER, ARKAN, ARGAN, ABYAR, MUNSHAAT, FIRSDUBAI, KBT, REAM, MENA, ALMUDON, MARAKEZ, REMAL, MSHAER, Real Estate, KIN, FACIL, IFA, NINV, KPROJ, COAST, SECH, SGC, ARZAN, MARKAZ, KMEFIC, ALAMAL, ALOLA, ALMAL, GIH, AAYAN, BAYANINV, OSOUL, KFIC, KAMCO, NIH, ISKAN, MADAR, ALDEERA, ALSALAM, EKTTITAB, ALMADINA, NOOR, TAMILV, EXCH, TAIBA, KSHC, ASIYA, GNAHC, AMWAL, ALMUTIAZ, MANAZEL, NIND, BIHC, SENERGY, AGHC, KPCC, TAHSSILAT, JEERANH, EKHOOLDING, GFH, INOVEST, Financial Services, Investment Instruments

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National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report logo

Global Stock Indices table with columns: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance, Yearly Performance

MENA Stock Indices table with columns: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance, Yearly Performance

Global Currencies Exchange Rate table with columns: Currency, Kuwaiti Dinar, Saudi Riyal, US Dollar, Euro, Sterling Pound, Swiss Franc, Japanese Yen, Australian Dollar

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate table with columns: Currency, US Dollar, Kuwaiti Dinar, Saudi Riyal, Bahraini Dinar, Qatari Riyal, Omani Riyal, Emiratis Dirham, Egyptian Pound

Global Interest Rates table with columns: Currency, 1-Week, 1-Month, 3-Month, 6-Month, 1-Year

Global Bond Yields table with columns: Country, 2-Year, 5-Year, 10-Year, 30-Year

Commodities table with columns: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance, Yearly Performance

For more information, call Global Investment House on 1 80 42 42, www.globalinv.net

Source: National Bank of Kuwait

ECB CUTS THE RATE, ROCKS THE BOAT AGAIN

NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

KUWAIT: The ECB announced this week that it was cutting the main refinancing rate, the marginal lending rate, the deposit facility rate, raising monthly asset purchases, while also expanding the list of assets eligible for the program to include non-bank investment grade corporate bonds, and finally introducing four new 4-year long term refinancing operations.

Initially, equity markets rallied across the board and the euro fell. However, the excitement did not last long and faded quickly after Draghi suggested that "the ECB did not see much scope for further rate cuts". Automatically, the market discounted the news by focusing all the attention on the credibility of the council in fighting the ongoing deflation rather than concentrating on the large monetary package delivered. Thursday's Euro move seemed to cause some of the greatest debate. The currency initially weakened over 1.5% in the minutes post the news, touching a low of 1.0822, the lowest since February before exploding higher to 1.1218.

The sterling pound remains in a no man's land while the UK continues to face weak economic data and stream of UK political noises. From the BoE governor's testimony before the UK Treasury Committee on the implications of the EU membership to comments from the Queen, investors remain on the sideline while waiting for the drama to unfold in June. Consequently, the Pound continues to trade on the back of other Central banks news.

The yen remains volatile trading between a high of 114.45 and a low of 112.23. The currency performance continues to be highly negatively correlated with the Japanese equity markets, and investors continue to sell the rally in the dollar while awaiting potential further actions from the BoJ.

On the commodities side, oil markets continued their strong surge of late this week. Crude and Brent rallied over 12 percent with the former closing the week at \$39 and the latter at the \$40 level for first time since December 9. Sentiment was boosted after the news of another drop in the number of US operating rigs last month while expectations continue to build ahead of a potential meeting between OPEC and non-OPEC producers later this month.

Meanwhile, Gold remains well supported in all these events. The continuation of Asian

uncertainties is likely to keep the metal in demand as long as investors don't have a clear resolution over the Chinese situation.

A recap of the strong labor report

In a light economic calendar week, we look at a recap from last week labor report.

The labor market generated 242k jobs in February following upward revisions by 30k to December and January. While the three-month moving average on nonfarm payrolls declined to 228k from 241k previously, the rate of hiring remains strong. The yearly increase in employment was 1.9 percent last month, the same as January. The unemployment rate was steady at a historically low 4.9 percent, but wage pressures moderated significantly.

In the details of the report, goods-producing employment was down -15k. This was due to a -19k drop in mining, the 17th consecutive decline and a -16k dip in manufacturing, the first decrease since September 2015. Construction was up 19k, its eighth consecutive gain.

Private services employment rose by 245k. The three-month moving average on private payrolls was 224k last month, down from 240k in January. The strongest component of service-sector hiring was education and health services, which rose 86k.

In retail trade, hiring was up 55k last month following a 62k increase in January suggesting a strong consumer spending this quarter.

What's in store for the Fed this week?

Markets overall expect the FOMC to hold rates steady this week. The Committee is likely to be in a waiting mode for the uncertainty to ease in Asia, rather than a more extended pause in the normalization cycle.

As the economic situation in the US continues to hold strongly, the number of hikes that the FOMC will be able to deliver this year depends more on international markets than the US data. Employment and inflation are moving higher especially with the recent increase in commodity prices and this trajectory is unlikely to change materially for now.

With the rates market pricing almost no rate hikes in 2016, the Fed has a difficult job in attempting to normalize without pressuring the dollar and triggering another round of tightening in financial conditions as in December.

After weaker than expected data in the beginning of the year, February economic data was on the stronger side. While domestic demand remains strong, the US economy continues to recover; however, manufacturing and industrial productions have softened in recent months mainly due to the outside events. For now, this weakness is likely to keep the Fed on hold in March.

Fed members cautiously optimistic

Fed Vice-Chair Fischer downplayed the suggestion that the link between strong employment and inflation was broken, saying that although the link has never been very strong "it exists and we may well at present be seeing the first signs of an increase in the inflation rate".

Speaking at a separate conference, Fed Governor Brainard stated that she was



impressed by the continued strong progress on employment and the resilience of American consumers, which stand against a considerably more challenging global backdrop. Having said that, she also warned that "we should not take the strength in the US labor market and consumption for granted" and that "sources of robust demand around the globe are few, and sources of weakness relatively greater". Brainard also cautioned that "tighter financial conditions and softer inflation expectations may pose risks to the downside for inflation and domestic activity" and that "from a risk-management perspective, this argues for patience as the outlook becomes clearer".

ECB monetary policy announcement

The interest rate on the main refinancing operations of the Eurosystem will be decreased by 5bps to 0.00 percent while the interest rate on the deposit facility will be decreased by 10bps to -0.40 percent. The monthly purchases under the asset purchase program will be expanded to €80bn starting in April. Investment grade euro-denominated bonds issued by non-bank corporations established in the Euro area will be included in the list of assets that are eligible for regular purchases.

A new series of four targeted longer-term refinancing operations, each with a maturity of four years, will be launched, starting in June 2016 where borrowing conditions in these operations can be as low as the interest rate on the deposit facility.

ECB over delivers

The ECB announced that "Investment grade Euro-denominated bonds issued by non-bank corporations established in the euro area will be included in the list of assets eligible for regular purchases under a new corporate sector purchase program (CSPP)".

The inclusion of non-financial corporate bonds was a surprise and it marks another milestone for the ECB. This is the first time they've entered the private unsecured market. Longer term this might be significant as it opens the door for other non-government or unsecured risk purchases.

The ECB purchases are expected to be

positive, although clearly there is still a certain amount of execution risk, while the liquidity of the market is also a big consideration. Given that Draghi over-delivered on most measures introduced, investors were puzzled by the market reaction and the volatility that resulted. Draghi probably didn't help investors' sentiments by suggesting the ECB saw no need to cut rates further early in his press conference. This comment seemed to turn markets after the initial rally.

Brexit and weak industrial performance

UK industrial production grew by less than expected in January, as a pickup in manufacturing activity was offset by a drop in oil and gas production. UK industrial production rose 0.3 percent in the month in January compared to expectations of 0.5 percent, and 0.2 percent on a yearly basis. In details, although factory output rose 0.7 percent on the month, the pickup in manufacturing activity was offset by a 6.3 percent slump in oil and gas production, dragging down the overall industrial performance.

On the Brexit subject, while the Queen of the United Kingdom announced that she has no political stance with regards to the EU referendum, a British finance lobby group has come forward again and warned of the hampering impact Brexit would have on the UK economy and particularly the investment industry. A very similar tone was expressed by the Bank of England Governor Mark Carney who advised that giving up the EU membership constitutes as the biggest risk to Britain's financial stability.

Chinese inflation on the rise?

China's consumer price inflation rose 2.3 percent from a year ago, exceeding estimates of 1.9 percent, the highest level since August 2014. In January, consumer inflation was only 1.8 percent. According to analysts, February rise was mainly due to the week-long Lunar New Year holidays. As food prices were up 7.3 percent, non-food inflation dropped to 1 percent in February, 0.2 percent lower than that in January, reflecting disinflation in the other components of the CPI. The rise in food prices is likely to be temporary and consumer inflation is likely to remain mild in coming months.

The producer price index also dropped 4.9 percent, after a 5.3 percent decrease in January, extending declines to a record 48 months. Chinese trade performance numbers

were also released this week much worse than expected in February. Exports fell 25.4 percent from a year earlier, twice as much as markets had expected, while imports slid 13.8 percent. While it is the biggest export drop since 2009, economists sighted reduced business activity due to the long Lunar New Year holidays earlier in the month. China posted a trade surplus of \$32.59 billion for the month, down from \$63.29 billion in January.

Japan needs more and more

Official data showed the economy contracted at 1.1 percent on an annual basis in the last three months of 2015, less than the 1.4 percent originally stated mainly driven by higher capital expenditures. The revision was slightly better than economists were expecting but still paints a weak picture of the Japanese economy. Indeed, the data details were weak. The overall picture is of a falling consumption, high inventory levels and a weak outlook for production in the first quarter of the year.

A second set of news showed Japan's consumer confidence fell in February to a one-year low falling 2.4 points from January to stand at 40.1, marking the fastest pace of decline since October 2013 and hitting the lowest level since January 2015. Finally, the Economy Watchers Survey was also weak in February, with current conditions and the forward-looking measures posting their biggest drops since April 2014. With monetary policy looking increasingly exhausted, the pressure for a fiscal response in Japan is growing.

Australia housing market cooling down

Australian housing loans data missed expectations in January, pointing to the likelihood that recent strength in house prices may cool off in the next few months. According to the data, the number of owner-occupier loans fell by 3.9 percent on a monthly basis, more than the 3 percent expectations and versus a 2.7 percent rise in December. The data obviously dragged down the value of new lending which fell to the lowest level since November 2014. The news came as a blow to the Australian government even with record low interest rates.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30065
The USDKWD opened at 0.30065 yesterday morning.

GCC STATES RECORD BUDGET DEFICITS AS OIL PRICES DIP

KAMCO GCC QUARTERLY ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: Budget deficits were recorded across all GCC states for the first nine months of 2015 as oil revenues plunged and state revenues fell below expenditure. As a result, the GCC is expected to report a deficit in government finances of approximately \$160 billion in 2015, a phenomenon not witnessed in the recent past. The current account balance for the GCC is also expected to come in negative for full year 2015, based on our analysis of IMF data, albeit marginally.

Oil GDP estimates for the region are likely to almost halve in 2015, and contribute to an overall GDP decline of 16 percent y-o-y for the region. Saudi Arabia which accounts for almost 46 percent of the region's GDP witnessed a decline of 13.3 percent y-o-y in 2015, as Oil GDP went down by c.43 percent over the period, based on preliminary estimates published.

KAMCO expects 2016 to remain a year of transition in the GCC, as governments reassess and implement steps to optimize state budgets and improve revenue side initiatives, as the full year impact of lower oil revenues and government initiatives take effect. Ratings agencies remain cautious on their outlooks for GCC countries, as witnessed from the S&P's downgrade of Saudi Arabia's debt rating for the second time in four months. Credit lending trends remained positive in major GCC states, as credit disbursed by banks in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE all went up above 8 percent in 2015, while credit lending went up higher by 15 percent y-o-y in Qatar. Money supply (M2) growth was negative in KSA (-4.0 percent), Kuwait (-1.1 percent) on q-o-q basis in Q4-15; while UAE, Qatar and Oman witnessed higher money supply compared to the previous quarter.

Kuwait

After declining marginally in 2014, Kuwait's GDP is expected to register a significant decline in 2015 on a nominal basis, driven by the unprecedented drop in oil prices during the year. The rout in oil prices which started in 2014, continued during 2015, and more than offset the impact of an increase in production of oil from 2.79mb/d in 2014 to 2.9mb/d. Nevertheless, Real GDP is expected to increase y-o-y, albeit marginally, driven by growth from the non-oil sector.

Total government revenues for Kuwait plunged by 47 percent y-o-y to KD 12.1 billion during Jan 15 - Sept 15 as compared to KD 22.9 billion during Jan 14-Sept 14. The drop was in large part attributed to the fall in oil revenues that almost halved y-o-y (-49 percent), to KD 10.9 billion. Non-oil revenues also declined by 27 percent y-o-y during the same period to KD 1.2 billion. On the other hand, expenditure inched up by 2 percent y-o-y to KD 15.6 billion, despite capital expenditure remaining flat y-o-y from Jan 15-Sept 15 at KD 1.5 billion. Government finances swung into the negative over Jan 15-Sept 15 from a surplus in the year prior, as a deficit of over 29 percent of total revenues was recorded over the period.

Credit facilities extended by Kuwaiti banks by the end of Q4-15 increased by 2.5 percent q-o-q to KD 33.2 billion. On a y-o-y basis however, credit extended improved by 8 percent, driven by the growth in Personal facilities, which grew by 11 percent over the period and accounted for over 41 percent of the credit disbursed by Dec-15. Credit to the real estate and construction sectors however saw muted growth on a y-o-y basis as credit disbursed by the sector grew by 2 percent and 2.5 percent respectively.

Kuwait's broad measure of money supply (M2) decreased by 1.08 percent q-o-q to KD 34.4 billion in Q4-15, after recording a drop in Q3-15 as well, as currency in circulation, quasi money and sight deposits declined sequentially since Q2-15.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia released 2015 preliminary GDP estimates of SAR 2,449.6 billion, a decline of 13.3 percent y-o-y compared to 2014. Non-oil GDP is estimated to have grown by 8.4 percent y-o-y over the same period to reach SAR 1,740.3 billion, as the non-oil Government sector grew by 14.6 percent y-o-y. The non-oil private sector grew by 5.8 percent over the period. On the other hand, the oil sector is estimated to have declined by over 42 percent during 2015 to reach SAR 685.3 billion from SAR 1,197.4 billion in 2014.

Meanwhile, the Emirates NBD Saudi Arabia PMI reached its lowest level in 2015 of 54.4 points during Dec-15. The index declined after rising to 60.1 points in Mar-15, indicating a deceleration in growth of the non-oil private sector towards the end of the year. Nevertheless, sustaining above 50 points, the index still pointed towards an expansion in

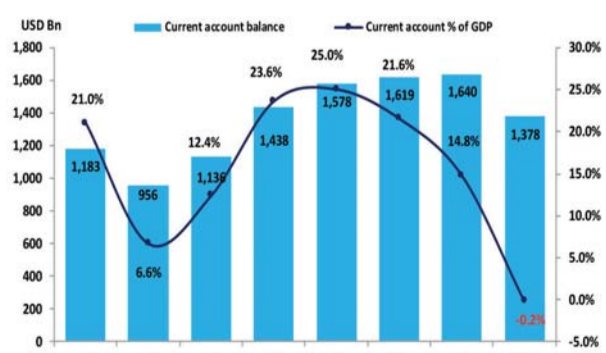
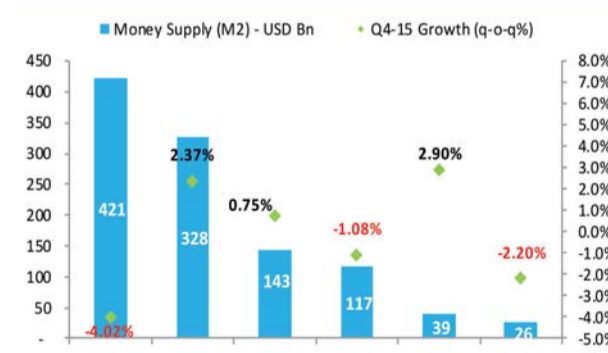
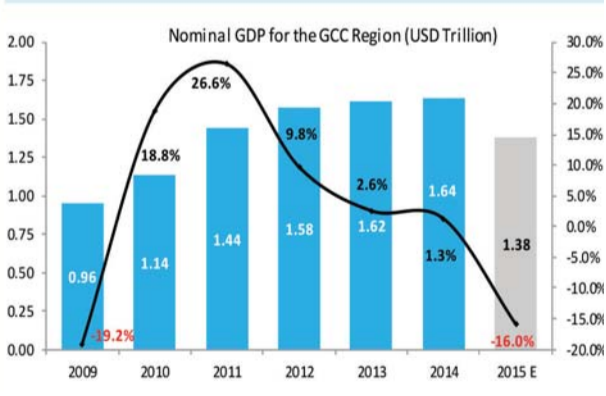
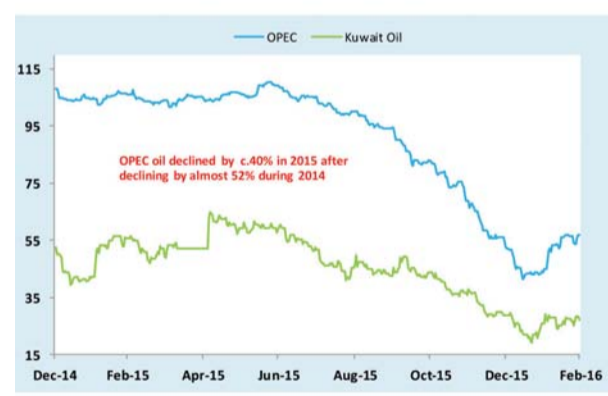
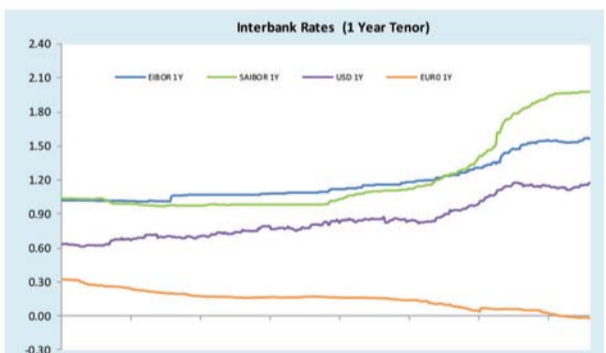
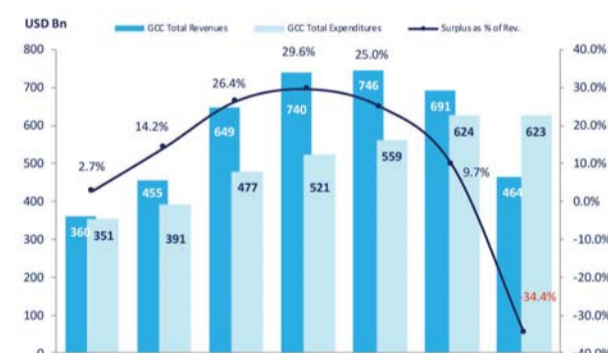
the non-oil private sector at the end of the year.

The broad measure of money supply (M2) in the Kingdom decreased by 4.0 percent q-o-q during Q4-15 to reach SAR 1,580 billion, after growing by 0.99 percent and 1.74 percent in Q3-14 and Q2-14, respectively. The decline in money supply was driven by a decline in demand deposits, which fell by 8.3 percent to SAR 976 billion, and currency outside banks which receded by 3.3 percent from its previous quarter.

During Q4-15, inflation inched up as compared to last quarter. The general consumer price index rose by 0.7 percent in Q4-15 as compared to Q3-15, and by 1.4 percent during 2015. Among the sectors, Education recorded the highest inflation rate during Q4-15, registering a quarterly increase in prices of 5 percent, followed by Clothing &

Meanwhile, manufacturing data for the non-oil private sector for December-15 highlighted a further slowdown as the Emirates NBD UAE PMI slid to a 3-year low level of 53.3 points, as new orders and export orders expanded more slowly. Moreover, on the price front, a sequential fall in input costs from Sept-2015 to Dec-2015 was recorded, while output prices were reduced as well over the period, in a bid to generate new orders.

On the capital front, total credit facilities further improved to AED 1.38 trillion at the end of the Q4-2015, an increase of 1.1 percent q-o-q and an 8.3 percent jump y-o-y. Credit to construction facilities increased by 5.1 percent q-o-q, while personal facilities inched up by 1.1 percent and credit to trade facilities contracted by 1.8 percent over the period.



footwear. In terms of the influence on the cost of living index, the food and beverages group ranked first with 26.1 percent during Q4-15 as compared to 55.3 percent in Q4-14; followed by Education at 19.1 percent as compared to 1.9 percent in Q4-14.

United Arab Emirates

Based on the results of their economic composite indicator, the Central Bank of UAE estimates the country's GDP to realize an annual GDP growth of 3 percent in 2015. This indicator measures the domestic economic activity by taking into account the development of many economic aggregates such as domestic credit growth, monetary aggregates and oil prices. The non-oil economic composite indicator suggested a growth of 3.5 percent in 2015 as against the previous year. The central bank estimates quarterly growth during Q3-15 to be 2.7 percent compared to 3.1 percent in the previous quarter.

Qatar

Qatar's Q3-15 GDP receded by 2.9 percent q-o-q, as oil & gas related sectors went down by 12 percent over the same period. On a y-o-y basis, Q3-15 GDP was down over 22 percent, while oil & gas related sectors went down by 47 percent over the same period. The non-oil sector however grew on a q-o-q and y-o-y basis, as the private sector grew by 2.7 percent on a q-o-q basis and 0.8 percent on a y-o-y basis. Non-oil Government sector GDP improved by 2.1 percent q-o-q in Q3-15.

Total credit facilities continued the uptrend and stood at a record high level at the end of 2015 with an increase of 5.5 percent q-o-q to reach QAR 748.7 billion as of Q4-15. The growth was ascribed to both the public sector and the private sector, which grew q-o-q in Q4-15, as the public sector grew by 6.4 percent, while the private sector credit went up by 3.1 percent over the same period. Within the pri-

private sector, larger sectors utilizing credit Real estate and Consumption sectors recorded a growth in lending. Real Estate credit grew by 5.7 percent q-o-q in Q4-15, and by 27.4 percent y-o-y, while Consumption credit grew by a lower 2.6 percent on a quarterly basis and 16.9 percent y-o-y.

Qatar's broad measure of money supply (M2) improved on a q-o-q basis, to add around QAR 3.9 billion or 0.75 percent in Q4-15 and stand at around QAR 521 billion as of December-15, after receding by 2.7 percent in Q3-15. The rise in M2 is mainly attributed to the increase in deposits in foreign currencies that added QAR 3.1 billion on a quarterly basis in Q4-15.

Quarterly inflation inched up during Q4-15 by 0.38 percent q-o-q, ascribed to an increase in Housing & related utilities prices which went up by 2 percent over the period, while Recreation gained by 3 percent as against the previous quarter. Food & Beverages and Clothing & Footwear were amongst the indices, which saw a decline during Q4-15, as they declined by 1 percent and 2 percent respectively, as against the previous quarter.

Bahrain

Bahrain's GDP receded by 1.4 percent q-o-q in Q3-15 and reached BHD 3.07 billion by the end of the period. The decline was largely ascribed to the 9.3 percent decline in oil sector GDP q-o-q, which constituted 16 percent of the overall GDP of the country for the quarter, as per Central Bank of Bahrain. Oil sector GDP declined by 40 percent y-o-y from Q3-14, owing to the lower oil price environment. However, non-oil GDP increased by 5 percent y-o-y by the end of Q3-15, as Private sector non-oil GDP that contributes c.84 percent to non-oil GDP grew by an equal amount, while the government sector grew by 6 percent over the period. Non-oil GDP also grew on a q-o-q basis in Q3-15 by 0.33 percent.

Real GDP inched higher by 0.3 percent q-o-q in Q3-15 reflecting non-oil GDP growth mostly. On a y-o-y basis however, Real GDP for the quarter was up by 2.4 percent, while non-oil GDP grew by a higher 3.3 percent. Oil GDP for Q3-15 declined in real terms on a y-o-y basis as production went down marginally.

Further, inflation numbers at the end Q4-15 suggested a sequential decrease of 0.96 percent as against Q3-15. On a y-o-y basis, CPI increased 0.7 percent by the end of 2015. In terms of components, Housing & Utility costs, Education and Recreation & Culture witnessed the largest increases y-o-y, increasing by 2.2 percent, 2.4 percent and 2.4 percent respectively. Food and Non Alcoholic Beverages also increased over the period by 1.7 percent, while Clothing and Footwear costs decreased by 1.5 percent as against Q4-14.

Oman

Oman continued to report quarterly fiscal deficits in 2015, as the deficit reported was OMR 1.02 Bn in Q3-15 as compared to a deficit of OMR 1.37 billion during Q2-15. Government's total revenues remained stable during the quarter to stand at OMR 2.1 billion, but dropped by 35 percent on a y-o-y basis. This drop was due to lower oil revenues as average oil prices continued to decline during 2015, in addition to lower other non-oil revenues. However, gas revenues improved and grew by 4 percent q-o-q, providing some respite to the declining government revenues. On the other hand, government expenditure decreased on a q-o-q and y-o-y basis, alleviating pressure on fiscal balances. Total expenditure increased by 10.2 percent, to OMR 3.2 billion.

On the monetary front, money supply (M2) at the end of the fourth quarter in 2015 increased by 2.9 percent q-o-q to OMR 15.1 billion as compared to a decline of -0.2 percent in Q3-15. Quasi money that accounted for a 64.6 percent of M2 increased by a strong 3.2 percent at the end of Q4-15 to OMR 9.8 billion, whereas the more liquid M1 increased at a slower pace of 2.4 percent to OMR 5.4 billion after a decline during Q3-15. The increase in Q4-15 was largely attributed to the 9.0 percent increase on a q-o-q basis in currency outside banks to OMR 1.4 billion, while demand deposits remained broadly stable at OMR 3.97 billion as against the previous quarter.

Meanwhile, inflation continued to increase marginally on a quarterly basis during Q4-15, as it grew by 0.10 percent at the end of the quarter. In terms of credit lending, total amount of credit disbursed went up by 1.9 percent during Q3-15 as compared to marginal growth of 2.6 percent during Q3-14, primarily on the back of higher grant of personal loans that increased by 3 percent to reach OMR 7.2 billion.



OMAN AIR, OMAN'S MOT ANNOUNCE SPECIAL TRAVEL PACKAGES FOR KUWAIT

A WIDE RANGE OF LOCATIONS FROM MUSCAT TO KHASAB

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Tourism, Oman in partnership with Oman Air has held a workshop for the Kuwait travel trade to launch a range of special holiday packages specifically designed for travellers from Kuwait. The workshop was held at the JW Marriot Hotel in Kuwait City with the attendance of nearly 90 key members from the travel trade. It also served as a platform to showcase Oman as a premier sailing destination in the region and as a leading weekend getaway from Kuwait for a variety of unique Omani experiences - mountains, beaches, deserts, caves and forts.

Salim Salim Bin Adey Al-Mamari, Director General of Tourism Promotion, Ministry of Tourism, Oman said: "Kuwait is one of our key markets in the GCC and we remain committed to our trade partners in the country by designing exclusive packages for visitors from Kuwait. We want to showcase Oman as a truly year round destination for a diverse and exciting range of activities that from sailing and diving to cultural trails, hiking, heritage walks and luxury travel. During 2015 the Sultanate welcomed more than 1 million visitors from the GCC alone, and we look forward to

attracting even more in 2016." At the event the Ministry of Tourism, Oman announced the following tailored packages for visitors from Kuwait to a wide range of destinations. All packages include flight tickets, 3 nights' accommodation, and daily buffet breakfast.

- * Shangri-La's Barr Al-Jissah Resort & Spa - KD 235 per person
- * Alila Jabal Akhdar Resort - KD 329 per person
- * Millennium Resort Mussanah - KD 157 per person
- * Intercontinental Hotel Muscat - KD 199 per person
- * Grand Hyatt Hotel, Muscat - KD 274 per person

- * Garden's Residences, Salalah - KD 149 per person
- * Crowne Plaza Resort, Salalah - KD 160 per person
- * Hilton Resort, Salalah - KD 180 per person
- * Atana Khasab Hotel - from KD 232 per person

The packages have been designed to enable tourists to sample a comprehensive range of locations in the country from the historic capital Muscat; the southern city of Salalah - home to the frankincense trail and much more; the sailing and water sports centre of Musannah; the cool clean air of the Jebal Akhdar plateau and the beauty of the Musandam Peninsula.

NREC BECOMES ULI'S FIRST SUSTAINING MEMBER IN ME

KUWAIT: National Real Estate Company (NREC), one of the region's leading real estate development companies, has become the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) first Sustaining Member in Kuwait and the Middle East. NREC joins some of the world's most respected developers and industry stakeholders including Tishman Speyer, SOM, JP Morgan Asset Management, Colliers International, and Prudential Real Estate Investors. As a Sustaining Member, 16 representatives of NREC's management team will become members of ULI; they will participate in ULI's global convening, serve on regional councils, and receive the latest industry training. ULI is a global multidisciplinary real estate research and education organization bringing together leaders from the private and public sectors, to exchange best practices and serve community needs while fostering their collaboration on issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development. Through knowledge sharing, members are able to advance land use policies and design practices to respect the uniqueness of both the built and natural environments. Sustaining Members commit to ULI's overarching code of ethics which dictates respect for all aspects of real estate development including consumers and the environment. Through its members'

leadership and expertise ULI offers the gold standard in quality programs and research, and the opportunity to make an impact on communities. NREC's CEO Samuel Sidiqi said, "We are pleased to become the first Urban Land Institute (ULI) Sustaining Member in Kuwait and the Middle East. NREC shares ULI's values, and is committed to delivering projects of enduring value and quality for tenants and other stakeholders alike. As a responsible developer we understand and genuinely embrace the need to build sustainable communities and provide for a high standard of living to future generations." As a strong proponent of sustainability, NREC leverages best practices in planning, design, and development to create balanced, viable, and quality projects and destinations across the MENA region. Established in 1973, the National Real Estate Company (NREC) is a publicly listed company on the Kuwait Stock Exchange and a regional pioneer in real estate investment, development and property management. NREC has developed a strong portfolio of retail, commercial and residential real estate in emerging and established markets across the Middle East and North Africa. NREC has grown into one of the largest real estate companies in the MENA region, with \$1.9 Billion in assets under management and \$711 million in shareholder's funds.

BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF YAWMI ACCOUNT

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the lucky winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a prize of KD 5,000. The lucky winners for the daily draws took home a cash-prize of KD 5,000 each, and they are:

1. Naser Abdulaziz Abdullah Alawadhi
2. Osama Edwar Yared
3. Bader Naser Abdulrazzaq Shaheen
4. Ahmad Hamzah Ismaeil Ibrahim
5. Iqbal Saleh Hussain Saleh Hussain

To further add to the anticipation of Yawmi account customers, Burgan Bank now offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account now offers Daily and quarterly Draws, the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to draw date.

Additionally, every KD 10 in the account, will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws. Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The more customers deposit, the higher the chances they receive of winning. For more information on opening a Yawmi account or about the new quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080 where customer service representatives will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Yawmi account or any of the bank's products and services.

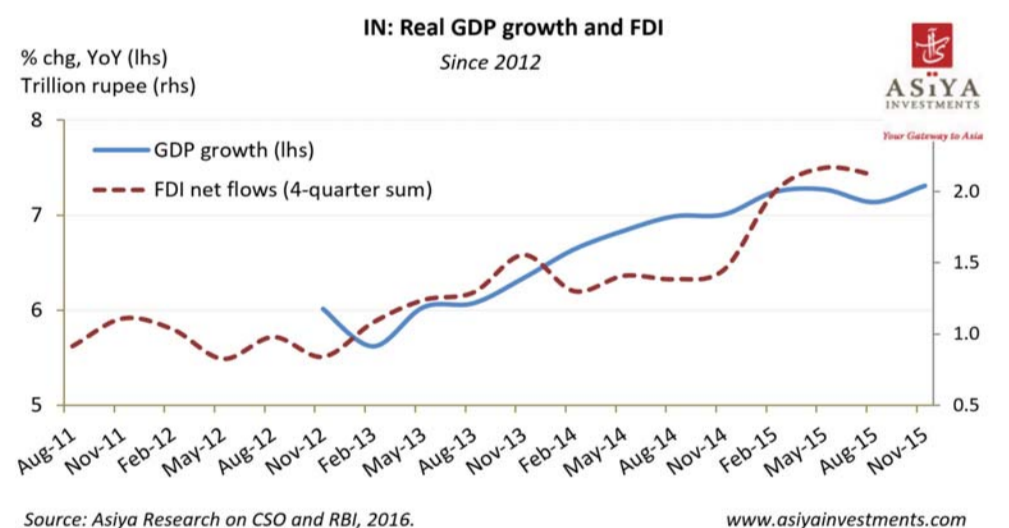
THE BUDGET UNDERPINS INDIA'S POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Asiya Capital Investments Company Report

By Jordi Rof

KUWAIT: The Indian economy is one of the few bright spots in the world in terms of growth. GDP expanded at a rate of 7.3 percent in 2015, a slight acceleration compared to 2014's figure and is widely expected to see faster growth this year. The IMF, for instance, forecasted growth rates of 7.3 percent and 7.5 percent in fiscal years (FY, the period from April to March) 15-16 and 16-17, respectively. The recent Indian budget implicitly assumes a slightly higher growth, at around 7.3 percent and 7.7 percent, according to our estimates based on the government's nominal numbers. In our view, Indian growth will accelerate timidly in real terms over the next quarters, led by consumption and investment, outperforming most emerging economies. However, there are some downside risks.

The three main factors that could derail growth are price instability, loss of investment momentum and vulnerabilities in bank's balance sheets. Inflation seems under control, but the latest improvements rely on low food inflation and energy prices. Adverse weather effects and a pick-up in oil prices - which is entirely imported - could revive inflationary pressures, forcing the central bank to increase policy rates and the government to spend more on subsidies. The political stalemate, which is blocking essential reforms, could also harm growth, as investors could lose their confidence on the implementation of promised reforms. In the last years, net foreign investment (FDI) flows grew along with the economy, from 1,108 billion rupee in 2011 to 2,112 in the last four quarters. Losing reforms momentum could hurt FDI and economic activity. Finally, the IMF also warned about asset quality and low capital ratios of state-owned Indian banks, which might result in insufficient quality lending and financial instability.



The budget for FY 16-17 addresses these potential risks to some extent. The focus on the rural sector is not only intended to improve the livelihood of economically depressed areas, but also to secure food supply and control prices. Projects such as irrigation systems, food storage facilities and rural road networks are detailed in the developments plans, and could have a positive impact on price stability. Beyond rural issues, energy (29.2 percent) and communications (34.5 percent) still represent the bulk of the budget. Spending in investment in these areas will contribute to raise investor confidence. Moreover, the budget includes an allocation of 250 billion rupee (11 percent of commercial bank assets) for public banks to strengthen their balance sheets. The Indian government also stressed the commitment of listing public companies in the stock exchange, which could provide additional capital

and improve corporate governance. Downside risks remain considerable, but the budget contributes to reduce them somewhat. However, its release did not come free of criticism. The assumptions behind the budget, particularly nominal GDP growth (10.8 percent) and oil prices (\$42 per barrel) have been regarded as over-optimistic. Lower growth would imply lower revenue from taxes and an automatic increase of the deficit. Higher oil prices would increase the political costs of introducing new taxation on gasoline and diesel, and increase the energy subsidy bill. If these assumptions do not materialize, the reduction of India's deficit from 3.9 percent to 3.5 percent of GDP will prove elusive, and fiscal sustainability, in spite of not representing an immediate threat, will worsen. Overall, the budget addresses India's main needs and concentrates on preventing some of its main threats from materializing.

UNEASE OVER CHINESE INVESTORS BUYING FARMS DOWN UNDER

SYDNEY: With Chinese buyers eyeing farm land in Australia and New Zealand, authorities are coming under growing pressure to balance the need for foreign investment against accusations of "selling out". Currently up for sale is the S Kidman and Co Limited cattle empire - a vast Outback estate which covers 1.3 percent of Australia's land mass and has an average herd of 185,000 cattle. Treasurer Scott Morrison blocked its

sale to all foreign investors in November, including from China, saying it was contrary to the national interest given part of the holding overlaps with a military testing range. But Morrison recently approved the sale of Australia's largest dairy farming business to a Chinese buyer, despite criticism that businessman Lu Xianfeng's Aus\$280 million (\$210 million) purchase of Tasmania's Van Diemen's Land Company could impact food security.

In a statement headed "Sell Out", independent Senator Nick Xenophon labelled the decision "wrong, wrong, wrong" saying Morrison failed to give sufficient weight to an alternative Australian bid. "It's certainly a very emotive issue," said Hans Hendrischke from the University of Sydney Business School. "The anxiety about Chinese ownership is part of a larger anxiety with demographic change, with economic change, it is part of Australia

having to cope with the idea... that we are coming much closer to Asia economically," he told AFP. Hendrischke, who last year co-authored a KPMG report which found that agribusiness accounted for only 1.0 percent of Chinese direct investment in Australia in 2014, said while the Middle Kingdom was not yet a major foreign investor in Australian farmland, politicians were wary of a public backlash as its stake grows. —AFP



SEOUL: South Korean professional Go player Lee Sedol (right sit) reviews the match with other professional Go players after winning the fourth match of the Google DeepMind Challenge Match against Google's artificial intelligence program, AlphaGo, in Seoul yesterday.—AP

HUMAN GO CHAMP SCORES VICTORY OVER SUPERCOMPUTER

SURPRISE WIN AFTER 3 HUMILIATING DEFEATS

SEOUL: A South Korean Go grandmaster yesterday scored his first win over a Google-developed supercomputer, in a surprise victory after three humiliating defeats in a high-profile showdown between man and machine. Lee Se-Dol thrashed AlphaGo after a nail-biting match that lasted for nearly five hours—the fourth of the best-of-five series in which the computer clinched a 3-0 victory on Saturday.

Lee struggled in the early phase of the fourth match but gained a lead towards the end, eventually prompting AlphaGo to resign. The 33-year-old is one of the greatest players in modern history of the ancient board game, with 18 international titles to his name—the second most in the world.

"I couldn't be happier today...this victory is priceless. I wouldn't trade it for the world," a smiling Lee said after the match to cheers and applause from the audience.

"I can't say I wasn't hurt by the past three defeats...but I still enjoyed every moment of playing so it really didn't damage me greatly," he said.

Lee earlier predicted a landslide victory over Artificial Intelligence (AI) but was later forced to concede that the AlphaGo was "too strong". Lee had vowed to try his best to win at least one game after his second defeat. Described as the "match of the century" by local media, the game was closely watched by tens of millions of Go fans mostly in East Asia as well as AI scientists.

The most famous AI victory to date came in 1997, when the IBM-developed supercomputer Deep Blue beat the then-world class chess champion Garry Kasparov.

But Go, played for centuries mostly in Korea, Japan and China, had long remained the holy grail for AI developers due to its complexity and near-infinite number of potential configurations.

INDIA'S MICROMAX, ONCE A RISING STAR, STRUGGLES

MUMBAI: A year ago, Micromax vaulted past Samsung Electronics Co Ltd to become India's leading smartphone brand. Today, its market share has nearly halved, several top executives have resigned, and the company is looking for growth outside India.

In Micromax's slide to second place is a tale of the promise and peril of India's booming but hyper-competitive smartphone industry. India is the world's fastest-growing smartphone market. Shipments of smartphones jumped 29 percent to 103 million units last year.

Rapid growth has helped nurture a crop of local brands, led by Micromax, that outsourced production to Chinese manufacturers. Now, as Samsung rolls out more affordable phones, the same Chinese factories are entering the Indian market with their own brands, depressing prices and forcing Indian mobile makers to rethink their strategies.

"What the Indian brands did to the global brands two years ago, Chinese phone makers are doing the same to Indian brands now, and over the next year we see tremendous competition for Micromax and other Indian smartphone makers," said Tarun Pathak, analyst at Counterpoint Research in New Delhi.

MANAGEMENT TENSIONS

Micromax, which was founded in New Delhi by four partners in 2000 but only began selling mobile phones in 2008, built its market share by working with Chinese manufacturers such as Coolpad, Gionee and Oppo to offer affordable phones quickly. In 2015, it launched more than 40 new models.

In 2014, the founders brought in outside managers to lead the company at a time when Micromax was challenging Samsung to become the largest mobile phone maker in India.

But tensions arose soon after between founders and the newly hired executives, six former executives told Reuters. These conflicts undermined Micromax's attempts

'More creative than we imagined'

Demis Hassabis, the head of the AlphaGo developer Google DeepMind, has described Go as the "Mount Everest" for AI scientists. "Lee Se-Dol was an incredible player and was too strong for AlphaGo," Hassabis said after yesterday's match. "It was doing well...but then, because of Lee's fantastic play, it was pressurised into some mistakes," he said, describing the loss as a "valuable" way to fix the problems with the supercomputer.

"Actually we are very happy because this is why we came here, to test AlphaGo and its limit and find out what its weaknesses were," he said.

Lee said those weaknesses included a difficulty in responding to certain unexpected plays by an opponent, which led to more mistakes. Go involves two players alternately laying black and white stones on a checkerboard-like grid of 19 lines by 19 lines. The winner is the player who manages to seal off more territory.

On the 78th move, Lee placed a stone unexpectedly in the middle section of the board, stunning many experts and confusing the AlphaGo.

Hassabis later tweeted that the AlphaGo made a "mistake" on the following 79th move and only realised it several moves later. AlphaGo uses two sets of "deep neural networks" that allow it to crunch data in a more human-like fashion—dumping millions of potential moves that human players would instinctively know were pointless.

It also employs algorithms that allow it to learn and improve from matchplay experience. "I think AlphaGo is far more creative than we ever imagined. It makes us to rethink all the conventional rules and knowledge we learned in Go," said Lee Hyun-Wook, a TV commentator and professional Go player.

The last match is to be held on Tuesday in the Four Seasons Hotel in Seoul.—AP

to raise funds for expansion, say former executives. Last May, Alibaba walked away from a mooted \$1.2 billion purchase of a 20 percent stake, citing a lack of clarity on growth plans, according to one executive involved in the discussion. Micromax co-founder Vikas Jain said in an interview with Reuters this week that the company and Alibaba disagreed on a future roadmap.

Alibaba declined to comment. Former executives said the lack of fresh funding undermined a proposal by the new executives to move Micromax's research and design operations, which had previously been outsourced, in-house. The move was intended to help Micromax differentiate itself from generic Android clones. "We hired about 80-90 people in Bangalore to do in-house software and design, but with no money from the investors and little interest from the founders, that team fizzled away and that office has been partially shut down now," said a former executive.

After Alibaba walked away, Micromax struggled to attract other investors who would have been key to Micromax's plan to invest in software R&D and hardware design. The company was forced to scale down the in-house R&D project, a top executive involved in the fundraising plan said.

At least five senior executives have resigned since November. The latest was Vineet Taneja, chief executive since 2014, who quit last week.

"THE WHOLE INDUSTRY IS SUFFERING"

Meanwhile, Chinese handset makers, including Coolpad and Oppo, to which Micromax outsources its manufacturing, were sharpening their focus on India. Samsung, too, began to introduce more affordable models there. In 2015, Chinese brands doubled their market share to 18 percent, according to Counterpoint Research, taking away business from Indian budget phone makers such as Micromax, Intex, Lava and Karbonn. Indian brands' market share fell from 48 to 43 percent last year.—Reuters

CANON RECEIVES HIGHEST STANDARD GOLD RATING FROM ECOVADIS

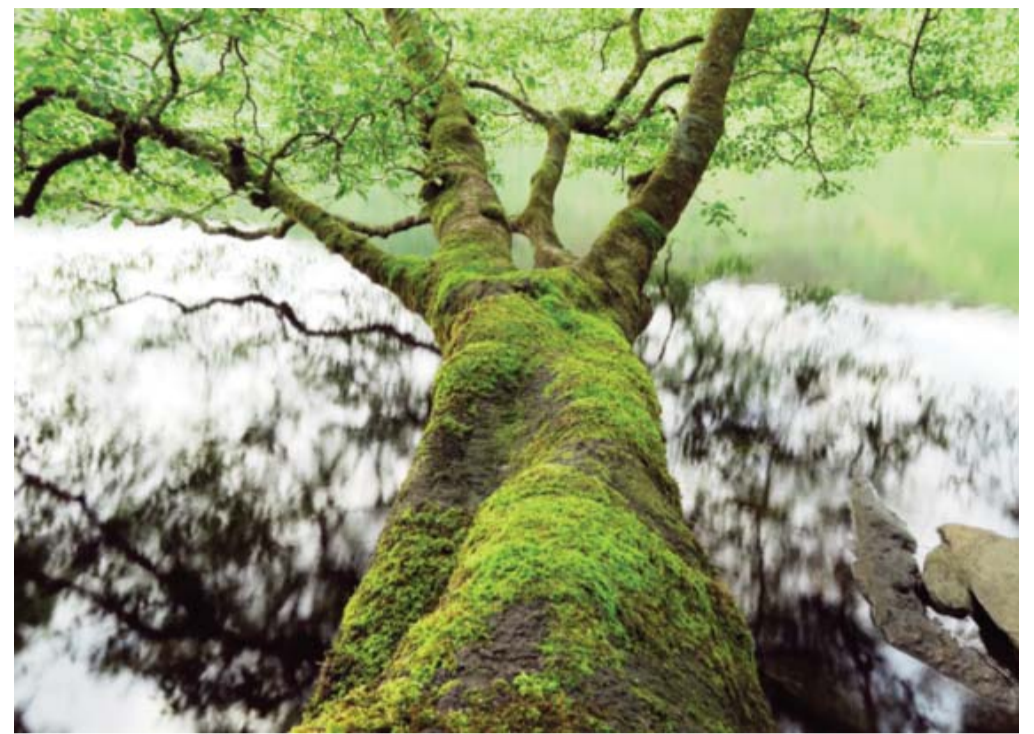
DUBAI: Canon, world leader in imaging solutions, has been awarded the EcoVadis gold rating for the second consecutive year, which positions the company among the top 5 percent for sustainability performance.

In order to decide company ratings, the EcoVadis CSR analysis system assesses 21 criteria across four themes of environment, fair labor practices, ethics/fair business practices and supply chain. Canon submitted data relating to CSR practices across its businesses to support these themes.

"We are proud to have been recognized for our hard work and commitment towards doing business responsibly," commented Walter TobÉ, Sustainability Director for Canon Europa NV. "This gold rating from EcoVadis gives our customers and partners the assurance that they can trust in our sustainability credentials."

Canon's commitment to sustainability spans across responsible business, society and the environment, aiming to embrace the Kyosei corporate philosophy, which means living and working together for the common good. Canon continues to monitor and assess its environmental impact to identify ways to improve its sustainability performance across all areas of the business.

EcoVadis is an independent CSR assessment agency. Its unique CSR assessment methodology covers 150 purchasing categories, 110 countries, and 21 CSR indicators. The methodology is also built on international CSR standards including the Global Reporting Initiative, the United Nations Global Compact, and the ISO 26000.



Canon is a world-leading innovator and provider of imaging and information technology solutions for individuals and businesses. Canon provides both individual products and complete networked technology solutions for information input, management and output. Its product range is divided between Business Solutions

(developing IT products, solutions and services for both the office and professional print environments) and Consumer Imaging (photography, video and digital camera, Laser and Inkjet printers). Canon Middle East is the operational headquarters for Canon in this region, and is based in Dubai, UAE.

QUALITYNET PARTICIPATES IN CAPACITY MIDDLE EAST 2016

BRAND GOLD SPONSOR OF THE EVENT AT DUBAI

KUWAIT: Qualitynet, Kuwait's #1 ICT, Data Communications & Internet Services provider participated at Capacity Middle East '16, held in Dubai between 1st & 3rd March. The brand is a Gold Sponsor of the event, which marks its 11th anniversary this year.

Capacity ME '16 attracted over 1,400 Telecom professionals representing more than 430 companies across the globe, the biggest event in their 11 year history. The event has cemented its position as the leading telecom event in the region, transforming itself into a platform for participating companies to discuss their strategies for revenue growth and future investment in the industry. This year's event attracted Senior Officials from leading telecom providers

across Europe, Asia, Africa, North America and the Middle East. Sabah Mohamed, Manager, Major Accounts & Int'l Relations - Qualitynet said "We consider the event to be a vital venue to discuss the many challenges we face in the industry today. It also provides us with an excellent opportunity to interact with other leading telecom companies, to exchange and share knowledge"

"Qualitynet's presence in regional and global events enriches its investment vision, enhancing its capabilities to develop existing opportunities and focus on enhancing new opportunities" said Mohammed. At this year's event, the company presents its ICT and Regional/ International Connectivity Services, provided in collaboration with globally renowned partners.



Sabah Mohamed



DUBAI: Fill Freybott, pilot of Freybott team of Germany, left, controls their team drone during the final day of the first World Drone Prix in Dubai on Saturday. (Inset) Luke Bannister of Somerset, a 15-year-old British pilot of Bannisteris team, Tornado X-Blades Banni UK, holds the trophy he won.—AP

15-YEAR-OLD PILOT FROM ENGLAND WINS DUBAI'S WORLD DRONE PRIX

DUBAI: A team led by a 15-year-old pilot from England took first place Saturday in the World Drone Prix, a new contest hoping to take flight both in this Mideast country fascinated by the technology and with sports fans worldwide.

Luke Bannister of Somerset led Tornado X-Blades Banni UK to win a \$250,000 purse, part of \$1 million in prizes handed out in the inaugural edition of this race as a Cabinet-level minister announced the start of the World Future Sports Games in December 2017.

Those contests next year will include robotic swimming, running, wrestling and car racing, as well as drone flying, as this city of futuristic skylines years to be ahead of the curve.

"We are trying to bring the future closer to us," said Mohammed Al-Gergawi, the United Arab Emirates' minister for Cabinet affairs.

At the World Drone Prix, four pilots at a time sat in racing-style seats, their eyes covered by goggles allowing them to watch a feed from a camera on their drone. The drones raced on a course behind them, zipping along a white track that occasionally reached up to pinch at the speeding aircraft for 12 laps with the skyscrapers of the Dubai Marina behind them.

Science fiction?

The pilots wore the white racing jumpsuits familiar to Formula One, but racers have to worry about what's above and below them as they fly their drones, said Zachry Thayer, a 25-year-old pilot for Team Big Whoop of Fort Collins, Colorado. But the onboard camera puts a racer into the action like nothing else, he said.

"That's what's making it explode," Thayer said. "Anybody can go out and all of a sudden, they're Superman." The crafts flown more resembled Erector Set creations, with one team using a cheap disposable lighter to solder a wire. The races themselves looked at home in the science-fiction film "Tron" - glowing fluorescent lights guiding the way around the 591-meter (650-yard) track.

Racers had to take at least one pit stop in the race, with crews leaning down to change out batteries. Pilots also had to decide whether to take short cuts, sometimes seeing their drones crash into the ground or into each other to the shouts of spectators.

Dubai, once a sleepy desert port city now home to the world's tallest building and the long-haul airline Emirates, has embraced drones. Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, has

given the \$1 million Drones for Good Award over the last two years. Government agencies across the larger United Arab Emirates, ever-eager to be seen using new technology, use drones in activities as varied as inspecting buildings to calming a frantic Abu Dhabi window-washer in 2014 caught 10 stories up after his scaffolding got stuck. Small hobby drones for sale sit on display in electronics stores in the country's many luxury malls, while Al-Dhafra Air Base hosts some of the US military's unmanned aircraft flying missions over Iraq and Syria targeting the Islamic State group. But the proliferation of hobbyist drone pilots has caused problems here as elsewhere in the world. Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, has seen drones fly into its airspace and halt its flights. Since February, drone owners have been required to register with the UAE's General Civil Aviation Authority. Authorities also ban hobbyists from putting cameras or lasers on their drones.

"It is not merely a flying game, but a sport that requires mental focus and accuracy to enable users to harmonize mental commands and hand movements to fly their drone," Saif Mohammed Al-Suwaidi, the aviation authority's director-general, said in a statement at the time.—AP

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT GMO MOSQUITO TEST PROPOSED IN FLORIDA

MIAMI: The spread of the Zika virus in Latin America is giving a boost to a British biotech firm's proposal to deploy a genetically modified mosquito to try to stop transmission of the disease. Oxitec has genetically modified the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which also transmits dengue and chikungunya, so the males produce offspring that do not live. But until now, its proposal to test the mosquito in the Florida Keys has languished at the Food and Drug Administration while the company conducted similar field trials outside the United States.

"The data seems to be promising in terms of reducing the mosquito populations in those small field trials, but we need to go through our process, and we are greatly expediting the process," FDA Assistant Commissioner Dr Luciana Borio said earlier this month at a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee hearing on Zika preparedness. Here are some things to know about genetically modified mosquitoes.

How are they modified?

Oxitec modifies *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes with synthetic DNA to produce offspring that won't survive outside a lab. Modified females are manually separated in the lab from the modified males, which do not bite and are released to mate with wild female mosquitoes.

Does it work?

Dr Borio: Oxitec says it has completed successful tests in Panama and the Cayman Islands, along with a test as part of a dengue-fighting program in Piracicaba, Brazil. The city's health department has confirmed Oxitec's results: a reduction in the wild *Aedes* larvae population in the targeted neighborhood by over 80 percent.

Some experts have questioned whether the use of genetically modified mosquitoes is feasible on a countrywide scale or is efficient



BRAZIL: File photo shows a researcher holds a container with female *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes at the Biomedical Sciences Institute in the Sao Paulo University in Sao Paulo, Brazil. —AP

for controlling mosquito populations and the spread of diseases over the long term.

Dr Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told the March congressional hearing that researchers would have to show that a reduction in the mosquito population led to a decline in disease. "Scalability is really going to be a problem," he said. "You don't want to scale up unless you know it works."

Tom Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said Thursday that tests of the genetically modified mosquitoes have only been done in small areas involving the release of tens of millions of mosquitoes. "So while they're promising technologies that we absolutely need to pursue, I think we also have to be realistic about what the impact in this mosquito season is likely to be," he said. World

Health Organization's Marie-Paule Kieny has called for "extreme rigor" in evaluating the effectiveness of modified mosquitoes.

What are the risks?

Oxitec says it has received no reports of adverse impacts from its modified mosquitoes. Anti-GMO activists say they want more proof that stray female modified mosquitoes that leave Oxitec labs aren't spreading genetic material through bites or that there are no other environmental risks, such as opening areas to infestation by another disease-carrying mosquito species. Outside researchers say Oxitec's method is safe and worth exploring as a weapon against a hard-to-eliminate mosquito, but some also say public perceptions about GMOs pose a significant challenge for Oxitec, which was bought last year by the biotechnology company Intrexon.

In a preliminary finding, the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine said Friday that the release of genetically modified mosquitoes as part of a field trial in the Florida Keys would not be harmful to people or the environment. "Based on the data and information submitted in the draft (environmental assessment), other submissions from the sponsor, and scientific literature, FDA found that the probability of adverse impacts on human or other animal health is negligible or low," the finding said.

Public outreach

Before the trial started in Brazil last April, Oxitec spent months on public outreach, including a radio jingle explaining how the technology worked and fliers about the "friendly mosquito." Oxitec also invited residents to place their bare arms in "bug dorms" containing hundreds of its modified mosquitoes, to demonstrate that the insects would not bite. About 35 million modified mosquitoes have been released in the middle-income residential neighborhood of Eldorado, flying from vans equipped with bladeless fans to blow insects out their windows. Piracicaba's mayor and health secretary say they hope to continue and expand the trial because traditional eradication methods hadn't been effective. "We were aware of its application in agriculture, and we have no doubts that it would be an important alternative to tackle what has become a daily headline story in the media," Mayor Gabriel Ferrato said when the trial results were announced in January.

The Florida proposal

The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District wants Oxitec to test its modified mosquitoes in a neighborhood of 444 homes clustered on a relatively isolated peninsula north of Key West. With or without the test, the district is looking for additional options to kill *Aedes*

egypti, which it considers a significant and expensive threat in the tourism-dependent island chain. In a statement Friday, executive director Michael Doyle said the district is looking at several different eradication technologies, but those other methods take years to develop, and Oxitec is furthest along.

A residents' group called the Florida Keys Environmental Coalition wants the district to instead try infecting mosquitoes with a bacteria that curbs their ability to transmit disease, arguing that Oxitec's proposal is mostly marketing hype and won't be subject to adequate federal oversight.

When will they be released in Florida?

Not anytime soon. The FDA still needs to review public comments on Oxitec's proposal and may require more documentation from the company before deciding whether to approve the trial - and there is no deadline for this process. The draft environmental assessment will be available for public comment for 30 days, beginning tomorrow.

"We need to give the public an opportunity to comment on the environmental assessment, given the significant attention that this novel technology has generated, especially in the communities for the proposed sites," Borio said.

Have genetically modified insects ever been released in the US?

Yes. Oxitec has released genetically modified pink bollworms in field tests aimed at reducing the population of the cotton pest in Arizona. Last summer, the company received approval for field cage trials in upstate New York for genetically modified diamondback moths, another agricultural pest, and Oxitec plans to continue further field trials in conjunction with Cornell University this summer. The US Department of Agriculture has overseen both projects. — AP

MOSQUITOES' RAPID SPREAD POSES THREAT BEYOND ZIKA

INVASIVE SPECIES SPREAD DISEASES TO EUROPE AND AMERICAS

LONDON: As the world focuses on Zika's rapid advance in the Americas, experts warn the virus that originated in Africa is just one of a growing number of continent-jumping diseases carried by mosquitoes threatening swaths of humanity. The battle against the insects on the streets of Brazil is the latest in an ancient war between humankind and the Culicidae, or mosquito, family which the pests frequently win.

Today, mosquito invaders are turning up with increasing regularity from Washington DC to Strasbourg, challenging the notion that the diseases they carry will remain confined to the tropics, scientists documenting the cases told Reuters. Ironically, humans have rolled out the red carpet for the invaders by transporting them around the world and providing a trash-strewn urban landscape that suits them to perfection.

The *Aedes aegypti* species blamed for transmitting Zika breeds in car tyres, tin cans, dog bowls and cemetery flower vases. And its females are great at spreading disease as they take multiple bites to satisfy their hunger for the protein in human blood they need to develop their eggs. Around the world, disease-carrying mosquitoes are advancing at speed, taking viruses such as dengue and Zika, plus a host of lesser-known ills such as chikungunya and St. Louis encephalitis, into new territories from Europe to the Pacific.

"The concern is that we have these species spreading everywhere. Today the focus is on Zika but they can carry many different viruses and pathogens," said Anna-Bella Failloux, head of the department that tracks mosquito viruses at France's Institut Pasteur. In 2014, there was a large outbreak of chikungunya, which causes fever and joint pains, in the Caribbean, where it had not been seen before, while the same virus sickened Italians in 2007 in a wake-up call for public health officials.

Europe has seen the re-emergence of malaria in Greece for the first time in decades and the appearance of West Nile fever in eastern parts of the continent. Out in the Atlantic, the Madeira archipelago reported more than 2,000 cases of dengue in 2012, in

a sign of the northerly advance of what - at least until Zika - has been the world's fastest-spreading tropical disease. In the past 40 years, six new invasive mosquito species have become established in Europe, with five arriving since 1990, driven in large part by the international trade in used vehicle tyres. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in the tyres and they hatch when rain moistens them at their destination. North American health experts are also racing to keep up, with the first appearance of *Aedes japonicus*, an invasive mosquito, in western Canada last November and *Aedes aegypti* found in Washington DC, apparently after spending the winter in sewers or Metro subway stations.

Spread unprecedented

The speed of change in mosquito-borne diseases since the late 1990s has been unprecedented, according to Jolyon Medlock, a medical entomologist at Public Health England, a government agency. For many experts, the biggest potential threat is *Aedes albopictus*, otherwise known as the Asian tiger mosquito, which is expanding its range widely and is capable of spreading more than 25 viruses, including Zika. "There is strong evidence that *Aedes albopictus* is now out-competing *aegypti* in some areas and becoming more dominant," said Ralph Harbach, an entomologist at London's Natural History Museum, who has been studying mosquitoes since 1976.

In the United States, *Aedes albopictus* has been found as far north as Massachusetts and as far west as California. In Europe it has reached Paris and Strasbourg. Adding to the challenge for public health authorities are the blurred lines between diseases carried by different mosquitoes, as shown by research in Brazil this month that another common mosquito, *Culex quinquefasciatus*, may also be able to carry Zika.

Both *Aedes aegypti* and *Culex quinquefasciatus* probably first arrived in the Americas from Africa on slave ships, scientists believe. In the centuries since, commerce has shuttled other species around the world, while air travel has exposed millions of people to new diseases. "You've got a global movement of

mosquitoes and a huge increase in human travel. Humans are moving the pathogens around and the mosquitoes are waiting there to transmit them," said Medlock. Human incursions into tropical forests have aggravated the problem. Deforestation in Malaysia, for example, is blamed for a steep rise in human cases of a type of malaria usually found in monkeys.

Don't kill the good guys

There have been some victories against mosquitoes, thanks to insecticide-treated bed nets and vaccines against viruses like yellow fever and Japanese encephalitis, as well as a new one for dengue approved in December. But mosquitoes still kill around 725,000 people a year, mostly due to malaria, or 50 percent more than are killed by other humans, according to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Climate change adds a further twist. A 2 to 3 degree Celsius rise in temperature can increase the number of people at risk of malaria by 3 to 5 percent, or more than 100 million, according to the World Health Organization.

Hotter weather also speeds up the mosquito breeding cycle from around two weeks at 25 degrees to 7 to 8 days at 28 degrees, according to the Institut Pasteur's Failloux. So is it time to wipe out mosquitoes altogether? Aggressive action in the 1950s and 1960s, including the use of the pesticide DDT, certainly pushed them back for a while. Today, genetic modification, radiation and targeted bacteria are being considered.

Trying to eliminate all mosquitoes, however, would make no sense, since there are 3,549 species and fewer than 200 bite humans. "It might be possible to wipe out a few species but we don't want to wipe out the good guys because a lot of them serve as food for frogs, fish and bats," said Harbach. "Many also visit flowers to feed on nectar and may play a role in pollination." Some are even our friends. Harbach has a soft spot for the *Toxorhynchites* genus, which have a convenient penchant for eating *Aedes aegypti* larvae. — Reuters

HAVING A YOUNGER SIBLING MAY BE GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH

NEW YORK: That pesky kid brother or sister who broke your stuff and got you in trouble all the time may have actually done you a favor. A US study suggests that younger siblings might be really good for your health. That's because by first grade, kids with younger siblings are much less likely to be obese. Children who didn't welcome a baby brother or sister into the family before first grade had almost triple the odds of obesity compared with kids who experienced the birth of a sibling when they were around three to four years old, the study found.

The study doesn't prove that being an only child will cause obesity or show how adding a new baby to family might help older kids maintain a healthy weight. But the results suggest that parents may make lifestyle changes after expanding the family that could be good to try even before another baby arrives, said senior study author Dr Julie Lumeng, a pediatrics and public health researcher at the University of Michigan and CS Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor.

"It is possible that when there is a younger sibling in the family, a child might become more active - for example running around more with their toddler sibling," Lumeng said by email. "Maybe families are more likely to take the kids to the park when there is a younger sibling, or maybe the child is less likely to be sedentary, watching TV, when there is a younger sibling to engage them in more active pretend play," Lumeng added. Mealtimes might also be different with a second kid in at the table.

Parents of only children can sometimes be controlling or hyper-focused about what their kid eats, which can potentially lead to bad eating habits, some previous research suggests. "When

parents use restrictive (e.g. keep food from children) or pressure-to-eat feeding practices (eg try to get kids to eat more food), children have an increased risk of being overweight," said Jerica Berge, a researcher at the University of Minnesota who wasn't involved in the study.

"When a new child is introduced, parents may relax their preoccupation with the older child's eating behaviors, allowing the older child to respond to their own satiety cues and self-regulate their eating," Berge added by email. "This self-regulation may lead to a healthier weight trajectory for the child with a sibling compared to a child without a sibling." For the current study, Lumeng and colleagues followed 697 US children from birth through age 6. At age 6, the kids without siblings were more likely to have higher-than-average weight for their height than their peers who did have a younger brother or sister, researchers report in the journal *Pediatrics*, March 11.

Limitations of the study include the lack of objectively measured birth weights and information on events such as a divorce, move or job loss in the family - all of which can influence the odds that children might become obese - the authors note. Other factors that can impact child obesity including parental weight, maternal weight gain or diabetes, breastfeeding, early introduction of solid food, family meals, bedtime routines, TV time and physical activity, noted Dr Sandra Hassink, medical director of the American Academy of Pediatrics Institute for a Healthy Childhood Weight. "This is a very interesting study that makes an observation but there is not enough information yet to understand why children without siblings would be heavier," Hassink, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email. — Reuters

GERMANWINGS CRASH: FRENCH URGE NEW HEALTH REPORTING RULES

LE BOURGET, France: French air accident investigators recommended yesterday that world aviation bodies draw up new rules requiring medical workers to warn authorities when a pilot's mental health could threaten public safety, after 150 people died when a Germanwings co-pilot deliberately crashed a jet into the French Alps last year. Co-pilot Andreas Lubitz had been treated for depression in the past, and the investigation found that he had consulted dozens of doctors in the weeks before the crash on March 24, 2015. But the many doctors didn't inform authorities of concerns about his mental health, France's BEA investigation agency said. One doctor referred Lubitz to a psychiatric clinic just two weeks before the crash, it said in its report on the disaster.

"Experts found that the symptoms (he was presenting at that time) could be compatible with a psychotic episode," said Arnaud Desjardin, leader of the BEA investigation. This information "was not delivered to Germanwings." Because Lubitz didn't inform anyone of his doctors' warnings, the BEA said, "no action could have been taken by the authorities or his employer to prevent him from flying." Germanwings and parent company Lufthansa have strongly denied any wrongdoing in the crash, insisting that the 27-year-old was certified fit to fly.

But relatives of those killed have pointed to a string of people they say could have raised



PARIS: Remi Jouty, director of BEA, the French Air Accident Investigation Agency, delivers a speech during a press conference at Le Bourget airport, north of Paris, yesterday. — AP photos

the alarm and stopped Lubitz, going back to the days when he began training as a pilot in 2008. The BEA investigation is separate from a manslaughter investigation by French prose-

cutors seeking to determine eventual criminal responsibility for the crash of Flight 9525 from Barcelona to Dusseldorf. The focus of its report was recommendations to avoid such accidents in the future, notably about pilot mental health issues and better screening before a pilot gets certified.

The agency found that the certification process failed to identify the risks presented by Lubitz. It said one factor leading to the crash might have been a "lack of clear guidelines in German regulations on when a threat to public safety outweighs" patient privacy. Germany's confidentiality laws prevent sensitive personal information from being widely shared, though doctors are allowed to suspend patient privacy if they believe there is a concrete danger to the person's safety or that of others. Desjardin described Germany's privacy rules as being especially strict, and said that doctors fear losing their jobs if they unnecessarily report a problem to authorities.

Suicidal tendencies

"That's why I think clearer rules are needed to preserve public security," he told reporters at a press conference in the French city of Le Bourget. The BEA recommendations also include peer support groups and other measures to remove the stigma and fear of losing a job that many pilots face for mental health issues. "The reluctance of pilots to declare their problems and seek medical assistance ...



GERMANY: In this file picture, a convoy of hearses drives on the highway in Duisburg.

needs to be addressed," the BEA said. Half an hour into the Germanwings flight, Capt Patrick Sondenheimer handed the controls to Lubitz and went to the restroom. When he returned, Sondenheimer found the cockpit locked from the inside. Lubitz, it seems, had disabled the safety code that would have allowed the pilot to open the door.

Shortly afterward, the Airbus A320 hit the ground near the French village of Le Vernet. Lubitz had previously been treated for depression and suicidal tendencies, and documents

seized by prosecutors show he partly hid his medical history from employers. Lubitz interrupted his Lufthansa training for several months due to psychological problems. He was allowed to return in 2009, having received the "all clear" from his doctors - though his aviation record now contained the note "SIC" meaning "specific regular examination." Lufthansa said after the crash that it was aware of Lubitz's depressive episode, but Germanwings, which he joined in 2013, said it had no knowledge of his illness. — AP

CALIFORNIA LAWMAKERS NEAR VOTE ON RAISING SMOKING AGE TO 21

ACRAMENTO, California: California's Senate is poised to vote on a sweeping package of anti-smoking measures-including raising the smoking age to 21- as lawmakers try to crack down on tobacco use and the health problems that flow from it. If the Senate approves Thursday and Gov Jerry Brown signs off, California would become the second state to move the age to buy cigarettes from 18 to 21, and electronic cigarettes would face the same restrictions as tobacco products.

The six bills represent California's most substantial anti-tobacco push in nearly two decades, the American Cancer Society said. But advocates couldn't garner enough support to raise cigarette taxes, which requires a two-thirds supermajority. The Cancer Society and other groups are seeking to qualify an initiative for the 2016 ballot. "With California having such a huge population it's going to be very impactful nationwide," said Cathy Callaway, associate director of state and local campaigns for the American Cancer Society.

Thursday's vote comes amid intense lobbying from tobacco interests and fierce opposition from many Republicans, who say the state should butt out of people's personal decisions, even if they're harmful to health. Still, the bills are likely to pass the Democratic-controlled Senate, which approved substantially similar legislation last year before it stalled in the Assembly.

A spokesman for the Democratic governor said last week that the governor generally doesn't comment on pending legislation. The Senate vote would come just over a week after San Francisco supervisors opted to raise the tobacco-purchase age, making it the second largest city to do so after



SAN FRANCISCO: In this file photo, a man smokes a cigarette in San Francisco. — AP photos

New York. Nationwide, more than 120 jurisdictions have raised the smoking age to 21, according to Tobacco 21, a group that advocates the policy shift nationally. Hawaii was first to adopt 21 as the smoking age statewide.

Buy tobacco

New Jersey's Legislature voted to raise the smoking age from 19 to 21, but the bill died when Republican Gov Chris Christie decided not to act on it before a January deadline. Advocates of a higher smoking age note that the vast majority of smokers

start before they're 18, according to data from the U.S. surgeon general. Making it illegal for 18-year-old high school students to buy tobacco for their underage friends will make it more difficult for teens to get ahold of tobacco products, they say.

Critics say adults are trusted to make weighty decisions to vote or join the military once they turn 18. In response, Democrats changed the bill to allow members of the military to continue buying cigarettes at 18. "You can commit a felony when you're 18 years old and for the rest of your life be in prison," said Assembly Minority Leader Chad Hayes, R-Yucca Valley. "And yet you can't buy a pack of cigarettes." Another bill would classify increasingly popular e-cigarettes, or "vaping" devices, as tobacco products subject to the same restrictions on who can purchase them and where they can be used.

The federal Food and Drug Administration has proposed regulating e-cigarettes but the rule hasn't taken effect. Anti-tobacco advocates fear that vaporizers are enticing to young people and may encourage them to eventually take up smoking. Others say they are a less-harmful, tar-free alternative to cigarettes. They haven't been extensively studied, and there's no scientific consensus on their harms or benefits.

The package would expand smoke-free areas to include bars, workplace breakrooms, small businesses, warehouses and hotel lobbies and meeting rooms. Smoking bans would apply at more schools, including charter schools, and counties would be able to raise their own cigarette taxes beyond the state's levy of \$0.87 per pack. Meanwhile, anti-smoking groups are collecting signatures for a ballot initiative that would raise



SAN FRANCISCO: State Sen Ed Hernandez, D-Azusa, urge lawmakers to approve his bill to raise the smoking age from 18 to 21, at the Capitol.

the cigarette tax to \$2 a pack and direct the money to be used for purposes including health care, tobacco-use prevention, research and law enforcement. With backing from wealthy liberal donor Tom Steyer, organizers have collected at least 25 percent of the signatures they need to place the measure on the November ballot. — AP

THREE KEY START-UPS FROM AFRICA'S TOP SCIENCE FORUM

DAKAR: From disease-fighting drones to wristbands bearing health data for expectant mothers-African entrepreneurs pitched ideas to overhaul everything from healthcare to urban planning before an audience of industry figures at the first gathering of the Next Einstein Forum in Dakar, Senegal this week.

Here are three of the best: Drones to fight disease, Moses Bangura, Sierra Leone

Bangura developed a civilian drone system to deliver medical supplies and transport clinical samples as part of his PhD in aerial robotics. He hopes to roll out the project first in his home country and then across hard-to-reach areas in Africa. "It's very reliable and robust, an open source system which anyone can develop," he said. "I thought about giving back to Sierra Leone and Africa, where I come from... one thing I realised is there is a very poor healthcare delivery system."

During the Ebola crisis, the first two hotspots were in the eastern towns of Kailahun and Kenema, linked by an extremely poor road that meant a distance of 100 kilometres (62 miles) could take a day's travel. "In both Kailahun and Kenema, the greatest need was for more treatment facilities backed by greater and faster laboratory support," the World Health Organization said in a report during the outbreak. "The cheapest and most efficient way would be to use civilian drones," Bangura told AFP, to ship medical supplies, blood donations, and getting tests to mobile laboratories. Bangura hopes his drones will take off within 18 months, subject to government legislation.

A wristband to save women's lives, Cameroon's Arreytambe Tabot

Software engineer Tabot has already received seed money from the Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology for his team's smart wristband, which works with mobile technology to provide real-time care for expectant mothers. Maternal sepsis is the third leading cause of maternal deaths in Africa, where more women die in childbirth than anywhere else, and Tabot says his invention is aimed at women in rural areas who are largely illiterate. It "does not require any behavioural change on the part of the primary user," working without messaging or apps, which usually require some reading ability, Tabot said.

A combination of voice commands and Radio Frequency Identification technology, previously used to register voters in Nigeria, holds data on vital signs from regular check-ups on the device, tentatively priced at \$1.50. "Every time she comes back to the local health center the wristband is accessed and if there are any changes then that is registered again and synchronised back into the cloud," Tabot told AFP. "These women are illiterate, a good number are in rural areas so they don't even know (sepsis) is a problem," he said, adding the wristbands will trial first in Nigeria. Any problem or discomfort can be registered by the expectant mother with a health practitioner via a missed call.

Building cities from plastic waste, Moussa Thiam, Mali

Thiam is still studying for his PhD at Canada's University of Ottawa, but is already forming links with government agencies back home to sell his

special brand of building material created from plastic waste. With expertise also built up as an alumni of Senegal's African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS), Thiam

wants to improve the environment in rapidly growing African cities while tackling pollution. "Long-term I want to be in Mali and West Africa," he said. — AFP



DAKAR: Senegalese group Dj Awadi performs in Dakar during the opening of the "Next Einstein Forum" (NEF). — AFP

HYPERTENSION AND HARD LABOR MAY BOOST MI RISK

NEW YORK: Women with hypertension and physically demanding jobs are much more likely to suffer myocardial infarction than peers who are less active at work and have normal blood pressure, a recent study suggests. Among thousands of nurses, hypertension and lots of lifting, carrying, standing and walking were linked to almost triple the odds of MI, compared with more sedentary labor, the Danish analysis found.

"Physically demanding work may be associated with an elevated heart rate and blood pressure," said lead study author Karen Allesen of the University of Southern Denmark in Odense. Over time, a high heart rate many hours a day may cause plaques to form in the arteries, Allesen said by email. Hypertension has also been tied to such plaques, she added. Her team thinks these links might help explain why some women ended up at higher risk for MI.

To explore the interplay between physical labor, high blood pressure and heart attack risk, Allesen and colleagues reviewed data on more than 12,000 female nurses who participated in the Danish Nurse Cohort Study starting in 1993. Data were collected using a questionnaire, with participants rating their exertion levels as low, moderate or high. During 15 years of follow up, 580 nurses developed ischemic heart disease. Roughly 12% of the nurses reported having hypertension.

About 47% of nurses reported high activity levels at work, 34% described their exertion level as moderate and 19% said they were generally sedentary. Nurses with normal blood pressure and high physical activity had a small

increased risk of heart disease, but this wasn't statistically meaningful after adjusting for other risk factors like diabetes and smoking. These women had about five additional cases of heart disease per 10,000 people per year than would have happened if they didn't have physically demanding jobs, the researchers calculated.

With hypertension, women had about 15 additional cases of heart disease per 10,000 people per year. Combining hypertension with hard labor, however, was associated with 60 extra cases of heart disease per 10,000 people per year, researchers reported February 14 in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology. One shortcoming of the study is its focus on only one profession in one country, the authors note. Because the analysis also relied on women to remember and report their activity and hypertension, it's possible they provided incorrect information.

It's also possible that whether women with hypertension took medication, and their lifestyles outside of working hours, could have influenced the results, said Lea Ann Matura, a researcher at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing in Philadelphia who wasn't involved in the study.

"Someone with uncontrolled hypertension may be at higher risk for ischemic heart disease due to physical activity," Matura added by email. "We need to think about not only the work environment, but also the person's personal life," Matura said. "If someone has uncontrolled hypertension and they are lifting heavy loads at home then they could be at risk, similar to the study's findings." — Reuters

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NBK SPONSORS LOYAC'S ANNUAL ECHO QUEST COMPETITION



Sponsored by NBK, LOYAC recently organized its fourth annual Echo Quest environmental competition with participation from 20 public and private schools that were represented by ten students each in the competition recently held at Al-Shaheed Park. LOYAC's marketing manager, Rabe'a Al-Hajri said that this was the first time NBK and LOYAC cooperated. She also hailed the constant support NBK provides to LOYAC's educational programs and activities.

Also speaking on the occasion, NBK's PR officer, Juan Al-Abdel Jeleel said that this sponsorship comes within NBK's constant support to LOYAC and its purposeful social mission in supporting various social sects, namely the youth.



MILLENNIUM HOTEL UNVEILS NEW EXECUTIVE LOUNGE

Millennium Hotel & Convention Centre Kuwait, one of the premier business hotels in the country, has unveiled a new Executive Lounge reinforcing its commitment to facilitate international business by providing guests with the best amenities and services throughout their stay.

Located on the 17th floor, the 5-star hotel's new lounge boasts a striking view of the city along with an elegant & comfortable interior, creating the ideal environment for both business-minded activity and simple relaxation. The lounge comes fitted with the latest technology and provides guests with complimentary gourmet

snacks and coffee, airport transportation, late check-out privileges and other exclusive perks.

Dani Saleh, Area General Manager of Millennium & Copthorne Hotels Kuwait explained that the Millennium brand enjoys a distinguished reputation for offering world-class facilities and outstanding serv-

ice. "We are ideally located and well-equipped to satisfy the full range of business needs. The Executive Lounge compliments our broader corporate offering and aims to place Millennium Hotel & Convention Centre as the preferred choice for those seeking to conduct business in Kuwait."

Located in Salmiya, Millennium Hotel &

Convention Center Kuwait is home to Kuwait's largest and extravagant ballroom, encompassing more than 6,000 SQM of function space. The property is operated by Millennium & Copthorne Hotels plc, a leading global hospitality management and real estate group with 120 hotels worldwide.

ACK SPONSORS THE 2ND CONFERENCE OF BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN THE GCC

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) will sponsor the "2nd Conference of Business Schools in the GCC". The conference will be held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of Kuwait, and organized by the College of Business Administration of Kuwait University.

The conference aims to cover significant topics addressed in the first installation of the event, while looking forward to new developments taking place within the sector. ACK is the sole private Kuwaiti university to participate in the conference through a research paper written by its very own Dr. Ahmad Khalidi, Assistant Professor in Marketing at the College, entitled

"Learning to Be Leaders: The Effect of Business Students' Learning Style in their Workplace Leadership"



Behaviors in the Arabian Gulf Region". Dr Khalidi's research investigates the effect of learning strategies on

transformational leadership practices in the workplace on a sample of business students in the Gulf Region. The findings of the study lead to several implications for learners and business schools in the Gulf Region. In addition to successfully being granted participation at the conference, Dr Khalidi's research paper will also be published in the prestigious "Arab Journal of Administrative Sciences" magazine.

ACK strongly believes in participating in such knowledge-sharing platforms, as well providing opportunities to its Academic staff to gain exposure to the latest regional developments in the fast-growing educational sector with the aim of delivering high quality learning experiences to its students.

TSC CELEBRATES INT'L WOMEN'S DAY FOR LADIES OF TSC REWARDS CARD HOLDERS

On the occasion of International Women's Day, The Sultan Center greeted its lady customers with tailor-made promotions and activities. TSC initiative stems from its deep appreciation to acknowledge women's role in social, economic, cultural and political achievements.

TSC Reward Card holders who spend KD 10 at any TSC store on a range of health and beauty care products, will get a chance to redeem a beauty treatment from Marcel Salon and beauty institution, which includes massage, mani-pedi, hair treatment, facials and arrange of other services.

TSC further organized a Social Media contest across its platforms, where customers were asked to mention a woman in their life who deserves a token of appreciation and

gratitude and explain the reasons why she was nominated; the winner of the contest will be awarded TSC Gift vouchers.

The competition runs from March 10th till March 19th. From all qualified entries one winner will be randomly selected. Lisa Al Gharib, Marketing Manager at TSC commented: "International Women's Day is to recognize women's achievements across the globe. In this special day, TSC wanted to celebrate the occasion with its lady customers by awarding them a symbol of appreciation and giving them the leisure to pamper themselves". TSC has been at the forefront in designing promotional campaigns for its TSC Rewards Card holders in recognition of their loyalty, and providing them with an extensive product portfolio and unparalleled services.





—Photos by Joseph Shagra



DIVAS CHAIN OPEN THEIR NEW RESTAURANT 'DIVAS LOUNGE'

Food and Beverages Company invited the media to celebrate the opening of their new project "Divas Lounge" located at Gold's Gym building near Hotel Holiday Inn Salmiya. In the presence of Mr Saad Al-Rashid - CEO and owner of Divas chain of restaurants who welcomed the guests and spoke about the opening of a new branch for Divas restaurants under the name "Divas Lounge" located in Gold's Gym building, which offers panoramic views of the Arabian Gulf Street

and opposite to The Scientific Center.

Mr Rashed added "the new restaurant consists of three floors, furnished in a unique way as it contains the latest technology in restaurant innovations many of which were imported from Europe." The outside seating area the chairs are imported from "Kartell" global company as to achieve the high level requested by the company, the series of three Divas Restaurants "Divas Lounge" "Divas Olympia" Divas Miral Complex, with a central kitchen

equipped in accordance with the requirements of ISO 22000 and a space of 1,300 square meter area, led by a French team of chefs specialists with international expertise. For example, Chef Edward Grosah and Chef Olivia, which provides the restaurant a rich menu of food that meets all our guests' requirements and tastes. Moreover the restaurant cares for the sources of the raw materials used by the chefs.

This option ensures each guest has a

unique experience, where the welfare of the place and quiet corners in addition to the diversity and richness of the dining menu and the magnificent scenery overlooking the Arabian Gulf Street

The Company distinguishes this particular branch with the most modern audio-visual system and achieve complete privacy for those who wish to use a separate training hall or to hold several meetings and celebrations for companies and individuals. The restaurant

is suitable to host a press conferences and meetings, and this came after a deep study of the requirements and needs of the market where there are many companies needs a hall that provide them with the highest levels of hospitality and services.

It is worth mentioning that the "Food and Beverages Company" recently opened another new company called "Le Pavillon", which will offer a new concept of hospitality and catering in the State of Kuwait and Gulf Area.



HILTON KUWAIT RESORT ANNOUNCES FRESH SPRING OFFERS AT ITS ACCLAIMED TEATRO RESTAURANT

Hilton Kuwait announced the launch of its spring specials at the resort's popular Teatro restaurant. Located on the ground floor, overlooking the Arabian Gulf, Teatro Restaurant boasts an elegant dining terrace and, throughout the month of March, guests can enjoy a range of tantalizing weekly specials whilst savoring culinary delights from across the globe against a stunning oceanic backdrop.

Treating Mom

Spoil mom this Mother's Day on March 21 with a delicious international buffet at Teatro restaurant. Enjoy quality time over lunch or dinner with a 25% discount on the total bill.

An Easter Brunch Special

Relax with family and friends this Easter, with an international brunch on Sunday 27 March, boasting a magic show and chocolate egg hunt for children and a delicious

variety of international cuisine for all to enjoy.

Friday Family Brunch

Fridays call for a family brunch, where children can play, dance to the live entertainment and enjoy their favorite dishes from the delicious kids buffet. In addition, kids can enjoy the magic show, movies and cartoon characters.

Succulent seafood

On Wednesday and Friday nights are for seafood lovers, with a seafood buffet and live cooking stations, offering a selection as vast as the ocean.

BBQ Thursdays

Celebrate the beginning of the weekend with a delicious BBQ on Thursday nights. Indulge in the finest meat, chicken and seafood and watch as it is grilled to perfection and served with your favorite sauces.

MARINA HOTEL KUWAIT TAILORS A SPECIAL WEEKEND PACKAGE

Marina Hotel Kuwait has customized an attractive and indulgent weekend package for residents and locals in Kuwait. At a location where luxury meets modernity, and where an attractive sea view, works harmoniously together with the latest technological systems, guests are invited to enjoy their weekends in style in the midst of absolute comfort. With a multitude of facilities and services, guests can break the daily routine and enjoy some peace of mind with a choice of room packages.

Perfect for a short break or a weekend getaway, guests can choose from any of the superior rooms and enjoy state-of-the-art facilities the hotel offers without missing out on other activities including shopping, wellness, sports and much more. They can further enjoy the vibrant white sands of the private beach along with the three pools and the pool bar - all not far away from the ultimate shopping destination, Marina Mall.

The package offers special rates for week-enders in the superior rooms at a rate starting from KD 88 which includes a buffet breakfast, free access to the hotel's health club, beach and pool area. Guests and their families can experience a luxurious escape after an exhaustive week and indulge themselves with a complimentary buffet breakfast for two persons at the Six Palms Restaurant.

Guests whose taste palettes crave for unique and diverse cuisines can watch authentic inno-



ventions spring to life for lunch and dinner at the renowned Atlantis Restaurant with the finest dishes from around the world and views of the Arabian Sea. The package also includes a 20% discount on buffet lunch and dinner for guests dining at the Atlantis Restaurant.

Within close proximity to Marina Mall, one of

the best shopping malls in Kuwait, and the Marina Crescent, which houses a variety international restaurants and coffee shops, Marina Hotel is an ideal location for family leisure. The award winning hotel is the destination to be for its dedication to a unique guest experience and high standard of service quality.



AMC

01:15 Four Rooms
02:50 Suspect Zero
04:30 Hoosiers
06:25 Island Of The Lost
07:55 Limit Up
09:25 Late For Dinner
11:00 Seven Years In Tibet
13:15 Rich Kids
14:50 The Tender
16:20 Little Sister
17:55 Waking Up In Reno
19:30 Still Life: A Three Pines Mystery
21:00 Night Manager
22:00 The Joshua Tree
23:40 Nightwatch

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:50 Gator Boys
02:40 Wild Capture School
03:10 Wild Capture School
03:35 Wildest India
04:25 Bahama Blue
05:15 Wildest Arctic
06:02 Wild Appalachia
06:49 Biggest And Baddest
07:36 Monkey Life
08:00 Monkey Life
08:25 Animal Maternity Ward
09:15 Big Fish Man
10:10 Treehouse Masters
11:05 Tanked
12:00 Animal Maternity Ward
12:55 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
13:50 Big Fish Man
14:45 Gator Boys
15:40 Treehouse Masters
16:35 Tanked
17:30 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli

CRIME & INVESTIGATION NETWORK

00:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 The Haunting Of...
03:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
04:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
05:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
06:00 The Haunting Of...
07:00 The FBI Files
08:00 The FBI Files
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 Beyond Scared Straight
11:00 Diabolical Women
12:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
14:00 The First 48
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 Ms. Murder
17:00 The FBI Files
18:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
19:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
20:00 The First 48
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 Diabolical Women
23:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos

BBC FIRST

00:30 Doctors
01:00 Eastenders
01:30 Silent Witness
03:20 Doctors
03:50 Eastenders
04:20 Starlings
05:05 Death In Paradise
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Eastenders
07:30 Starlings
08:15 Call The Midwife
09:10 Doctor Who
10:00 Doctors
10:30 Eastenders
11:00 Death In Paradise
11:55 Starlings
12:40 Call The Midwife
13:35 Doctor Who
14:25 Doctors
14:55 Eastenders
15:30 Frankie
16:25 Call The Midwife
17:20 Doctor Who
18:10 Casualty
19:05 Death In Paradise
20:00 Doctor Foster
21:00 Happy Valley
21:55 Happy Valley
22:50 Death In Paradise
23:45 Casualty

Bloomberg TELEVISION

00:00 Brilliant Ideas
00:30 Encore
01:00 High Flyers
01:30 Bloomberg Businessweek
02:00 First Up With Angie Lau
03:00 First Up With Angie Lau
04:00 Trending Business
05:00 Trending Business

CNBC

14:00 News Update
14:30 Dialogue
15:00 News Update
15:15 China 24
16:00 News Update
16:15 Global Business
17:00 News Update
17:15 World InSight
18:00 Asia Today
18:30 Culture Express
19:00 News Update
19:30 Spectrum Asia
20:00 Africa Live
21:00 Global Business
21:30 Dialogue
22:00 News Update
22:15 China 24
23:00 News Update

DISCOVERY CHANNEL HD

00:00 The Edge
00:30 Managing Asia
01:00 The Rundown
02:00 Asia Squawk Box
05:00 Asia Street Signs
07:00 CNBC Originals
08:00 Capital Connection
09:00 Squawk Box Europe
12:00 Europe Street Signs
13:00 Worldwide Exchange
14:00 U.S. Squawk Box
17:00 Squawk On The Street
19:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
20:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
21:00 U.S. Power Lunch
23:00 U.S. Closing Bell

DISCOVERY CHANNEL HD

00:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 The Haunting Of...
03:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
04:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
05:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
06:00 The Haunting Of...
07:00 The FBI Files
08:00 The FBI Files
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 Beyond Scared Straight
11:00 Diabolical Women
12:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
14:00 The First 48
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 Ms. Murder
17:00 The FBI Files
18:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
19:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
20:00 The First 48
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 Diabolical Women
23:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos

DISCOVERY CHANNEL HD

00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 Lions Of Sabi Sand: Brothers In Blood
02:50 Alcatraz: Escaping The Rock
03:40 What's In The Barn?
04:05 The Liquidator
04:30 Garage Gold
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 Chasing Classic Cars
06:00 Flying Wild Alaska
06:50 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 What's In The Barn?
08:55 The Liquidator
09:20 Garage Gold
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Chasing Classic Cars
10:35 Fast N' Loud Clip Shows
11:25 Street Outlaws
12:15 Extreme Car Hoarders
13:05 What's In The Barn?
13:30 The Liquidator
13:55 Garage Gold
14:20 Flying Wild Alaska
15:10 Wheeler Dealers
16:00 Fast N' Loud
16:50 Chasing Classic Cars
17:15 How Do They Do It?

DISCOVERY SCIENCE

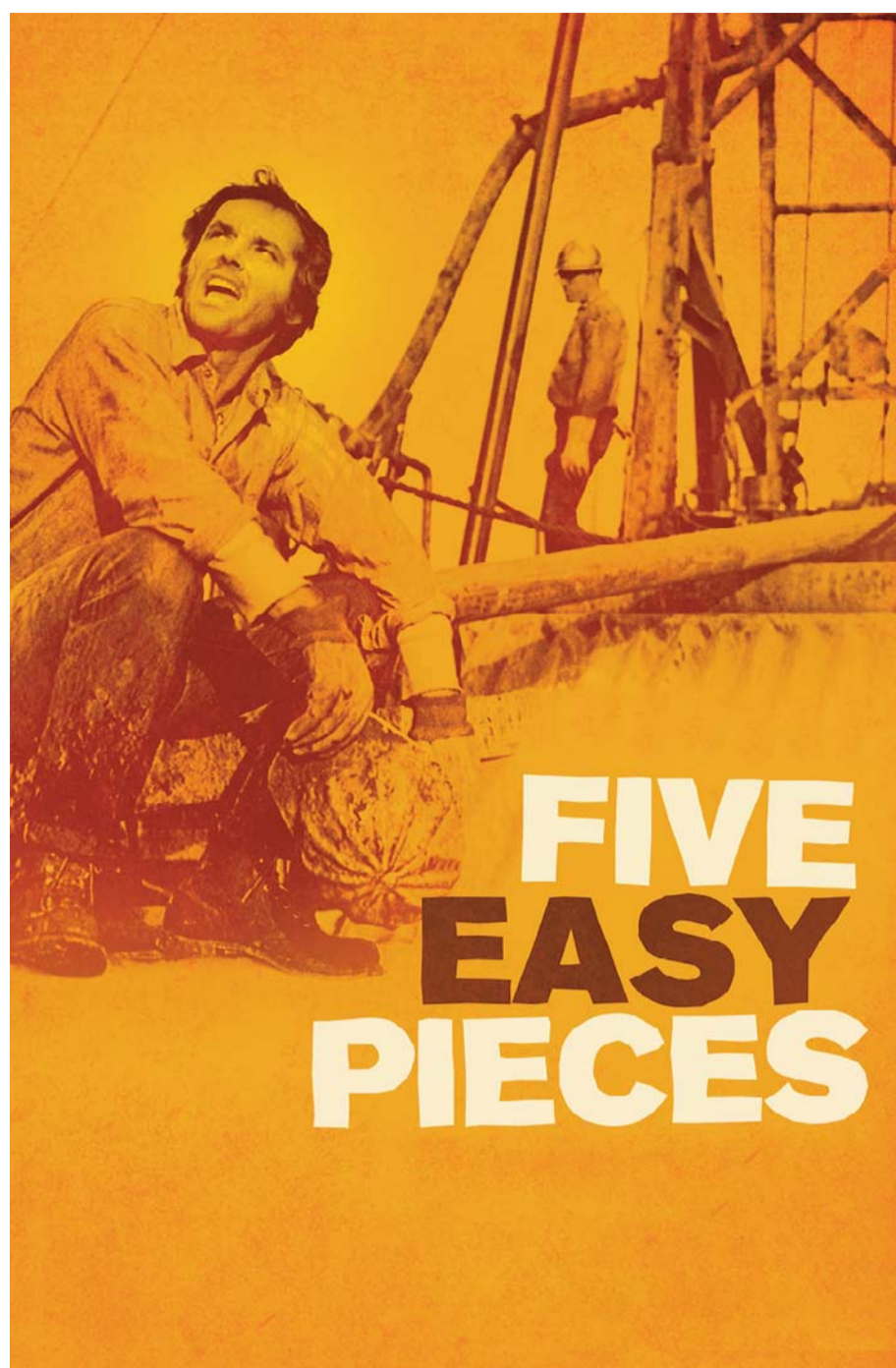
Zahn
17:35 Murder Shift
18:25 I Almost Got Away With It
19:15 The Will
20:05 Deadly Affairs
20:55 True Crime With Aphrodite
Jones
21:45 California Investigator
22:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
22:35 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
23:00 Swamp Murders
23:50 True Nightmares

DISCOVERY WORLD

00:35 Science Of The Movies
01:20 Science Of The Movies
02:08 Invent It Rich
02:55 Da Vinci's Machines
03:42 Mighty Ships
04:29 Mighty Ships
05:16 Mega Builders
06:03 Food Factory
06:25 Food Factory
06:50 Food Factory
07:13 Food Factory
07:37 How Do They Do It?
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:23 Race To Escape
09:08 Science Of The Movies
09:53 Engineering Earthquakes
10:38 How It's Made: Dream Cars
11:00 How It's Made: Dream Cars
11:23 Da Vinci's Machines
12:08 How The Universe Works
12:53 Engineering Earthquakes
13:38 Race To Escape
14:23 How It's Made: Dream Cars
14:46 How It's Made: Dream Cars
15:10 Science Of The Movies
15:57 Da Vinci's Machines
16:44 How The Universe Works
17:31 Unchained Reaction
18:18 Science Of The Movies
19:05 Race To Escape
19:50 You Have Been Warned
20:40 Cosmic Collisions
21:25 How It's Made
21:50 How It's Made
22:15 Science Of The Movies
23:00 You Have Been Warned
23:45 Cosmic Collisions

DISCOVERY CHANNEL HD

00:40 Secrets Of The Arsenal
01:30 Zero Hour
02:20 Zero Hour
03:10 Zero Hour
04:00 Zero Hour
04:50 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
05:35 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
06:25 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
07:10 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
08:00 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
08:50 100 Miles From Nowhere
09:40 Extreme Engineering
10:30 Codes And Conspiracies
11:20 Origins
11:45 Chasing Classic Cars
12:10 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
13:00 100 Miles From Nowhere
13:50 Extreme Engineering
14:40 Codes And Conspiracies
15:30 Origins
15:55 Chasing Classic Cars
16:20 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
17:10 100 Miles From Nowhere
18:00 Extreme Engineering
18:50 Codes And Conspiracies
19:40 Origins
20:05 Chasing Classic Cars
20:30 Collapse: When Structures Fail
21:20 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
22:10 Extreme Engineering
23:00 Collapse: When Structures Fail
23:50 Codes And Conspiracies



FIVE EASY PIECES ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

Disney JUNIOR

Ladybug & Cat Noir
12:45 Fish Hooks
13:00 Fish Hooks
13:10 Austin & Ally
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Descendants Wicked World
14:30 Liv And Maddie
14:55 Dog With A Blog
15:20 Dog With A Blog
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
16:10 Violette
17:00 The Next Step
17:25 Austin & Ally
17:50 Dog With A Blog
18:15 Mako Mermaids
18:40 Gravity Falls
19:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
19:30 Violette
20:20 The Next Step
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

EHD

00:05 Henry Hugglemonster
00:20 Calimer
00:35 Zou
00:50 Loopydoo
01:05 Art Attack
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
01:45 Calimer
02:00 Zou
02:15 Loopydoo
02:30 Art Attack
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Calimer
03:20 Zou
03:30 Loopydoo
03:45 Art Attack
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
04:20 Calimer
04:35 Zou
04:45 Loopydoo
05:00 Art Attack
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
05:35 Calimer
05:50 Zou
06:00 Loopydoo
06:15 Art Attack
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
06:50 Calimer
07:00 Zou
07:20 Loopydoo
07:35 Art Attack
08:00 Calimer
08:10 Zou
08:25 Loopydoo
08:40 Miles From Tomorrow
09:05 Sofia The First
09:30 Goldie & Bear
09:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
10:35 Doc McStuffins
11:00 Sofia The First
11:30 Goldie & Bear
12:00 Miles From Tomorrow
12:25 Special Agent Oso
12:40 The Hive
12:50 Handy Manny
13:15 Jungle Junction
13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
14:00 Sofia The First
14:25 Goldie & Bear
14:50 Doc McStuffins
15:15 Zou
15:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:55 Loopydoo
16:10 Miles From Tomorrow
16:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
17:00 Sofia The First
17:25 Jungle Cubs
17:50 Aladdin
18:15 Gummi Bears
18:40 Goldie & Bear
19:05 Miles From Tomorrow
19:30 Sofia The First
19:55 Doc McStuffins
20:20 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
20:35 Miles From Tomorrow
21:00 Goldie & Bear
21:30 Sofia The First
22:00 Jungle Cubs
22:25 Aladdin
22:50 Gummi Bears
23:20 Lilo And Stitch
23:50 Zou

ITV CHOICE

00:10 The Chase
01:30 Emmerdale
01:55 Emmerdale

FOOD NETWORK

00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Tia Mowry At Home
01:30 Tia Mowry At Home
02:00 Cuthroat Kitchen
05:00 Chopped
06:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
06:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:30 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
09:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 The Pioneer Woman
11:30 The Pioneer Woman

XD

00:00 Programmes Start At 7:00am KSA
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K. C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas
08:15 Annedroids
08:40 Lab Rats
09:10 Kirby Buckets
09:35 Wander Over Yonder
10:00 Rocket Monkeys
10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
10:50 Boyster
11:20 Pair Of Kings
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 Lab Rats
13:30 Phineas And Ferb
13:55 Phineas And Ferb
14:20 Kickin' It
14:45 Kickin' It
15:10 Guardians Of The Galaxy
15:15 Rocket Monkeys
16:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
16:30 Kirby Buckets
16:55 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:25 K. C. Undercover
17:50 Supa Strikas
18:15 Lab Rats
18:40 Mighty Med
19:10 Annedroids
19:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
20:00 Kirby Buckets
20:25 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:50 K. C. Undercover
21:20 Pickle And Peanut
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Mighty Med
22:40 Super Matrak
23:05 Super Matrak
23:30 Boyster

HISTORY HD

00:20 Pawn Stars Australia
01:10 American Restoration
02:00 Duck Dynasty
02:50 American Pickers
03:40 Shipping Wars
04:05 Shipping Wars
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Hunting Hitler
06:00 Ice Road Truckers
06:50 Counting Cars
07:40 Ax Men
08:30 Storage Wars
08:55 Swamp People
09:45 Down East Dickering
10:35 American Pickers
11:25 Hunting Hitler
12:15 Pawn Stars
13:05 Shipping Wars
13:55 Pawn Stars
14:45 Pawn Stars Australia
15:35 Storage Wars
16:00 American Pickers
16:50 Big Rig Bounty Hunters
17:15 Big Rig Bounty Hunters
17:40 Counting Cars
18:05 Counting Cars
18:30 Hunting Hitler
19:20 Duck Dynasty
19:45 Duck Dynasty
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Storage Wars
21:25 Storage Wars
21:50 Aussie Pickers
22:40 The Curse Of Oak Island
23:30 Storage Wars
23:55 Storage Wars

COMEDY

00:00 Community
00:30 Playing House
01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
01:30 Family Guy
02:00 South Park
02:30 The League
03:00 Your Family Or Mine
03:30 The Goldbergs
04:00 Two And A Half Men
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 The Last Man On Earth
06:00 Mad Love
06:30 Community
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 Two And A Half Men
08:30 Breaking In
09:00 Your Family Or Mine
09:30 Grandfathered
10:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
10:30 Community
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 Mad Love
12:30 Two And A Half Men
13:00 Breaking In
13:30 Community
14:00 The Goldbergs
14:30 Grandfathered
15:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
15:30 Playing House
16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
17:00 Mad Love
18:00 Your Family Or Mine
18:30 The Goldbergs
19:00 The Grinder

COMEDY

00:10 The Chase
01:30 Emmerdale
01:55 Emmerdale

OSN FIRST HD

02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Big Star's Little Star
03:25 Seven Days With A
04:20 The Jonathan Ross Show
05:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?
06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:00 Tracey Ullman's Show
07:30 Grantchester
08:25 The Jonathan Ross Show
09:20 Big Star's Little Star
10:15 The Chase
11:10 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
12:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?
13:25 Emmerdale
13:50 Eggheads
14:20 Coronation Street
14:45 Big Star's Little Star
15:35 Come Dine With Me Couples
16:30 Tracey Ullman's Show
17:00 Raised By Wolves
17:25 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
18:20 Emmerdale
18:45 Coach Trip
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 Come Dine With Me Couples
20:30 Tracey Ullman's Show
21:00 Raised By Wolves
21:25 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
22:20 Coronation Street
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?

NAT GEO people HD

00:10 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
01:00 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
01:25 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
01:50 Maximum Foodie
02:15 Eat Street
03:00 Meat v Veg
03:30 Tripping Out With Ailie & Georgia
04:20 Top Tables, Top Cities
05:10 Fearless Chef
06:00 American Food Battle
06:25 Rustic Adventure Argentina
06:50 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
07:15 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
07:40 Maximum Foodie
08:05 Eat Street
08:55 Meat v Veg
09:20 Tripping Out With Ailie & Georgia
10:10 Top Tables, Top Cities
11:00 Fearless Chef
11:50 American Food Battle
12:15 Rustic Adventure Argentina
12:40 East Bites West
13:05 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
13:35 Maximum Foodie
14:00 Eat Street
14:55 Meat v Veg
15:25 Tripping Out With Ailie & Georgia
16:20 Top Tables, Top Cities
17:15 Fearless Chef
18:10 American Food Battle
18:35 Rustic Adventure Argentina
19:05 Meat v Veg
19:30 Tripping Out With Ailie & Georgia
20:25 Top Tables, Top Cities
20:50 Top Tables, Top Cities
21:15 Fearless Chef
22:05 American Food Battle
22:30 Rustic Adventure Argentina
22:55 East Bites West
23:20 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
23:45 Maximum Foodie

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

00:00 Bates Motel
01:00 Scandal
02:00 How To Get Away With Murder
03:00 The Last Kingdom
04:00 Bones
05:00 Good Morning America
06:00 Suits
07:00 Covert Affairs
08:00 Heroes Reborn
09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
10:00 Bones
11:00 Covert Affairs
12:00 Coronation Street
13:00 Coronation Street
13:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Suits
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 Heroes Reborn
19:00 Scandal
20:00 How To Get Away With Murder
21:00 Quantico
22:00 Rosewood
23:00 Allegiance

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

00:00 Neighbors
02:00 I Love You Beth Cooper
04:00 Serial (Bad) Weddings
06:00 Mr. Wonderful
08:00 The Other Sister
10:15 Serial (Bad) Weddings
12:00 Almost Christmas
14:00 Down To Earth
15:45 The Other Sister
18:00 500 Days Of Summer
20:00 Lay The Favorite
22:00 Superbad

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

02:00 Five Easy Pieces
03:45 Vanity Fair
06:15 A Beautiful Mind
08:30 Half Of A Yellow Sun
10:30 Black Nativity
12:30 Vanity Fair
15:00 What Dreams May Come
17:00 Half Of A Yellow Sun
19:00 Secret Window
21:00 Blaze
23:00 Killer Joe

OSN MOVIES HD

01:00 Outcast
03:00 Some Girls
05:00 A Gift Of Miracles
07:00 Penthouse North
09:00 Some Girls
10:45 Godzilla
13:00 Not Safe For Work
14:45 Cuban Fury
16:45 Stoneheart Asylum
18:45 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I
21:00 Fast Girls
23:00 Horrible Bosses 2

OSN SPORTS 1 HD

01:00 World Rugby
01:30 AFL Season Preview
05:00 Super Rugby
07:00 Golfing World
08:00 World Rugby
08:30 Gillette World Sport
09:00 NRL Premiership
11:00 Live NRL Premiership
13:00 FIH Hockey World
13:30 Super Rugby
15:30 Top 14 Highlights
16:00 Super Rugby
18:00 Golfing World
19:00 PGA Tour Highlights
20:00 PGA European Tour Highlights

OSN SPORTS 2 HD

01:00 Gillette World Sport
01:30 PGA European Tour Highlights
02:30 Live NHL
05:30 Gillette World Sport
06:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
07:00 PGA Tour
12:30 Gillette World Sport
13:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
14:00 NRL Premiership
16:00 WWE Bottom Line
17:00 WWE Superstars
18:00 WWE Main Event
19:00 WWE Experience
20:00 WWE Afterburn
21:00 This Week In WWE
21:30 Indy Car

OSN SPORTS 3 HD

05:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
06:00 Inside Sailing
06:30 The World Sailing Show
07:00 World Rugby
07:30 Gillette World Sport
08:00 Golfing World
09:00 World Pool Masters
10:00 Indy Car
13:00 Europro Tour
15:00 The Weber Cup
16:00 Golfing World
17:00 NRL Premiership
19:00 NHL
21:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
22:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
23:00 Top 14 Highlights
23:30 HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series

OSN SPORTS 4 HD

00:30 Louis Vuitton America's Cup Highlights
01:30 V8 Supercar Series Highlights
03:30 Porsche GT3 Cup Middle East
04:00 Pro Kabaddi

HORRIBLE BOSSES 2

JASON BATEMAN CHARLIE DAY JASON SUDEIKIS JENNIFER ANISTON JAMIE FOXX CHRISTOPH WALKER CHRISTOPH WALKER

THE HUSTLER THE BRAINS THE BOY TOY THE SEX POT THE MONEY THE HOTSHOT

11.26

HORRIBLE BOSSES 2 ON OSN MOVIES HD

06:00 Asia Edge
07:00 Bloomberg Best
08:00 Charlie Rose
09:00 Countdown
10:30 On The Move
11:00 On The Move
12:00 The Pulse
13:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
14:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
15:00 Bloomberg Go
16:00 Bloomberg Go
18:00 Bloomberg Markets
19:00 Bloomberg Markets: European Close
20:00 Bloomberg Markets
21:00 Bloomberg Markets
22:00 Bloomberg Markets
23:00 Bloomberg Markets

CCTV NEWS

00:00 News Update
00:30 Dialogue
01:00 News Update
01:15 China 24
02:00 Americas Now
03:00 News Update
03:30 China InSight
04:00 News Update
04:30 Assignment Asia
05:00 News Update
06:00 Dialogue
07:00 News Hour
08:00 Americas Now
09:00 News Update
10:30 Sports Scene
11:00 Global Business
12:00 News Update
12:30 Culture Express
13:00 Africa Live

DISNEY CHANNEL

00:00 Violette
00:45 The Hive
01:00 Gold Rush
01:50 Diamond River Hunters
22:40 Pacific Warriors
23:30 Wheeler Dealers

ID. INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY

00:40 Deadly Affairs
01:30 Laurny Is Lost: A Disappeared Special
02:20 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
03:10 Swamp Murders
04:00 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
04:45 Deadly Affairs
05:30 Laurny Is Lost: A Disappeared Special
06:20 The Will
07:10 The Will
08:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner On The Case With Paula Zahn
08:50 Fatal Encounters
10:30 Murder Shift
11:20 Deadly Affairs
12:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
13:00 The Will
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 California Investigator
15:05 Dr G: Medical Examiner
15:55 Fatal Encounters
16:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn

CLASSIFIEDS

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (10/03/2016 TO 16/03/2016)

Time	Programme
11:45 AM	SHARQIA-1 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
1:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
4:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
6:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
9:00 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
11:00 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
1:00 AM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:30 PM	SHARQIA-2 LONDON HAS FALLEN
2:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
4:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
6:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
8:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
10:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
12:00 PM	SHARQIA-3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
2:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
5:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
7:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
10:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
12:30 AM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
11:30 AM	MUHALAB-1 ZOOTOPIA
1:45 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
4:15 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
6:45 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
9:15 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
11:45 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
12:45 PM	MUHALAB-2 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
3:15 PM	ZOOTOPIA
5:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA
7:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
9:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:05 AM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:00 PM	MUHALAB-3 LONDON HAS FALLEN
2:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
4:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
6:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
8:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
10:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
12:05 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
11:30 AM	FANAR-1 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
1:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
4:00 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
6:00 PM	ZOOTOPIA
8:15 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
10:15 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:15 AM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:00 PM	FANAR-2 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
2:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
5:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
7:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
10:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT

Time	Programme
12:30 AM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
11:45 AM	FANAR-3 TRIPLE 9
2:00 PM	TRIPLE 9
5:00 PM	TRIPLE 9
7:15 PM	TRIPLE 9
9:30 PM	TRIPLE 9
12:05 AM	TRIPLE 9
12:30 PM	FANAR-4 LONDON HAS FALLEN
2:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
4:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
6:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
8:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
10:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
12:45 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
1:00 PM	FANAR-5 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
1:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
3:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
6:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
8:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
11:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
1:00 AM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
11:45 AM	MARINA-1 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
1:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
4:00 PM	ZOOTOPIA
6:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA
8:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
10:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:45 AM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:15 PM	MARINA-2 LONDON HAS FALLEN
2:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
4:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
6:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
8:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
10:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
12:15 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
11:30 AM	MARINA-3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
2:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
4:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
7:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
9:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
12:05 AM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
11:45 AM	AVENUES-1 ZOOTOPIA
2:15 PM	ZOOTOPIA
4:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
7:15 PM	ZOOTOPIA
9:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
12:15 AM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
11:45 AM	AVENUES-2 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT

Time	Programme
2:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
5:15 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
7:45 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
10:15 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
12:45 AM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
12:30 PM	AVENUES-3 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
2:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
5:00 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
7:15 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
9:30 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
11:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:00 PM	360°-1 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
2:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
5:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
7:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
10:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
12:30 AM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
1:15 PM	360°-2 ZOOTOPIA
1:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA
3:45 PM	ZOOTOPIA
6:15 PM	ZOOTOPIA
8:45 PM	NO SAT ZOOTOPIA
11:15 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:15 PM	360°-3 LONDON HAS FALLEN
2:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
4:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
7:00 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
9:15 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
11:30 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
12:45 PM	AL-KOUT.1 LONDON HAS FALLEN
2:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
4:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
6:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
8:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
10:45 PM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
12:45 AM	LONDON HAS FALLEN
11:30 AM	AL-KOUT.2 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
1:45 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
4:00 PM	ZOOTOPIA
6:15 PM	ZOOTOPIA
8:30 PM	ZOOTOPIA
10:30 PM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:30 AM	THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR
12:00 PM	AL-KOUT.3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
2:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
5:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
7:30 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
10:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT
12:30 AM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT

FOR SALE

Mitsubishi Pajero, dark blue, 2006 model, owner driven 1,00,000 kms, 5x CD changer, new tyres, new battery, registration up to Dec 2016. Please call 99218172. (C 5143)

Expatriate leaving Kuwait, household appliances and furniture for sale, please call 99218172. (C 5143)

10-3-2016

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Hatim holder of Indian Passport No: K8514434, Sadar Bazar, VIL - Partapur, Bedwara, Teh - Garhi, Banswara, Rajasthan, hereby changed my name to **Hatim Mansur Najmi**. (C 5146)

14-3-2016

I, Gregory Joao Gomes, (old name) holder of Indian Passport No. Z2111063, son of late Joao Gomes from Borim - Goa, hereby change my name to **Anselmo Gregorio Gomes**, (new name) as per my birth certificate. (C 5145)

FOR RENT

New flat in Jabriya
 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, kitchen

Contact: **97414191**

I, Ligorio Dsouza, holder of Indian Passport No. N1868736, Agosso Loliem Canacona Goa, south Goa 403728, hereby change my name to **Ligorio De Sousa**, H.N. 355, Agas Loliem Canacona Goa. (C 5144)

I, Betty Juliet D Souza, holder of Indian Passport No. 9397340, H.N. 64 Comba Margao Salcete, Goa, India, hereby change my name **Betty Juliet Pires**. (C 5144)

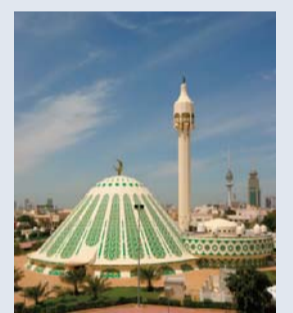
I, Abdullah Walid Khalid holder of Pakistani Passport No. AC 6774661 22 Zubair Street Islamiya Park Pouch Road Lahore, hereby changed my name to **Saad Walid Khalid**. (C 5142)

10-3-2016

EMERGENCY 112

Prayer timings

Fajr:	04:41
Shorook	06:00
Duhr:	11:57
Asr:	15:20
Maghrib:	17:55
Isha:	19:12



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

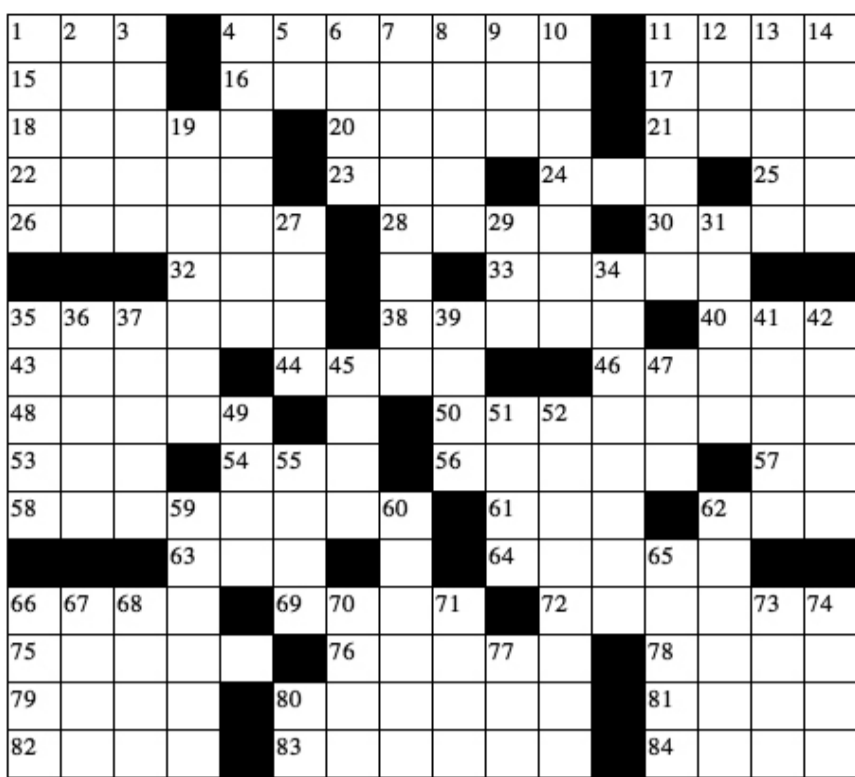


Arrival Flights on Monday 14/3/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05
BBC	044	Dhaka/Dammam	00:05
MSC	403	Asyut	00:15
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
RJA	642	Amman	01:05
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05
DLH	635	Doha	01:35
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30
THY	768	Istanbul	02:50
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25
JZR	503	Luxor	04:25
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:55
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
IRA	667	Esfahan	10:00
OMA	641	Muscat	10:05
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:15
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00

Departure Flights on Monday 14/3/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
AIC	982	Ahmedabad/Chennai	14:10
MSC	502	Alexandria	14:30
JZR	528	Asyut	14:40
PIA	206	Lahore	14:50
FDB	072	Dubai	15:05
JAI	573	Mumbai	15:30
MSC	416	Sohag	15:40
MSC	404	Asyut	15:45
BBC	044	Dhaka	15:55
THY	773	Istanbul	16:10
DLH	635	Frankfurt	16:30
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	16:40
UAE	854	Dubai	16:55
THY	769	Istanbul	16:55
PGT	859	Istanbul	17:15
OMA	644	Muscat	17:30
FDB	068	Dubai	17:50
MSR	613	Cairo	17:55
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	17:55
KKK	6508	Istanbul	18:00
QTR	1077	Doha	18:00
THY	765	Istanbul	18:05
CEB	7695	Manila	18:20
JZR	560	Sohag	18:30
FDB	070	Dubai	18:35
JZR	164	Dubai	18:45
RJA	643	Amman	18:55
THY	771	Istanbul	19:10
FDB	5062	Dubai	19:25
GFA	212	Bahrain	19:30
KAC	537	Sohag	19:35
FDB	054	Dubai	19:40
QTR	1087	Doha	19:45
BAW	156	London	19:45
SVA	513	Riyadh	20:10
KAC	671	Dubai	20:20
KAC	787	Jeddah	20:20
ABY	126	Sharjah	20:55
UAE	856	Dubai	20:55
KAC	541	Cairo	21:00
KAC	561	Amman	21:00
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	21:20
KAC	501	Beirut	21:20
FDB	056	Dubai	21:25
KAC	153	Istanbul	21:40
QTR	1071	Doha	21:45
IRA	666	Esfahan	22:00
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	22:15
OMA	642	Muscat	22:25
GFA	214	Bahrain	22:25
AXB	890	Mangalore	22:30
JZR	776	Jeddah	23:05
KAC	103	London	23:15
UAE	874	Dubai	23:45
MEA	405	Beirut	23:50
KAC	785	Jeddah	23:55
FDB	076	Dubai	23:55

Departure Flights on Monday 14/3/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KAC	617	Doha	14:45
KNE	481	Taif	14:50
PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:55
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
QTR	1079	Doha	15:10
FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
KAC	513	Tehran	15:10
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:50
KAC	613	Bahrain	15:50
KNE	473	Jeddah	16:05
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:25
OMA	646	Muscat	16:30
JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	17:30
JZR	238	Amman	17:30
FDB	052	Dubai	17:35
QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
RJA	641	Amman	17:55
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
MSR	615	Cairo	18:50
FDB	064	Dubai	19:20
ABY	124	Sharjah	19:25
UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	283	Dhaka	20:35
KAC	353	BLR	20:40
KAC	361	Colombo	20:45
QTR	1081	Doha	20:50
KAC	351	Kochi	20:50
KNE	461	Riyadh	21:10
KAC	331	Trivandrum	21

CROSSWORD 1195



ACROSS

1. Automatic data processing by electronic means without the use of tabulating cards or punched tapes.
4. A member of an Indian people formerly living along the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
11. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
15. A person active in party politics.
16. The ninth month of the Moslem calendar.
17. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
18. A board with the alphabet on it.
20. Chief god of the Rig-Veda.
21. Set down according to a plan.
22. Thick like cream.
23. How long something has existed.
41. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
25. A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
26. Having had pain or loss or suffering inflicted.
28. Formerly a large constellation in the southern hemisphere between Canis Major and the Southern Cross.
30. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
32. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
33. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
35. Shrubby plant with aromatic grayish-green leaves used as a cooking herb.
38. Of or related to or derived from oats.
40. Any of various units of capacity.
43. Type genus of the Anatidae.
44. Air pollution by a mixture of smoke and fog.
46. The inner and thicker of the two bones of the human leg between the knee and ankle.
48. A holy war by Muslims against unbelievers.
50. Beliefs and practices of a sect of Orthodox Jews.
53. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
54. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
56. (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
57. In operation or operational.
58. Gum resin used especially in treating skin irritation.
61. Group insurance that entitles members to services of participating hospitals and clinics and physicians.
63. A city in the European part of Russia.
64. A songlike cry in which the voice fluctuates rapidly between the normal voice and falsetto.
66. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
69. Not easy.
72. United States psychologist who studied the intelligence of primates (1876-1956).
75. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
76. With the mouth wide open as in wonder or awe.
78. A language unit by which a person or thing is known.
79. Exhibiting or restored to vigorous good health.
81. A state of agitated irritation.
82. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
83. Growth of hair or wool or fur covering the body of an animal.
84. A three-tone Chadig language.

DOWN

1. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
2. Sorghums of dry regions of Asia and North Africa.
3. Someone who plies a trade.
4. Of or relating to Aram or to its inhabitants or their culture or their language.
5. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
6. Type genus of the Amiidae.
7. Any of several herbivorous leaping marsupials of Australia and New Guinea having large powerful hind legs and a long thick tail.
8. A machine or person that adds.
9. (in golf) The standard number of strokes set for each hole on a golf course, or for the entire course.
10. A mystical or allegorical interpretation (especially of Scripture).
11. A deep bow.
12. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
13. The basic unit of money in Nigeria.
14. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt.
19. Tropical tree of the East Indies cultivated for its edible fruit.
27. Portuguese explorer who in 1488 was the first European to get round the Cape of Good Hope (thus establishing a sea route from the Atlantic to Asia) (1450-1500).
29. (slang) A gangster's pistol.
31. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation.
34. (physics) The point of maximum displacement in a periodic system.
36. Administer an oil or ointment to.
37. United States naval officer and historian (1840-1914).
39. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
41. Any of several large shaggy-maned humped bovids having large heads and short horns.
42. A genus of Lamnidae.
45. Little known Kamarupan languages.
47. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
49. Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
51. Pale gray.
52. Siberian breed of white or cream dog of the spitz family.
55. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
59. The southern part of the ancient Palestine succeeding the kingdom of Judah.
60. (Akkadian) God ruling with his consort Ereshkigal the world of the dead.
62. A non-aromatic saturated hydrocarbon with the general formula C_nH_(2n+2).
65. Painter (born in Germany, resident of France and the United States) who was a cofounder of Dadaism.
67. Dearly loved.
68. (usually followed by 'to') Having the necessary means or skill or know-how or authority to do something.
70. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
71. An informal term for a father.
73. An independent ruler or chieftain (especially in Africa or Arabia).
74. Stalk of a moss capsule.
77. A wooden pin pushed or driven into a surface.
80. A physician who is not a specialist but treats all illnesses.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You feel a love of order and law-an appreciation for responsibilities and duty. Problems are valued for their lessons. Travel plans may have to be changed, but it will not stop you from finding some time to relax and enjoy the day. This is the time you have been looking for in order to catch up with your reading or at least do some serious planning. Schedule a massage for you and your loved one this afternoon. You may be moved to discover and appreciate the beauty in your life and in those around you. At the same time, everything could take on added importance. Even though this is one of your better days for money-be careful that you do not overspend or indulge too much just now. A quiet dinner for two is in order tonight.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You will find that your mind and thoughts will be very intense just now. There could be a lot of pressure to make decisions but walk away for a moment or two so that you can have a focus. After some problems have been solved within your own surroundings, there may be another cause to jump. Someone else has difficulty and wants you to quickly fix the problem. It may be time to help your loved ones learn some self-help steps. When you solve someone else's problem, it would be good to demonstrate the process you took so that he or she can step up and solve problems alone in the future. Satisfaction comes from a job well done. Your mate, children and other companions show their respect for your kind guidance.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Matters pertaining to the family, home or property will need your undivided attention. This may mean a delay of any trips you were planning. You are encouraged to speak your mind with family and friends. Improved and revised plans are decided soon. It is good you know how to listen because after you speak your mind you are good to invite others to speak their mind. You have plenty of people that love to have you on their team as you always seem to be listening to just what people say. Targeting what others want to accomplish, you go fishing for just the right way to put a plan together that will make everyone happy. One exciting development will include enough room for every person and extra space for visitors. There is room for surprises.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You like to go off by yourself and that is good some of the time, but today you should take some time to invite your partner or close friend to join you in your adventure of the day. You may decide to drive in one direction for one and one-half hours, just to see where the road takes you. It may be that an old hardware store or an out-of-the-way antique store would be fun to explore. The person you are with may have some money-saving tips or ways to make more money with a couple of pieces of furniture today-with a high possibility of a possible good investment. The day is such a success that you may have requests from others. Today was a little different. After driving for quite a while, you may enjoy a little exercise before the evening meal.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

A young person or persons may say that they do not need your help today, but with just a little attention, you may find that this young person is very appreciative that you would take some interest in them. Your magnetic personality is strong and you can talk most people into just about anything. New ways to save the planet are uppermost in your mind this afternoon. If you are not doing research, you are probably copying ideas to hand out to your friends. One of the reasons that recycling does not catch on in some areas is that the cities are still holding back on recycling containers and techniques, etc. Consider starting a petition geared to the city officials finding ways to help develop this project. You could get kids involved to teach recycling.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Fate seems to bring you new friends. An organization you belong to or a group you associate with could change some of your energies with old friends. You may find that different interests have developed between you and your friends. It may be time to let go of some old patterns and move into new directions. You may feel like stretching your wings this afternoon and trying something new and unusual. You may sign-up to learn how to fly a plane or to take a helicopter ride. This is the perfect time for new ideas, a breakthrough in thinking and a novel approach. Shopping brings new insights. Be careful that you do not overspend just now. Enjoy an exciting movie this afternoon; it will bring about opportunities for some fun conversations later.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

A group get-together in the afternoon will give you an opportunity to meet new people and enjoy old acquaintances. This could be some sort of planning committee for an upcoming event. Perhaps a parade is being planned and you are the person that can lend new and helpful suggestions. It is likely that learning a variety of stress relief techniques will put a smile on your face; perhaps you can use a joke book. If you are a creature of habit, you might want to consider changing your daily routine a bit. Make your changes slowly so that you do not feel lots of restlessness-especially if you have been highly active. There may be the establishment of new habit patterns soon-make sure they're good ones, because they'll set the tone for quite some time!



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Issues that test faith, the inquisition or the purging of the superficial are subjects that take hold at the very roots of your being. This is a kind of spiritual or philosophical rebirth and it is not always gentle. Ultimate answers come from far away. You may discover some of these answers as you speak to someone from the past. Getting in touch with your feelings and instincts is important now. You have an interest in joining a health spa or gym and may check it out in the afternoon. If you can find a friend or partner that will sign-up to participate with you, you will see your goal all the way through to success. This is always a wonderful idea. Remember... If you make the promise and commit your money you will want to commit your time as well.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

There is an urge today to be recognized by your friends. You may have a performance or some art work that you have recently finished and want to show to others. This creativeness of yours is one of the things that attract your friends to you. You will use this talent today to talk with others, to critique or purchase or praise your work or product. You may even teach or guide others in some creative setting. This evening you think and perhaps write about some changes you would like to see in the workplace. You certainly give this enough consideration to form your writing into a professional type of art layout for people to see this next week. This may consist of anything from safety precautions to simply washing hands before returning to work.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Money frustrations will clear up after the twenty-fourth. Delay large purchases until then. You have much zest today. Your fuel tank of enthusiasm may be full but you will need to be careful how you use this energy. If used correctly, you will be adding a little twinkle to your personality. If used incorrectly, headaches could be quite common. You may also find this a time you look for solutions regarding stability at home. Creative endeavors will help to pull you out of financially difficult situations. You can quickly create a finished product from whatever creative art you know: candle making, beadwork or special candies. There could be a common interest in the spiritual and mystical among family members; enjoy a psychic fair.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

With very few problems in your home life you are the one most likely to lead a discussion group in a religious setting today. You could help others learn some problem-solving technique or give them ideas on a variety of things to do to keep kids interested and motivated in learning, among other things. Additional responsibilities may be placed on you in the context of the home setting. You however, are able to handle most situations. Also, you should open up to relatives, as it is a good time to give support and catch up on current events. There is great sensuality and desire for love. You have an opportunity to attract new friends and people of the opposite sex. Diet, exercise and work however, are what fill your time.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Although this is not a workday, you may find yourself optimistic about this next workweek. You look forward to being with co-worker friends and may find that some of your free time today brings your thoughts back around to your professional goals. The envelope is always a tempting object when it is colorful and has inviting words to tempt the viewer to open. Some way to invite the public to see and buy depends on a free gift or early viewing or something else you can think of this day. Perhaps free delivery or a surprise gift with a purchase. Friendships are in a state of transformation-old ones are either revitalized or else they come to an end and new ones are formed. Friends gather-enjoy the flow of events this afternoon.

Wordsearch Puzzle

1950's Songs

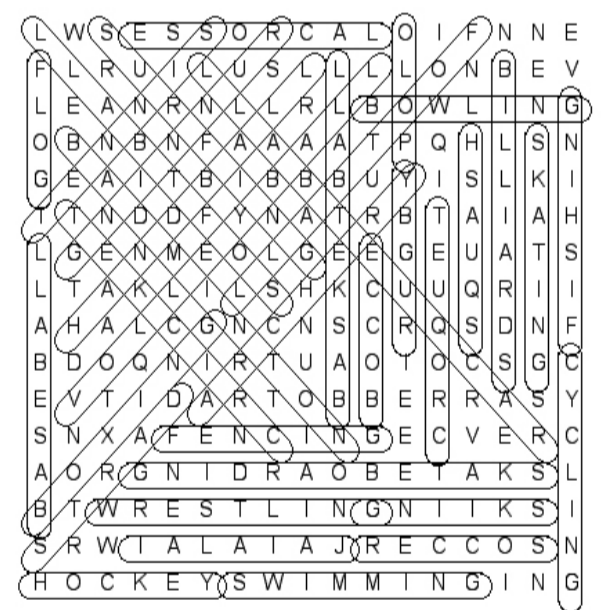
Find and circle all of the 1950's song titles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional 1950's song.



- BLUEBERRY HILL
- BO DIDDLEY
- BYE BYE LOVE
- CRAZY ARMS
- DJANGO
- HOUND DOG
- JAILHOUSE ROCK
- KANSAS CITY
- LA BAMBA
- LONELY TEARDROPS
- MONA LISA
- MOVE IT
- MYSTERY TRAIN
- NIGHT TRAIN
- ONLY YOU
- SEARCHIN'
- SHOUT
- SIXTEEN TONS
- SPEEDO
- SUZIE Q

Yesterday's Solution

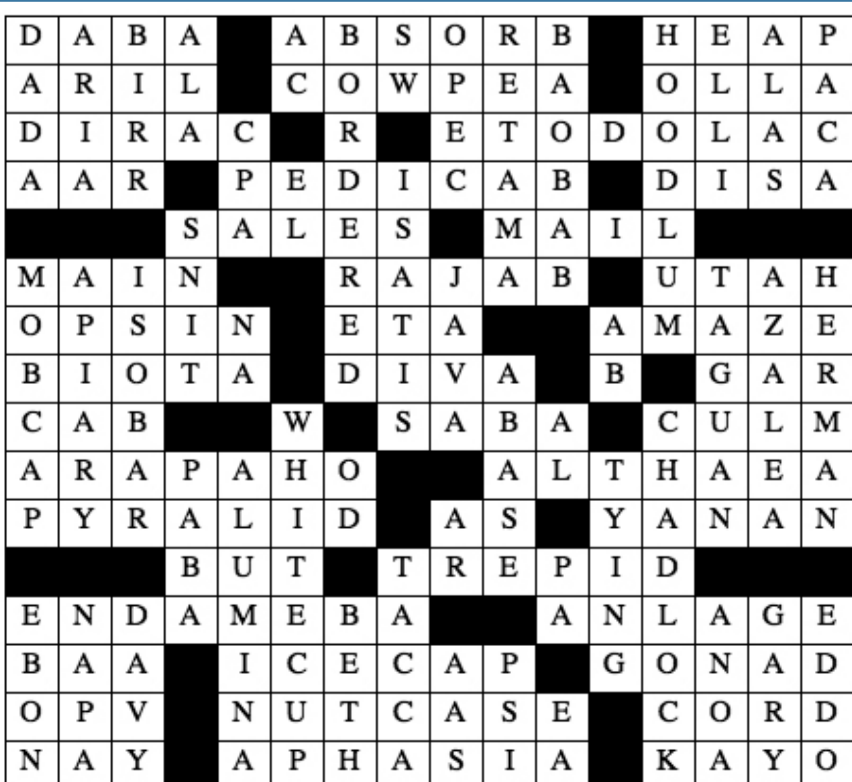
Sports



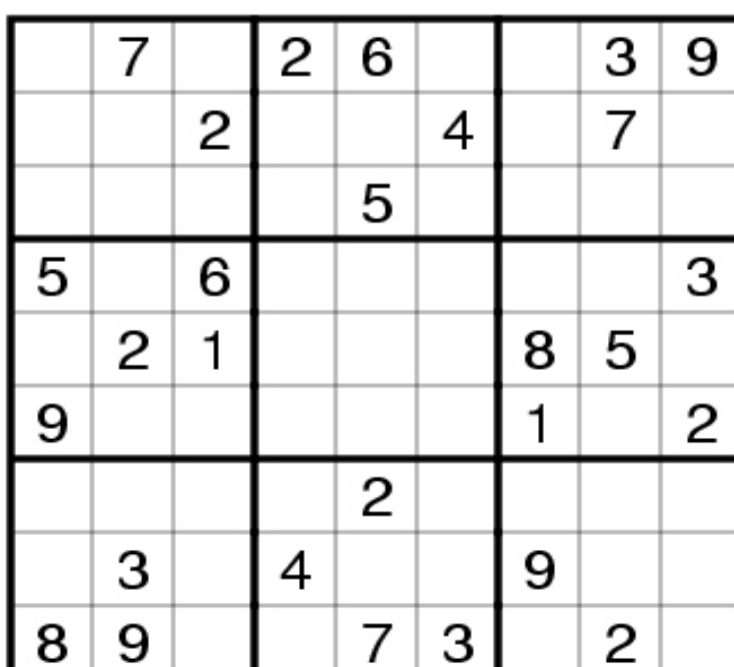
- ARCHERY
- BADMINTON
- BASEBALL
- BASKETBALL
- BILLIARDS
- BOCCIE
- BOWLING
- BOXING
- CRICKET
- CROQUET
- CYCLING
- DARTS
- FENCING
- FISHING
- FOOTBALL
- GOLF
- HANDBALL
- HOCKEY
- JAI ALAI
- LACROSSE
- POLO
- RACQUETBALL
- RUGBY
- RUNNING
- SKATEBOARDING
- SKATING
- SKIING
- SOCCER
- SOFTBALL
- SQUASH
- SURFING
- SWIMMING
- TENNIS
- VOLLEYBALL
- WRESTLING

The hidden sentence is: WINNERS NEVER QUIT AND QUITTERS NEVER WIN

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Mercedes-Benz

Fashion Week



Jordan Peele, left, Keegan-Michael Key, right, and director Peter Atencio pose at a screening of their work-in-progress film "Keanu" at the Paramount Theatre during the South by Southwest Film Festival yesterday in Austin, Texas. — AP

SXSW film review: "Keanu"

A two-hour online cat-video binge would yield as many "awws" and probably far more laughs than "Keanu," an initially amusing but fatally overstretched action-comedy that marks a lamer-than-expected big-screen outing for Keegan-Michael Key and Jordan Peele following the conclusion last year of their frequently brilliant cable series. Enjoyable for a good 15 minutes or so, mostly due to the scene-stealing powers of the adorable, much-coveted kitty whose name gives the movie its title, this is otherwise a stale, repetitive effort whose one-joke premise—two suburban buddies forced to pass themselves off as gangsters in a grimy underworld where they clearly don't belong—never achieves comic liftoff, much less the richly subversive dimensions typical of Key and Peele's best work.

The Warner Bros./New Line release debuted as a "work-in-progress" at SXSW ahead of its planned April 29 release, though it would take more than a few technical tweaks to significantly improve what feels, at the moment, like 100 minutes of hit-or-miss comic purr-gatory. That the movie reteams a number of collaborators from Comedy Central's "Key and Peele"—including director Peter Atencio and screenwriters Peele and Alex Rubens—would seem to bear out the notion that their distinctive brand of double-edged satire is best served and consumed in five-minute sketches. "Keanu," by contrast, is one flabby tabby that seems to be overstaying its welcome at the half-hour mark, and leans heavily thereafter on over-the-top violence whenever it's clear the jokes aren't landing.

That tendency is apparent in the opening sequence, in which the notorious Allentown brothers (imagine darker, longer-haired, more offensive versions of the Salamanca cousins from "Breaking Bad") stage a bloody attack on a church where drugs are being secretly manufactured. The lone innocent bystander is the aforementioned kitten, who through some miracle of CGI rendering manages to survive, dodging bullets left and right in slo-mo, and even winning over the brothers' cold, black hearts before escaping and making its way to the suburbs of Los Angeles. There, the tiny furball winds up on the doorstep of Rell (Peele), a pot-smoking underachiever who, having just been dumped by his girlfriend, embraces the kitten as a divine offering and christens it Keanu.

On-screen allusions

And why not? Much like the actor whose name he borrows, kitty Keanu makes an effortlessly expressive camera subject and requires no dialogue—only a nimble physicality and a series of adorable, quizzical reaction shots—to thoroughly magnetize the screen. Further cementing the connection, the movie is intended in some ways as a "John Wick," the thrilling 2014 action film in which Keanu Reeves avenged the murder of his own beloved pet. Audiences familiar with Key and Peele's pop-cultural savvy will

be unsurprised by the various on-screen allusions to crime thrillers like "Heat" and "New Jack City," plus throwaway comic references to "Fargo," "The Shining," "Crimson Tide" and "Point Break" (all of which figure into one of the movie's better visual gags).

The movie under scrutiny, alas, seems unlikely to ascend to the level of even a minor classic. The best scenes are those of Keanu bonding with his new owner, Rell, and his best friend, Clarence (Key), a family man whose wife and daughter are conveniently sent out of town for narrative purposes. When Keanu goes missing in a burglary one night, Rell becomes hellbent on getting him back and, together with Clarence, beats some helpful information out of his in-the-know drug dealer (Will Forte in dreads). From there, the duo make their way to the strip-club hangout of the notorious 17th Street Blips ("the ones who got kicked out of the Bloods and the Crips"), led by a formidable thug named Cheddar (Method Man). Sure enough, Cheddar promises to give back the purloined puss if these two self-styled heavies join his crew and help them out with some of their dirty work.

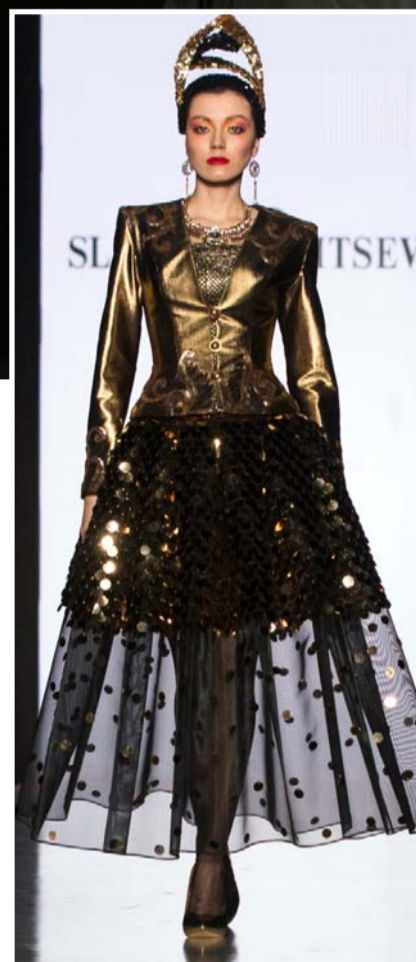
Culture-clash

Key and Peele's signature talent for tweaking and exploding racial stereotypes gets a moderate workout here, as their characters are forced to ditch their plain-vanilla manner of speaking and load up on N-bombs and 12-letter expletives. But under the weight of all the pro forma shootouts and car chases that ensue, all the code-switching culture-clash comedy feels weak and belabored here—particularly a running gag involving Clarence's efforts to sell the hip-hop-loving Blips on the paler charms of George Michael. (Presumably the studio paid a pretty penny for the rights to "Father Figure," given how often it surfaces on the soundtrack.) Still, the leads remain masters at mining improvisational gold from even the thinnest material: Peele can register panic in a few hilariously shifty eye movements, and the motormouthed Key retains his flair for both the over-the-top pronouncement and the deadpan non sequitur ("Wordness to the turdness," he notes in a failed attempt at gangsta speak).

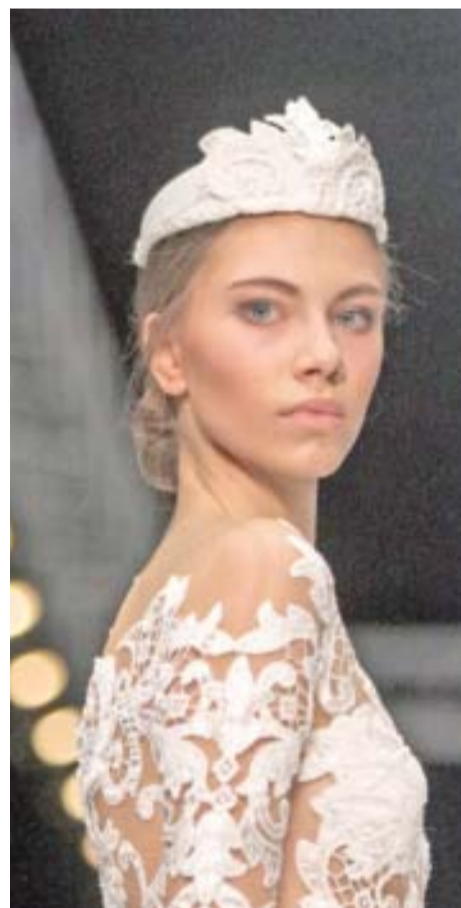
There are a few standouts in the supporting cast as well, including Tiffany Haddish as the lone female Blip (who of course must shoulder the burden of Rell's emotional baggage), plus a delightfully self-mocking cameo from an actress who, in the interests of preserving one of the film's few legitimate pleasures, shall remain nameless here.

Ditto the actor who does the kitten's very Reeves-like voice in one bizarre hallucination; suffice to say that, as game imitations go, it's not half bad.

"Keanu," alas, is another story, and a very tedious one. If only the creatives involved had followed their choice of subject matter to its logical conclusion, they might well have realized the ideal format for their story wasn't a movie, but a meme. — Reuters



Russian designer Slava Zaitsev, second right, waves surrounded by models after displaying his creations during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in Moscow, Russia, Saturday. — AP/AFP photos



Eagles of Death Metal frontman apologizes for comments on Paris attack



In this file photo, singer Jesse Hughes of Eagles of Death Metal performs at Debaser Medis in Stockholm, Sweden. — AP

Eagles of Death Metal frontman Jesse Hughes has apologized for suggesting security guards at the Bataclan concert hall in Paris may have had advance knowledge of the Islamic State attack at the venue that left 89 people dead. The California-based Eagles of Death Metal were playing at the Bataclan on Nov. 13, 2015 when gunmen stormed the venue and shot and killed concertgoers.

Hughes told Fox Business Network in an interview that aired on Wednesday that he learned six security guards failed to appear for work at the Bataclan the night of the attack and that "it seems rather obvious they had a reason not to show up."

The owners of the Bataclan had disputed the suggestions Hughes made in the Fox Business Network interview, saying in a state-

ment he had made "grave and defamatory accusations" even though "all the testimonies gathered to this day demonstrate the professionalism and courage" of the guards, according to the entertainment trade publication Variety.

Hughes later apologized for the comment in a statement on the band's Facebook page on Friday. "I humbly beg forgiveness from the people of France, the staff and security of the Bataclan, my fans, my family, friends and anyone else hurt or offended by the absurd accusations I made in my Fox Business Channel interview," Hughes said. He said the accusations were "unfounded and baseless." Indicating he was under stress, Hughes said he has dealt with nightmares and attended therapy since witnessing the attack. — Reuters



Two visitors sit on tyre seats during the International Design Festival (FID) in San Jose, Costa Rica. — AFP photos



Designer Lucia Alaba takes part in the International Design Festival (FID).

Costa Rica celebrates hip designers



A visitor looks at funny wall signs during the International Design Festival (FID).

Hip visionaries in architecture, photography and toys got to strut their stuff in a three-day eclectic design showcase in Costa Rica that wrapped up Saturday. The FID or International Design Festival took over a central district of San Jose, where hundreds of artsy types filled cafes, exhibits and parties for presentations and talks about various disciplines.

Among the guests were Carl Sprague, the art director on the movie "The Grand Budapest Hotel"; the team from Danish architecture studio BIG; and Italian upstart sneaker firm D.A.T.E. FID-goers also heard from Ti Chang, a San Francisco-based industrial designer. The festival, which was in its 6th iteration, aims to highlight Costa Rica's artistic ambitions and cross-cultural influences in the design world. — AFP



A visitor buys a t-shirt during the International Design Festival (FID).

Japan region seeks full-time 'ninjas' for tourism



This handout photo provided by Aichi prefecture government tourism bureau shows six full-time ninjas posing in Nagoya Central Japan's Aichi prefecture. — AFP

Wanted: six full-time ninjas who have a way with words and can do backward handsprings. Pay: about \$1,600 a month. Central Japan's Aichi prefecture said it is hiring full-time ninjas—the martial-arts masters and stealth special assassins of feudal times—to promote tourism in the area known for historic Nagoya castle. Newly hired ninjas will receive a one-year contract with monthly pay of 180,000 yen (\$1,580) plus bonus, said Satoshi Adachi of the prefectural government's tourism promotion unit.

They will also perform acrobatics, demonstrate the use of their trademark "shuriken"—ninja star-weapons and pose for photo-

graphs with tourists, he told AFP on Friday. A poster the prefecture created says the ideal candidates are ones who "enjoy being under the spotlight even though he or she is a secretive ninja". Japanese speaking ability is preferable, but non-Japanese individuals passionate about history and tourism are welcome as the troupe will sometimes perform in English, Adachi said.

"Our ninjas also have to be good at talking to promote tourism, although ninjas are basically required to be secretive," he said. They also "have to be able to do backward handsprings and some dance moves", he added. Successful candidates will go through a one-month training course in April. The

prefecture is accepting applications until March 22. Men and women aged 18 or above of any nationality can apply. Nowadays ninjas are mostly confined to history books and fiction. But they are also used to promote Iga, some 350 kilometers (220 miles) southwest of Tokyo, a city near the ancient imperial capital of Kyoto that was once home to many ninjas. And last year, governors and mayors from prefectures around the country traded their usual suits for ninja costumes to announce the launch of a "ninja council". The not-so-stealthy move comes as local governments turn to tourism as an economic growth driver ahead of the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. — AFP



Kalyan Jewelers to foray into Qatar with seven showrooms

Kalyan Jewelers, one of the most trusted and leading jewellery brands in the GCC and India, has announced its foray into Qatar. The company will make an emphatic entry by opening seven showrooms in Doha on a single day later in the month — marking the largest number of showrooms inaugurated in a single day in the company's history. Kalyan Jewellers' global brand ambassador and film icon Amitabh Bachchan will inaugurate the showrooms in his maiden visit to Qatar. He will be accompanied by popular brand ambassadors and film stars Nagarjuna, Prabhu Ganesan and Manju Warrior for the launch.

Kalyan has been steadily expanding its presence in the GCC region since it launched its international operations in two years the company has opened over 40 showrooms in India and the GCC. Kalyan Jewellers is also slated to achieve a milestone of 100 showrooms by the first half of the year. TS Kalyanaraman, Chairman and Managing Director of Kalyan Jewellers said, "We have registered a healthy double digit growth rate in our business in the GCC and believe that the Qatar presence is critical for us to push the GCC share of the group turnover to the 40 per cent mark, which is our medium-term target.

Qatar is a robust retail market of USD 12.4 Billion, driven by a growing population and an increasing expatriate population. We also believe that the country's affinity for luxury goods makes it a compelling proposition for Kalyan, given our strong portfolio of high-end fashion jewellery as well as jewellery for daily wear in contemporary and traditional motifs."

"Qatar's focus on expanding the non-hydrocarbon sector and recent infrastructure initiatives to add one million square meters of retail space in the next two to three years augurs well for the growth of the retail sector," Kalyanaraman added. Kalyan has been rapidly expanding its distribution operations, both in India and West Asia. The company was the first to attract the largest private equity investment of USD 200 million by Warburg Pincus in the jewellery sector in India in 2014. Kalyan had made an emphatic entry into the GCC by launching six showrooms on a single day in the UAE. Kalyan Jewellers has established benchmarks when it comes to innovation, quality, transparency and customer service. The company has one of the largest customer loyalty programmes with more than 2.8 million members. Kalyan Jewellers has developed a deep connect among its stakeholders with its brand promise of 'Trust is Everything'.

Lose hour of sleep, gain hour of evening light for months



A collection of antique clocks are displayed in the lobby at the Electric Time Company in Medfield, Mass. — AP photos

Lose an hour of sleep this weekend, gain an hour of evening light for months ahead: Daylight saving time is back. Set those clocks 60 minutes ahead before you hit the hay Saturday



Tyler Eisner, an engineer at the Electric Time Company, works on switching the movement from gravity fed to electrically fed on a historic clock from the Silk Building in New York City.

night. The time change officially starts Sunday at 2 am local time. Consider putting in new batteries in warning devices such as smoke detectors and radios - and repeat the exercise when standard time

returns Nov 6. The time change is not observed in Hawaii, most of Arizona, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Marianas. — AP



Tom Liberatore, a materials purchasing manager, walks past clocks being tested prior to shipping at the Electric Time Company in Medfield, Mass.



Host Blake Shelton gets slimed at the Kids' Choice Awards. — AP photos



Dinah-Jane Hansen, from left, Ally Brooke, Lauren Jauregui, Normani Hamilton and Camila Cabello of Fifth Harmony get slimed at the Kids' Choice Awards at The Forum.



Ellen DeGeneres presents the award for favorite animated movie.

Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards 2016

Blake Shelton slimes himself to end the show



Benjamin Flores Jr, from left, Cree Cicchino, Kel Mitchell, Madysyn Shipman and Thomas Kuc from the show "Game Shakers" present the award for favorite voice from an animated movie.

The annual ceremony's messy tradition was upheld this year - and host Blake Shelton brought the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards 2016 to a messy end as he slimed himself.

The Voice star hosted the annual ceremony, and made sure no one was safe from the goo as celebrities and fans were covered throughout the show. However, the presenter was more than happy being the butt of the jokes, allowing himself to be coated in green slime - along with audience members on the front row - as he thanked everyone for watching.

John Stamos, Fifth Harmony, Angry Birds' Jason Sudeikis and Cameron Dallas were also amongst the victims - but it was also a night to celebrate big winners across TV, film and music. Justin Bieber, Ariana Grande and Fifth Harmony

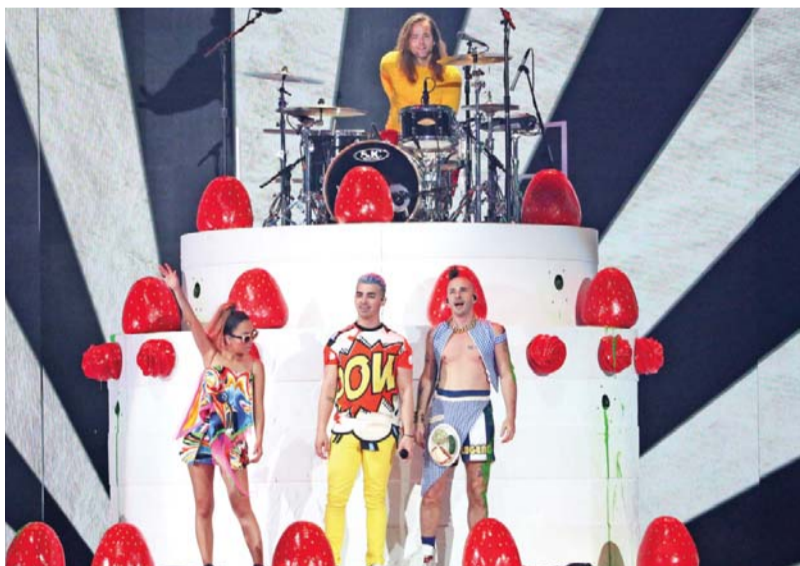
were awarded the top prizes for favorite male singer, female singer and group respectively, whilst Adele's Hello was song of the year.

Hotel Transylvania 2 star Adam Sandler accepted the film's award for Favorite Animated Movie, whilst Star Wars: The Force Awakens won the overall film prize. Will Ferrell (Daddy's Home) and Jennifer Lawrence (The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 2) were awarded the acting trophies, with Amy Poehler's role in Inside Out earning her the Voice from an Animated Movie gong.

Actress Zendaya was also recognized for her part in KC Undercover, and she thanked her fans for their support - and gave a shout-out to their parents. She said: "Thank you for allowing me to be a role model for your children. I really, really do not take that for granted."

Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards 2016 full winners list:

- Favorite TV Show:** The Thundermans
- Favorite Family TV Show:** The Muppets
- Favorite Male TV Star - Kids' Show:** Ross Lynch - Austin and Ally
- Favorite Male TV Star - Family Show:** Jim Parsons - Big Bang Theory
- Favorite Female TV Star - Kids' Show:** Zendaya - KC Undercover
- Favorite Female TV Star - Family Show:** Sofia Vergara - Modern Family
- Favorite Talent Competition Show:** The Voice
- Favorite Cooking Show:** Cake Boss
- Favorite Cartoon:** SpongeBob SquarePants
- Favorite Movie: Star Wars:** The Force Awakens
- Favorite Movie Actor:** Will Ferrell - Daddy's Home
- Favorite Movie Actress:** Jennifer Lawrence - The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 2
- Favorite Animated Movie:** Hotel Transylvania 2
- Favorite Voice from an Animated Movie:** Amy Poehler - Inside Out
- Favorite Music Group:** Fifth Harmony
- Favorite Male Singer:** Justin Bieber
- Favorite Female Singer:** Ariana Grande
- Favorite Song of the Year:** Hello - Adele
- Favorite New Artist:** Shawn Mendes
- Favorite Collaboration:** See You Again - Wiz Khalifa feat. Charlie Puth
- Favorite Book:** Diary of a Wimpy Kid series
- Favorite Video Game:** Just Dance 2016. — www.mirror.co.uk



JinJoo Lee, from front left, Joe Jonas, Cole Whittle, and Jack Lawless, in the background, of DNCE perform "Cake by the Ocean" at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Presenter Sarah Hyland, from right, and Debby Ryan present the award for best cooking show to Buddy Valastro for "Cake Boss".



Anthony Anderson, left, and Heidi Klum present the award for favorite female TV star - kids' show.



Ally Brooke, from left, Dinah Jane Hansen, Lauren Jauregui, Normani Kordei, and Camila Cabello of Fifth Harmony arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards at The Forum.



Cole Whittle, from left, Joe Jonas, JinJoo Lee and Jack Lawless, of DNCE, arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Tori Spelling, from left, Liam McDermott, Stella McDermott, and Dean McDermott arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Jack Griffo, left, and Ryan Newman arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Peyton List, left, and Spencer List arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Summer Soltis, left, and Hal Sparks arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Amy Poehler accepts the award for favorite voice from an animated movie for her role as Joy from 'Inside Out'.



Stormtroopers arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Adam Sandler, right, accepts the award for favorite animated movie for "Hotel Transylvania 2".



Charlie Puth, left, and Wiz Khalifa perform at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Chris Evans, left, and Robert Downey Jr play thumb war.



Josh Gad, left, and Jason Sudeikis participate in a live-action "Angry Birds" game.



Host Blake Shelton speaks at the Kids' Choice Awards.



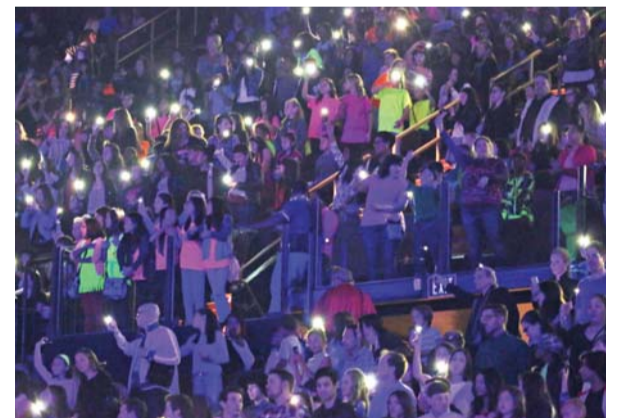
Yara Shahidi, left, and Marcus Scribner arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Owen Vaccaro, left, and Scarlett Estevez arrive at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Charlie Puth, left, and Wiz Khalifa accept the award for favorite collaboration for "See You Again".



The audience at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Zendaya, left, accepts the award for favorite female TV Star - kids' show for her role as KC Cooper in "KC Undercover" from Heidi Klum and Anthony Anderson.



Brec Bassinger arrives at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Witney Carson arrives at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Zendaya arrives at the Kids' Choice Awards.



Benjamin Flores Jr from the cast of "Game Shakers" participates in a live action game at the Kids' Choice Awards.

Lifestyle

MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016

Blake Shelton
slimes himself to
end the show

38



Members of the Alfonso Lopez troupes smile for the camera while waiting for the start of the inaugural parade marking the 15th Iberoamerican Festival of Theater, FITB, in Bogota, Colombia, Saturday, March 12, 2016. The festival celebrates the performing arts, including circus, cabaret, musicals, live bands, dance, and theater. — AP

Turning New York trash into treasure



In this photo provided by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, an Indian statue believed to be from the 8th and 10th centuries AD that authorities say was stolen and smuggled out of India is shown. — AP

1,000-year-old Indian statues seized from NYC auction house

Two Indian statues that are more than 1,000 years old were seized Friday from Christie's auction house after investigators discovered they had been smuggled out of the country, eventually landing in New York. The antiquities were to be part of an auction next week called "The Lahiri Collection: Indian and Himalayan Art, Ancient and Modern." Both were made from sandstone. One statue called "Stele of Rishabhanata" depicts a cross-legged teacher flanked by standing attendants. It is valued at about \$150,000 and dates from the 10th century. The second is a rare representation of an equestrian deity, Revanta, worth \$300,000 from the 8th century.

Christie's said in a statement that it would never knowingly offer a stolen work of art and it was cooperating with authorities. "Christie's devotes considerable resources to investigating the provenance of all objects we offer for sale. This is one of the difficulties the art market faces in vetting antiquities, which is why Christie's very much values building strong relationships with and between countries of origin, law enforcement, archeologists, and the collecting community," the statement read.

According to a yearlong, ongoing investigation by federal agents and the

Manhattan district attorney's office, the Rishabhanata statue was sold in 2006 or 2007. The Revanta panel contained a piece that had been perfectly broken off to be sold by smugglers after the sale of the main sculpture. The seizure sends an important message, said Angel M. Melendez, special agent in charge of the New York office of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations. "First and foremost, it demonstrates that we are committed to protecting cultural heritage around the world, and second, it demonstrates that we are monitoring the market to protect prospective buyers as well," Melendez said. Investigators believe both came from a smuggler in India who's awaiting trial on charges he looted rare antiquities worth tens of millions of dollars from seven countries. Federal officials said four museums and a collector have surrendered looted artifacts within the past year. Four others have been arrested in the scheme. The consul general of India praised authorities for their work in tracking down the statues.

"I would like to convey my deep sense of appreciation to HSI for the exceptional work done in locating and retrieving the sculptures brought into the United States by organized crime syndicates," said Ambassador Riva Ganguly Das. — AP

For 30 years, sanitation worker Nelson Molina kept New York clean-and in the process found beauty in other people's garbage, rescuing enough condemned items to fill a warehouse. On the second floor of a sanitation truck depot in East Harlem, he has amassed an astonishing collection of thousands of objects once chucked in the bin but now lovingly cleaned and restored. Walk to the back of the depot, climb a small, steep staircase and you find yourself in an enormous space that at first sight might appear to be a flea market.

But none of these items are on sale, although some could fetch a pretty penny. Molina values his collection at \$160,000 and calls it "Treasures in the Trash." Skis stand next to a Native American children's play tent. There is a stained glass window and a memorabilia tie from the hit show "Baywatch." There are dozens of photos and pictures, dated portraits of unknown people perhaps thrown out because of limited space in cramped New York apartments. To walk the collection is to retrace 30 years of life in East Harlem in intimate detail from the majority Hispanic area, where Molina was born and still lives today.

"It's really well done. You can see the evolution of the neighborhood," said Martin Bellew, a retired New Yorker on a scheduled tour. The premises are not open to the public, but visits are occasionally organized. "I call that a museum but it's not officially a museum," says Molina, a man of slim build who retired in 2015 after 34 years at the sanitation department. "I've been a picker since I'm nine years old," said Molina, now in his 60s, who says he inherits



Items are displayed as part of former New York sanitation worker Nelson Molina's "Treasure in the Trash" gallery.

ed the habit from his mother who never threw anything away. "She's 83 years old," he said. For Christmas, he buys her tool boxes, pliers and a

drill to help her make things. "She's still into it," Molina added.

In a city that each day produces 12,000 tons of waste and where the



Typewriters are displayed as part of former New York sanitation worker Nelson Molina's "Treasure in the Trash" gallery in New York.

mayor has vowed to stop sending garbage to landfills by 2030, Molina had to work hard. At first, he kept his finds in a corner of the depot. Then he took over a hall and then the entire second floor when 15 years ago it was deemed too fragile to withstand the heavy weight of sanitation trucks. Sanitation department rules prohibit workers from taking home anything they pick up on the streets but not from keeping objects at the work place. Molina has spread out his collection with the utmost fastidiousness. Objects are grouped together thematically and lined up on tables: African statuettes, action toy dolls and typewriters.

Molina, something of a handyman, has mended broken objects and repaired electrical parts to bring back to life a Santa Claus and an artificial fountain. His favorite piece? It's a metal Star of David sculpted from metal recovered from the site of the Twin Towers in remembrance of a victim of the 9/11 attacks. Now retired, Molina still comes to the depot twice a week to look after his items, which he insists belong to the warehouse. "I don't want anybody to take care of it," he said. His son, who also works at the sanitation warehouse, was not interested in the task. "He told me 'you're crazy, that's too much work.'"

But the future is uncertain. In the next four to five years, the collection will have to move. The Metropolitan Hospital, which owns the site, wants to claim it back. "Ideally, it should stay in this neighborhood," says Robin Nagle, anthropologist in residence at the department of sanitation. But she admits the cost of renting a dedicated building would be exorbitant. — AFP



Furby toys displayed as part of former New York sanitation worker Nelson Molina's "Treasure in the Trash" gallery in New York. — AFP photos



Items are displayed as part of former New York sanitation worker Nelson Molina's "Treasure in the Trash" gallery.