

Kuwaiti MPs to discuss bedoons' naturalization in Comoros?



Raids 'kill 39 civilians' in Islamic State bastion



Interpol urges 'extra vigilance' at borders after Abdeslam arrest



Indomitable Leicester surge on towards title



FLYDUBAI JET CRASHES IN SOUTH RUSSIA; 62 KILLED

AMIR SENDS CABLE OF CONDOLENCES TO RUSSIAN AND UAE LEADERS



Min 12°
Max 30°
High Tide 10:45 & 22:10
Low Tide 04:05 & 16:20



MOSCOW: A Dubai airliner with 62 people on board nosedived and exploded in a giant fireball yesterday while trying to land in strong winds in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don, killing all aboard, officials said. Several planes had trouble landing at the airport at the time of the crash, with one trying to land three times before giving up and diverting to another airport, experts said.

Russia's Emergencies Ministry said the Boeing 737-800 operated by FlyDubai was carrying 55 passengers, most of them Russians, and seven crew members. FlyDubai confirmed there were no survivors and said four children were among those killed. It was FlyDubai's first crash since the budget carrier began operating in 2009. Its fleet consists of mint 737-800 aircraft like the one that crashed. Closed-circuit TV footage showed the plane going down in a steep angle and exploding.

The powerful explosion left a big crater in the runway and pulverized the plane but investigators quickly recovered both flight recorders. The cause of the crash wasn't immediately known, but officials and experts pointed at a sudden gust of wind as a possible reason. "By all appearances, the cause of the air crash was the strongly gusting wind, approaching a hurricane level," said Rostov regional Gov. Vasily Golubev.

According to weather data reported by Russian state television, when the FlyDubai plane first tried to land, winds at ground level weren't dangerously strong, but at an altitude of 500 meters and higher they reached a near-hurricane speed of around 30 meters per second.

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ROSTOV-ON-DON: Russian fire servicemen check the wreckage of the Dubai plane that crashed at the Rostov-on-Don airport yesterday. (Inset) Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer of Flydubai reacts during a press conference. — AFP



KUWAIT IS 'NOT A FREE-RIDER,' SECURITY CHIEF TELLS OBAMA

KUWAIT: Kuwait is not a "free-rider" in US-led campaigns against terrorism and other threats, a senior Kuwaiti security official said, rejecting comments by President Barack Obama critical of some US allies. Sheikh Thamer Al-Sabah, President of Kuwait's National Security Bureau, was referring to Obama's remarks to The Atlantic magazine last week in which he said some states in the Gulf and Europe were "free-riders" who called for US action without getting involved themselves.

In an interview, Sheikh Thamer said Kuwait, like fellow Gulf state Qatar, had opened up air bases and airspace for the US-led coalition bombing Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. Aircraft from other Gulf countries had carried out sorties, said Sheikh Thamer, a member of Kuwait's ruling family. "I am just wondering what a free ride is when we do all of these things," he said, referring to Kuwait's role. "When we share intelligence, when we open our air, land and sea, when we spend billions of dollars in trying to combat terrorism and trying to help the Syrian refugees, how is it free?" he added.

"I actually looked up 'free ride' in the dictionary and I would like other people to know what a free ride is and see what we are doing here in this part of the

world, especially when he mentioned the Gulf." Sheikh Thamer's comments were unusually critical of the United States for a Kuwaiti official. They echo those on Monday by Saudi Arabia's Prince Turki Al-Faisal, a former intelligence chief, who said the American leader had "thrown us a curve ball" in criticizing Riyadh's regional role.

When asked about what Sheikh Thamer said, the White House referred to comments it made on Monday. Spokesman Josh Earnest said the United States viewed Saudi Arabia and the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) "as effective national security partners who can and should do more." "We're encouraging them to do more to contribute to the security situation in their region of the world."

Hot spot
Kuwait, which borders Iraq and Saudi Arabia and lies across the Gulf from Iran, is working to combat the threat of attacks by Sunni Islamist militants like Islamic State on its own soil, Sheikh Thamer said, as well as Iranian-backed operatives. In June last year a Saudi suicide bomber blew himself up at a Shiite mosque in Kuwait, killing 27, in an attack

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SUICIDE BOMBING KILLS 5, WOUNDS 36 IN ISTANBUL

KUWAITI INJURED IN ISTANBUL BLAST

ISTANBUL: Five people including a suicide bomber were killed and 36 wounded in an attack on a major shopping and tourist district in central Istanbul yesterday, in the fourth suicide bombing to hit Turkey this year. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack on part of Istiklal Street, a long pedestrian street lined with global shops and foreign consulates, a few hundred meters from an area where police buses are often parked.

Kuwaiti Consulate in Istanbul said a Kuwaiti national was slightly wounded in the suicide attack. The Consulate is following up the injured Kuwaiti's condition with his family, urging Kuwaitis in Turkey to contact it in case of emergency. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable of condolence



ISTANBUL: A suicide bombing ripped through a famous shopping street in central Istanbul killing four people and injuring dozens less than a week after an attack by Kurdish rebels left 35 dead in Ankara. — AFP

to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan over the victims of yesterday's suicide bombing. In his cable, His Highness the Amir

sharply condemned this horrible terrorist act that violates all religions and human values, and that targeted safe innocents and the

country's security and stability. His Highness also reiterated Kuwait's firm position rejecting all forms and manifestations of terrorism, praying to Allah the Almighty to bless the victims' souls with mercy and those injured swift recovery. Two Turkish officials said evidence suggested the attacker was likely from the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) or the Islamic State militant group. NATO member Turkey faces security threats from both the PKK in the mainly Kurdish southeast and has also been a target for Islamist militants. One of the official said the bomber had planned to hit a more crowded spot. "The attacker detonated the bomb before reaching the targeted point because they were scared of the police," the official said.

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KOHLI SPARKLES; INDIA THUMP RIVAL PAKISTAN

KOLKATA: Virat Kohli helped India survive a top-order collapse and beat Pakistan by six wickets in a tight game yesterday to revive their World Twenty20 campaign and maintain their impeccable World Cup record against the arch-rivals. Kohli's magnificent 55 not out was the difference between the sides in the rain-hit 18-overs-a-side match, coming under tremendous pressure on a prodigiously turning track at Eden Gardens.

Chasing 119 to secure their first win of the tournament, India slumped to 23-3 in

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the fifth over before Kohli and Yuvraj Singh (24) shared a match-high 61-run partnership to virtually take the game away from Pakistan. Home captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni smashed a six to level the scores and took a single to seal victory with 13 balls to spare as India bounced back from their shock opening defeat by New Zealand. Kohli made batting look ridiculously easy on a difficult track, embellishing his unbeaten 37-ball knock with seven fours and a six, and he was the obvious choice for the man-of-the-match award.



KOLKATA: India's Virat Kohli celebrates his team victory during the ICC World Twenty20 2016 cricket match against Pakistan at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India yesterday. — AP

19 PILGRIMS DIE IN SAUDI BUS ACCIDENT

RIYADH: At least 19 pilgrims died, all of them Egyptian, and 22 were injured yesterday when their bus overturned in western Saudi Arabia, authorities in both countries said. The Tourism Ministry in Cairo said 19 Egyptian pilgrims and a child were killed and 15 were injured in the accident. "Nineteen people were killed when the bus carrying them turned over on the Hijra road" between the coastal city of Jeddah and the holy city of Medina, Saudi Red Crescent spokesman Khaled Ben Messaed Al-Sihli said. "All the bus passengers have the same nationality of an Arab country except the driver who is Asian," he said.

Another 22 people were injured including some who were badly hurt, Sihli added. Millions of Muslims visit Saudi Arabia each year for the year-round umra minor pilgrimage and the annual haj pilgrimage. Jordan said on Wednesday that 14 pilgrims died and another 36 were injured in another bus accident in southern Jordan near the Saudi border. The country's civil protection service said the driver lost control of the vehicle which turned over 320 kilometers south-east of Amman. A stampede during the hajj last September killed about 2,300 foreign pilgrims, according to data from foreign officials. — AFP



Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi is honored during the conference.



Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi tours an exhibition held on the sidelines of the conference.

Local spotlight

ECONOMIC REFORM



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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There is much talk these days about an economic and financial reform plan in Kuwait. The proposed plan was prepared by the Committee of Economic Affairs in the Cabinet, and includes six factors and 41 programs, including short-term and medium-term ones. So far, the Cabinet has blessed this move despite a number of reservations.

This step is occurring at a time when the world is experiencing fluctuations in oil prices, as well as a lot of political and sectarian conflicts.

The reform plan includes several topics. On top comes the increase of non-oil revenues, rationalization of public spending in order to reduce the budget deficit, and fiscal sustainability. Also, it includes redrawing the state's role in the economy so that it can gradually move out of production, and increasing the role of the private sector in economic activity. Another chapter is dedicated to the 'activation of citizens' participation' by up to 40 percent through the privatization of projects, and partnership between the public and private sectors.

The plan also calls for the need to reform the labor market and the civil service system in order to implement justice between workers, improve job performance, and increase the public sector's efficiency by linking pay to productivity while maintaining stability of the standard of living.

Administrative and institutional reform was also mentioned in the plan. This can happen by raising the efficiency of public administration and financial management.

The Cabinet had praised the efforts of preparing the plan and the policy of the Central Bank of Kuwait to preserve the strength of the Kuwaiti dinars.

For those who do not understand how we in Kuwait maintain the power of the currency, the answer is simple. The Kuwaiti dinar's exchange rate is based on linking the dinar with a basket of key global currencies. This is the basic framework of the Central Bank of Kuwait's rate policy.

I think that the government seems to favor the proposed plan. However, the plan is not just a series of good wishes or laws. It should be transformed into steps that are implemented to overcome such key problems as administrative corruption, nepotism and demographic imbalance.

I agree with the government and parliament's approval of the integrated project of economic reform. The Kuwaiti citizen must be a key partner in the Kuwaiti economy.

Some observers commented on the project, saying that it needs to be associated with political reform in order to reach a comprehensive reform. I think lowering the age of the voters to 18 years instead of 21 would have positive impacts that could serve efforts which lead to sustainable development. I believe any reform plan has to focus on the importance of human development. I also wish to see an expanded participation of female and Christian citizens in the cabinet and parliament. This would eventually help transform the parliament into a real base for legislation for all Kuwaitis regardless of their race, gender or religion.

In Kuwait, we have an expatriate majority that must be put into consideration in the reform process, and that means reviewing and repairing current laws related to visa, employment, salaries and how to encourage foreign investments.

We need to a comprehensive plan which keeps everyone, citizens and expats, as partners, and not spectators of the reform process. Actions can be louder than words. Until this happens, this plan will be a good wish, and all opinions must be taken into account.

QUALIFIED PHYSICIANS BACKBONE OF MODERN HEALTH: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi has stressed the importance of benefiting from qualified physicians and trained medical practitioners, who are the backbone of modern health system, to promote sustainable development.

Minister Obaidi made his remarks Friday in his opening speech at the 'Updates in Medicine' conference, organized by Kuwait Medical Association (KMA) with participation of a number of top international medical specialists from the US, Britain, Canada, and Arab countries.

The conference's agenda tackles the latest updates in the treatment of heart diseases, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases (CRDs), and cancer, he mentioned. It also comes in line with the ministry's plan of action, and the state development plan, particularly in prevention and response to non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The two-day conference boosts the potential of Kuwaiti medical system in facing the challenges of assuring the quality of medical care, in addition to patients' safety and rights, Minister Al-Obaidi said. He noted that KMA is a main partner in implementing the ministry's strategies, health programs, and development programs.

Organizing such an event by KMA embodies the commitment to improve the medical sector and keep up with the latest global updates through exchanging of expertise and updating protocols and policies of action, he said. There are so many challenges facing the medical system,



KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi speaks at the 'Updates in Medicine' conference. —KUNA photos

not only on Kuwait's level but also on the Gulf, regional, and international levels, he said.

He reiterated the ministry's keenness on keeping up with these challenges through Kuwait's membership of the executive council of the World Health Organization (WHO), GCC health ministers' council, and Arab health ministers' council.



KMA President Dr Mohammad Al-Mutairi speaks to reporters.

Meanwhile, Dr Mohammad Al-Mutairi, KMA's President, said that the conference focused on six different medical sectors, including general surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, medical education and ethics, internal medicine, and intensive care. Over 12 extensive workshops and 33 lectures were during the event, he said. —KUNA

KUWAIT TAKES PART IN IPU CONFERENCE

LUSAKA: The General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is due to hold its 134th meeting, themed "democracy renewal... granting vote for youth," in the Zambian capital today, with participation of a Kuwaiti delegation headed by National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. The three-day conference is scheduled to tackle a host of issues, namely boosting democratic institutions, examining innovative ideas for updating democratic culture, empowering youngsters to express their opinions on combating terrorism, bolstering global cooperation to confront threats against democracy and individuals' rights. On the event sidelines, the parliamentary human rights commission will hold a meeting, beside meetings at the level of women parliamentarians and parliaments' general secretaries.

Ghanem is scheduled to address the State of Kuwait statement during the convention. The Kuwaiti parliamentary caucus delegation, comprising MPs Faisal Al-Shaya, Humoud Al-Hamdan, Dr Khalil Abul, Madi Al-Hajeri and National Assembly General Secretary Allam Al-Kandari, is scheduled to take part in the permanent committees' meetings. The IPU, founded in 1889, groups 167 parliaments of sovereign states. The Geneva-headquartered Union advocates global inter-parliamentary dialogue, promoting peace, cooperation and democracy. —KUNA

BAHRAINI PREMIER PRAISES KFH'S ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

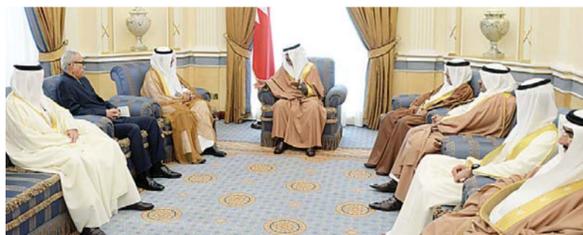
MANAMA: Prime Minister of Bahrain Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa praised the leading role played by Kuwait Finance House (KFH) in implementing many economic development projects in Bahrain, lauding the bank's outstanding planning and implementation competence.

He expressed pride, while receiving at the Gudaibiya Palace the Board Chairman of the Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq, in the depth of the Bahraini-Kuwaiti relations in various fields, noting that the Kuwaiti investments in Bahrain is among the aspects of the advanced level of bilateral cooperation.

He stressed that Bahrain always welcomes Kuwaiti investments and is keen on ensuring their success.

The Prime Minister affirmed that the financial and banking sector enjoys all forms of support and care within an atmosphere of freedom which, he said, has increased the sector's contributions to the national economy and enabled it to generate job opportunities for the citizens.

He pointed out that all plans and programs adopted by the government to



MANAMA: Prime Minister of Bahrain Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa speaks to KFH Chairman Hamad Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq.

upgrade the private sector are aimed at maintaining the kingdom's prestigious regional and global status as an outstanding financial hub.

He said that the economic situation in the region is favorable for the success of all investments. He called for the need to focus on joint investments that ensure the steady growth of the development process to achieve the interests of the region's countries and welfare of their peoples.

Meanwhile, Marzouq expressed the bank's appreciation to the Kingdom of



KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality organized a beach cleaning campaign at the Green Island with participation of Da'iyah residents, volunteers and students.

MP ASHOUR UPSET AT COLLEAGUES' CHANGE OF HEART DURING GRILLING

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Saleh Ashour was upset following the end of the debate of his grilling against Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Subaih yesterday, when three lawmakers changed their minds after initially telling him that they would sign a no-confidence motion against the minister. The three MPs' change of heart came after a 'senior government official' approached them and requested that they do not sign the request to file the motion, informed sources said. Subsequently, the three, who had already signed the request, withdrew their names in the last moments, the sources said.



MP Saleh Ashour

recently received official letters from different ministries, requesting the hiring of Kuwaitis in place of recently laid off expatriates, said informed sources. These measures come within the government's plan to reduce the number of expatriate employees in the public sector as well as employing citizens already awaiting vacancies, the sources added.

Price increases

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry is scheduled to study a letter sent by Dr Saad Al-Shabo, Chairman of the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies (UCCS), in which he demands suspending all new price increase requests made in various co-op societies, as well as reconsidering some prices that were increased when oil prices were high.

'Kuwaitization'
The Civil Service Commission (CSC)

KUWAITI MPs TO DISCUSS BEDOONS' NATURALIZATION IN COMOROS?

DELEGATION MEETS COMOROS PRESIDENT

MORONI: A delegation representing the first Kuwaiti parliamentary friendship group arrived in the Comoros Friday on an official visit. Head of the group MP Saud Al-Hurajji was quoted in the press last week as saying that MPs would attempt during their visit to validate reports about settling bedoons, or stateless residents in Kuwait, in the Comoros.

The visiting delegation held talks yesterday with their counterparts in the Comoros that focused on boosting bilateral relations, Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported. It did not specify however whether the issue of bedoons was discussed or not.

Although reports last year had suggested that governments of Kuwait and the Comoros discussed the possibility of granting the African nation's citizenship to stateless residents, the issue of resettling 'bedoons' there was not addressed. Hurajji said last week that the visit would include attending four workshops on the settlement of bedoons in the Comoros to probe the credibility of recent talks about it. "We are keen on returning with verified news about this topic because I do not think what has been said is true, but we want to make sure," he remarked.



MORONI: President of the Comoros Ikilillo Dhoinine meets with Kuwaiti lawmakers. — KUNA

could gain access to basic humanitarian and social rights, recruiting them at military and government agencies and bodies as well as the private sector, and for reconsidering existing security restrictions on illegal residents' families. Furthermore, illegal residents should be given access to birth and death certificates, marriage and divorce contracts, driving licenses and public schools.

Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah had warned that the government would abstain from voting unless such recommendations were reformulated. But, he had assured that the issue of illegal residents was given top priority by the government.

Privileges

Kuwait first entertained the idea of providing the Comoros' citizenship to 'bedoons' in 2014, following on the footsteps of the United Arab Emirates in this field. Under a plan reportedly discussed between the governments of the two nations, illegal residents would obtain Comoros' citizenship and retain the rights to reside in Kuwait under Article 22 (self-sponsorship), to free education and health care, and to employment. Meanwhile, Kuwait would build schools, institutes and houses in the island-nation. Kuwait insists that no stateless resident would be forcibly deported as a subsequence of this plan.

Kuwait has for over six years been encouraging 'bedoons' to legalize their status by obtaining documents that show their original nationalities, announcing benefits to those who do so including residency permits, free-of-charge education and health services, supply cards, and priority recruit-

ment after Kuwaiti nationals in public agencies and bodies. Last November, Kuwaiti authorities announced that over 7,000 stateless people have regulated their status since 2011.

Relations

President of the Comoros Ikilillo Dhoinine met yesterday with visiting Kuwaiti lawmakers, with whom he discussed bolstering Comorian-Kuwaiti relations. While he touted the progress of bilateral relations, he said these relations would be boosted further after the official opening of his country's embassy in Kuwait, KUNA reported.

Speaking for the Kuwaiti delegation of lawmakers, Hurajji said the Kuwaiti lawmakers' visit to the Comoros is part of the Kuwaiti National Assembly's program for visit exchanges with the parliaments of friendly countries, aiming at strengthening bilateral ties in all fields.

Meanwhile, Acting President of the Assembly of the Union of the Comoros Hashem Bambara met with the Kuwaiti lawmakers, welcoming their visit, and finding it a propitious chance to boost legislative contacts between the two nations' lawmakers. He expressed the desire of Comorian lawmakers to gain knowledge from the democratic experience in Kuwait. To a query by Kuwaiti MP Hamadan Al-Azmi regarding the possible existence of investment impediments in the Comoros, Bambara said the major obstacle was in the problem of providing uninterrupted energy. Comorian MP Ali Ahmad had welcomed the Kuwaiti delegation, noting that it was the first such visit to his country by Kuwaiti lawmakers. Hurajji said the visit afforded both sides the opportunity to exchange viewpoints and expertise on plethora of mutual issues.



MEXICO CITY: Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lieutenant General Sulaiman Al-Fahad and Mexican deputy public security minister Enrique Francisco Galindo sign the agreement. — KUNA

KUWAIT, MEXICO INK SECURITY ACCORD

MEXICO CITY: The State of Kuwait and Mexico yesterday inked a security cooperation accord, in a new joint step expected to boost bilateral relations further. The agreement was signed by the visiting Kuwait's Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lieutenant General Sulaiman Al-Fahad and Enrique Francisco Galindo, the deputy public security minister, during a grand ceremony held at the foreign ministry headquarters in the Mexican capital. Kuwait Ambassador Sameeh Hayat who attended the ceremony affirmed that the accord constituted a crucial move for bolstering bilateral ties and security cooperation between the two countries.

Earlier, Head of Government of Mexico's Federal District, Mayor of Mexico City Dr Miguel Angel Mancera said that Mexican Government is ready to develop and strengthen bilateral relations with Kuwait in various fields, espe-

cially the security domain.

Mancera made the statement during a meeting yesterday with Lt Gen Fahad, accompanied by Hayat, at the Mexican Government palace. The visit of Lt Gen Fahad to Mexico and his meetings with Mexican officials is an important step to strengthen relations and cooperation with Mexico, he said.

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior is keen on boosting cooperation with Mexico on security matters due to Mexico's use of technology in that field, Lt Gen Fahad said. He conveyed greetings of Mancera to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, following Mancera's visit to Kuwait last December. Meanwhile Lt Gen Fahad also met with Mexico's Attorney General Arely Gomez Gonzalez where they discussed exchange of experience and security cooperation between Kuwait and Mexico. — KUNA

Qualification

Kuwait is home to over 100,000 illegal residents who seek Kuwaiti citizenship as well as civil and social rights. However, the government says that only 34,000 are qualified for consideration while the rest are Arabs or descendants of Arab people who moved to Kuwait following the discovery of oil and deliberately disposed of their original passports to seek citizenship in the oil-rich country.

Last November, Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passports Affairs Major General Mazen Al-Jarrah confirmed that the issue pertaining with the 34,000 illegal residents is being studied in cooperation with the Central Apparatus for Illegal Residents; a state body established in 2010 to find a final solution to the decades-old problem. He added that while those people have documents to prove they were registered in the 1965 census - a prerequisite for consideration to receive citizenship - further filtering could render some files disqualified due to security and other reasons.

Recommendations

The National Assembly approved last Tuesday several recommendations pertinent to the conditions of illegal residents. The recommendations included the naturalization of worthy illegal residents, mainly the children of martyrs, Kuwaitis' relatives and military personnel. They also called for handing out 'security cards' to illegal residents who are not included in naturalization lists so that they

60% WORKING RESPONDENTS WILL BE HIRING IN NEXT THREE MONTHS: SURVEY

ALMOST HALF LOOKING TO HIRE MID-CAREER CANDIDATES

DUBAI: A recent Middle East Job Index Survey, conducted by the Middle East's leading job site, Bayt.com, and research and consulting firm, YouGov, revealed that, across the MENA region, 43 percent of MENA companies are planning to hire in the next three months are looking to fill up to five jobs. In parallel, one in four companies are expecting to fill between six to ten jobs.

Long-term hiring prospects, however, are bright: seven in ten organizations in the region plan to recruit new employees in a year's time. The industries with the highest intention to hire in twelve months' time include Education/Academia (84 percent), Tourism/Hospitality (81 percent) and Consumer Goods (81 percent).

Hiring expectations

According to working respondents in the MENA region, 35 percent are 'definitely hiring' and 25 percent are 'probably hiring' in the next three months, while just 7 percent say that they are 'definitely not hiring' in the same time period. Focusing on future expectations, one third (33 percent) of working respondents in the region say that their companies will be 'definitely hiring' in a year's time and 38 percent claim that they will be 'probably hiring'. On the other hand, 4 percent are 'definitely not hiring' and 20 percent 'don't know/can't tell' their intentions for recruitment in the coming year.

Among those hiring in the next three months in the MENA region, 43 percent will open positions to fill a maximum of five job roles and approximately 24 percent will be hiring for 6-10 jobs. Almost half of respondents (49 percent) will be looking to hire 'mid-career candidates with no managerial responsibilities', while 47 percent will be looking for 'team leaders/supervisors' and 29 percent will be looking for 'entry-level with no managerial responsibilities'. Only a quarter of respondents are seeking to hire a 'manager'.

Over half of the MENA region's working respondents (52 percent) state that, over the last three months, their company has hired new employees; 15 percent say that they had new hires in the last six months.

Roles and experience

MENA companies are looking for candidates with managerial experience (39 percent), followed by computer skills (30 percent), while 29 percent look for candidates with experience in sales and marketing.

Desired skills

Good communication skills in Arabic and English is the most desired skill by 65 percent of companies in the MENA region. Being a team player, good leadership qualities, the ability to work under pressure, and being effective/productive also highly valued skills for 48 percent, 43 percent, 41 percent and 41 percent of the region's working respondents, respectively.

As for the most sought-after educational qualifications, graduate/post graduate degrees in Business Management (27 percent), Engineering (25 percent) and Commerce (23 percent) emerged as the most desired academic qualifications amongst MENA companies looking for a candidate.

Top talent

Respondents living in the MENA region claim that 'construction' (35 percent) and 'banking and finance' (33 percent) are the industries that attract and retain the best talents in the region.

Moreover, 43 percent believe that their country of residence is more attractive as a job market than other MENA countries, while 29 percent claim the opposite. This belief is much more common amongst GCC residents (58 percent) as compared to those living in North Africa (26 percent) and in Levant (23 percent).

"At Bayt.com there are currently more than 10,000 jobs posted on the website on any given day. This augments the tremendous amount of recruitment that takes place via the Bayt.com CV Search functionality for employers who prefer not to immediately advertise their pressing job vacancies, which recruiters can try for free on <http://www.bayt.com/en/search-cv/>. Jobseeker registration on our website is growing at over 12,000 new professionals a day and continues to reflect a healthy appetite for jobs across the industrial and career spectrum," said Suhail Masri, VP of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com.

He continued, "Of particular note has been the uptake of corporate consumption of our proprietary branded career channel platform, Talentera, which

empowers corporates big and small to seamlessly integrate and comprehensively manage, monitor and measure their entire recruitment function in-house using the award-winning technology Bayt.com has pioneered."

"It is interesting to see the most popular job roles in the MENA region have changed since our last survey in July, indicating the fluidity of the overall market when it comes to employment options," said Elissavet Vraka, Research Manager, YouGov.

Twenty four percent of the MENA region private sector employees said they work in a multinational company, and 16 percent in a large local company. 15 percent of respondents are currently not working.

Twenty two percent of working respondents claimed to be 'junior managers/team leaders', 20 percent claimed to be 'directors or senior managers' followed by 'middle managers' (17 percent) and 'professionals' (15 percent). Of the MENA region respondents surveyed, 16 percent work in the Construction industry. Data for the Bayt.com Middle East Job Index Survey was collected online between December 8, 2015 and January 21, 2016, with a total of 1,232 online interviews conducted with respondents from the UAE, KSA, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Pakistan.



AHLI UNITED BANK CONCLUDES BLOOD DONATION CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) recently concluded a successful blood donation campaign in a humanitarian initiative that supports solidarity with the community and in a giving spirit to society.

The campaign was launched from AUB's Head Office on March 10, 2016 to the benefit of the Blood Bank. This was to help increase their reserves and to enable the Blood Bank to perform its effective role in providing essential support for patients and those injured in need of a blood transfusion.

It is worth mentioning that AUB organized this blood donation campaign as part of its social responsibility program and to encourage

employees in their humanitarian giving whilst increasing awareness of the significance of this initiative.

On this occasion, AUB issued a press release and said: "We are proud of this valuable humanitarian initiative as blood donation is considered an essential contribution in all societies." It added: "Simply, a Blood donation may help save the recipient's life." AUB commended the excellent turnout from its employees to donate blood without whose positive involvement the campaign could not have been a success. AUB emphasized that it is always keen to play an effective role in society and for its employees to be good role models for giving to the community.



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets a number of fishermen yesterday.

INTERIOR MINISTER MEETS FISHERMEN

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah yesterday made an inspection tour at a number of beaches in Kuwait to check security situations. During the tour, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled met many people fishing and joined them in practicing their hobby.

Complaints

The Ministry of Electricity and Water's (MEW) Assistant Undersecretary for Water Operation and Maintenance Khalifa Al-Furaj said that the ministry receives complaints about water supplies on a 24/7 basis and that the total number of complaints water centers received in January and February was 5,508.



KUWAIT: General Department of Civil Defense conducted a drill at Holiday Inn Salmiya recently, featuring participation of personnel from the Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD), the Health Ministry's Medical Emergency Department and other departments.

Special Report

Chairman talks Bar Association's achievements, challenges

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Bar Association (KBA) was founded by law number 24/1962 by 16 members as a nonprofit organization under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, and started its activities in 1963. The first board of directors was elected in 1965 and consisted of six members, with Sulaiman Al-Mutawa as chairman. The number of members increased rapidly, to reach 5,511 presently. Members are of two types - those who work in this profession and those who don't. Membership is open to Kuwaitis and Arab nationals who live in Kuwait and have at least 10 years of experience in the field.

Dr Nasser Al-Kreween, Chairman of KBA, spoke about the achievements of the association. "Each of the previous boards of KBA added new achievements and developed the work of the association, and I would like to thank all previous members for their efforts," he told Kuwait Times.

More problems

According to him, the increasing number of members means providing more services, causing more problems. "This has put more burdens on the board, and since I became chairman, I have paid attention to this issue and I'm setting the framework for the next period so we have a clear view and policy for KBA's work. We increased the number of permanent internal committees and formed temporary committees to meet the needs of the members," said Kreween.

"We prepare cooperation protocols with internal and external bodies. We improve the services provided to simplify the procedures in dealing with the ministry of justice, ministry of social affairs and labor and the ministry of interior, as

we deal with them in issuing authorization for attorneys for instance, and other work. KBA also participates in local and international conferences and events, and reviews draft laws that are submitted to the parliament," explained Kreween.

Voluntary work

"Any voluntary work has both positive and negative effects on a person's main job or profession. So a person should try to balance between the two to reduce the negative effects on both. Good organization of time and realizing the need to increase efforts from the beginning, along with dividing work between all members of the board and colleagues, will lead to success," he said.

Financial support

Kreween said having financial reserves and support is also very important to face any obstacles and difficulties. It also simplifies work procedures. In addition, cooperation between the members of the board in the tasks that each of them is in charge of making work proceed smoothly and relieves pressure.

Benefits for members

"The main goal for founding this association was to organize the legal profession in Kuwait, starting from registering a member in the list of attorneys and providing him with all the information he needs to practice his profession. KBA also provides opportunities to join training courses to improve members' skills and participate in local and international conferences. They can also join the committees of KBA to offer services to colleagues in various fields including social, health, sports and special needs," said Kreween.

KBA also provides services for nonmembers. As the legal profession is a humanitarian one, KBA is considered a house of law for all communities, so it has permanent committees for community service that provide judicial support to people in need free of charge. The association also spreads legal awareness in the community, especially to young people, in cooperation with various public and private institutions, in addition to preparing joint programs with the ministry of education, ministry of defense, ministry of interior, ministry of justice, Civil Service Bureau and various NGOs and clubs.

KBA also conducts other activities that are in line with the



Dr Nasser Al-Kreween

goal of the association, such as accepting the registrations of attorneys through the registration committee of KBA. This committee manages the list of lawyers during the period of their practicing the profession. Furthermore, it provides training for new members and finds them a workplace to practice. There are about 30 permanent committees and five temporary ones at KBA, which work during the whole year. As part of KBA's structure, there is a media center, human rights center, arbitration center and law institute. All these bodies support KBA's work and activities.

Photo

of the day



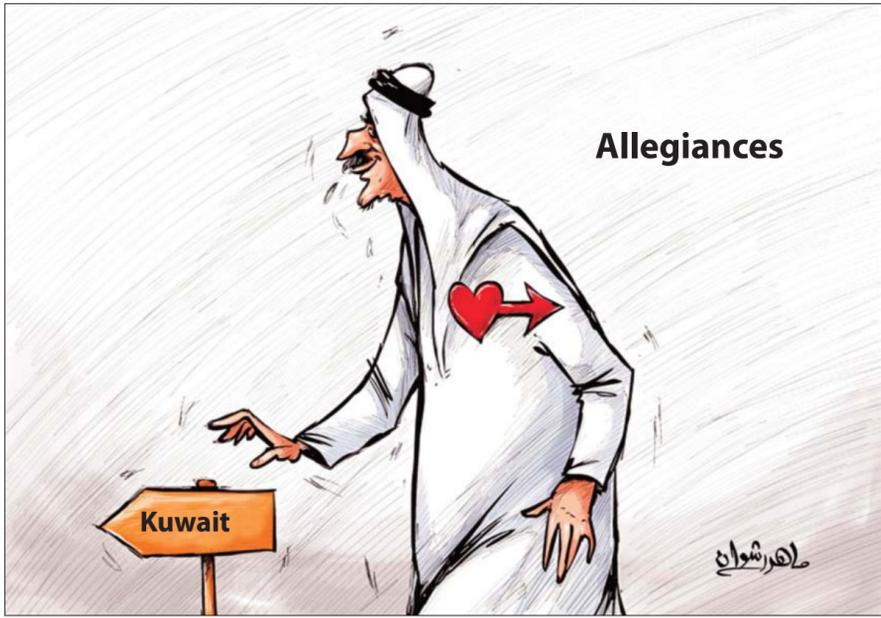
KUWAIT: A vendor rearranges golden jewelry at a jewelry shop in Kuwait City on March 17, 2016. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT MEDIATES TO END IRAN-GCC TENSIONS: REPORT

KUWAIT: Kuwait recently started mediating between Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and Iran to put an end to regional tensions, a local daily reported yesterday quoting diplomatic sources. Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah has recently carried letters in this regard to leaders of five GCC state, while another letter would be handed over to the United Arab Emirates today. The letters convey a wish from the Iranian leadership to 'turn a new leaf' of relations with GCC states and to discuss unsolved problems through dialogue.

The source added that Kuwait had recently received the Iranian minister of intelligence Dr Sayyed Mahmoud Alawi who carried a message from President Hassan Rouhani about bilateral relations with Kuwait as well as with other GCC states in general. It further conveyed a strong will to resolve regional problems without any foreign interference.

Further, the sources said that Kuwait asked the Iranian official to work on building trust and that it also expressed its official view on Iranian interferences in Bahrain, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and discovering several armed cells in some GCC states including Kuwait. — Al-Rai



Crime

Report

TEEN DRUG PUSHER ARRESTED

KUWAIT: A 16-year-old expat was recently arrested for selling drug on behalf of a citizen who is serving a life time imprisonment sentence for drug trafficking, said security sources. Case papers indicate that narcotics detectives were tipped off concerning the juvenile's activity and how he used to hide drugs in certain hideouts where his customers could then pick them up. Arresting the boy while putting a package, he confessed that he worked for a central prison inmate. He also led police to about 50 grams of heroin he hid at his house. The boy also told police that at first he received a call from an unknown person, who offered him KD5 for each delivery he made. He added that he later on learnt that he worked for an inmate. The boy added that he usually received a call from the inmate, telling him where to pick up the packages till further notice. A case was filed and the inmate is being summoned for further investigations.

Woman arrested for liquor trade

Farwaniya detectives recently raided a liquor factory, and arrested an Asian woman who ran the place. The woman also hired a number of compatriots to distribute her products. Case papers indicate that police patrol officers spotted a woman carrying a large bag and on approaching her, she tried to flee but was caught. By checking the bag she carried, policemen found out that it was full of liquor bottles. The woman led police to where she brewed the liquor and to her associates. In another case, an Asian man was recently arrested in Fintas with possession of 160 bottles of homebrewed liquor, said security sources. Case papers indicate that patrol officers stopped the man and on noticing that he was nervous, they searched his vehicle to find the liquor in the trunk.

Ex-wife assaulted

A female citizen recently filed a complaint against her ex-husband, accusing him of breaking into her apartment in Maidan Hawalli and assaulting her. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Addict assaults officers

A man was recently arrested in Jahra industrial area for drug abuse, possessing 67 illicit pills and insulting police officers, said security sources. They noted that police patrol officers had suspected the man and on stopping him, he was found to be under the influence of drugs. The man refused to cooperate with search procedures, and insulted the officers who still searched his vehicle and found the pills. A case was filed. Separately, a Kuwaiti citizen was recently arrested in Adan with possession of a large piece of hashish in addition to smaller pieces packed and ready for sale, said security sources.

Senior citizen assaulted

A Syrian man was recently referred to Andalus police station for assaulting a senior citizen who was selling traditional photos at the Friday market, when they argued about location priority. — Al-Rai, Al-Anbaa

EDUCATOR SLAMS TEENS' NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS

KUWAIT: A recent report rang a bell of warning about the practices of teenagers during the annual national celebrations, and urged the information minister to react towards what it described as a 'very dangerous' phenomena. "Those celebrations made young people believe there were no behavioral limits," the report reads, "thus giving teenagers living in other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries the impression that there are no gender restrictions during the celebrations."

"This is why those youngsters make sure to attend the celebrations every year," reads the report which was prepared by Deputy Chairman of the National Celebrations Committee and the Ministry of Education's Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative Development Yousif Al-Najjar.

The top educator further expressed rejection to turning Kuwait into a 'den' where teenagers from other countries can have fun.

Najjar added that expressing patriotism and love to one's home country should not be done by parades, spraying others with foam of water guns, losing contact to ethics or painting vehicles in Kuwait flag's colors. "This love should be better expressed by hard work that places Kuwait amongst leading countries," he underlined. —Al-Rai

الذنباء

Al-Anbaa

THE CHILDREN OF BIBI

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

Sheikha Bibi Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah appeared on TV last week to speak about those who were born orphans or lost their parents under any circumstances. She spoke with a spirit of mercy, not with the text of laws, about those who never knew any a cradle to contain them except for Kuwait itself.

Before I start my article and attempt to analyze all the things said during Sheikha Bibi Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah's TV interview, I would like to tell Um Yousuf the following: Those are not only your children, rather they are the children of Kuwait. Maybe many spoke, wrote and put forth parliamentary questions about that problem. But recently during the 'Al-Rai Meeting' show, Sheikha Bibi Al-Yousuf presented her cause through the eye of mercy, and a heart that is full of mercy, without dismantling laws and without hitting at officials. When Um Yousuf appealed to the government, she did so with the heart and soul of a mother. She asked them to look with mercy at those children who missed the feeling and meaning of fatherhood from an early age, and asked some officials to adopt the values of Islam which our Prophet (PBUH) had asked for in mercy and love. That is the point which Um Yousuf focused on during her dialogue every now and then, while speaking about the issue through a humanitarian eye, that keeps a distance, every movement, from laws and regulations. She is a woman who is not against laws and does not attack officials. Rather, she presents an issue based on laws written by the alphabets of love, and its lines have much mercy.

cy. Sheikha Bibi Al-Yousuf's demands are that the education of those children must be based on considering them individuals in the Kuwaiti family. That was her demand, and that is what the Kuwait society is demanding because they are at the end Kuwaitis.

Some people may look at those children as a small group in our society. Despite their low number, they are still individuals in the Kuwaiti society. So why don't we follow and implement Um Yousuf's proposal? These proposals are as follows:

- Provide them with housing that gives them dignified family life with the Kuwaiti society's customs and values.
- Supervise them just like we do our children.
- Give them the feeling that they are indivisible part of this society.
- Maintain their dignity, respect their individuality, avoid making them feel inferiority, and do not accept anything for them that we do not accept for ourselves.

The message of Sheikha Bibi was clear. If our officials analyze Um Yousuf's message, they will find out that she gave them many rules in love and mercy, because her message is coming out from the daughter of Kuwait; the land that is so generous to those who want to help. So how will it be if those who need help, love and mercy are Kuwait children?

In conclusion: We may differ in opinions, but we agree in the love we have for Kuwait.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

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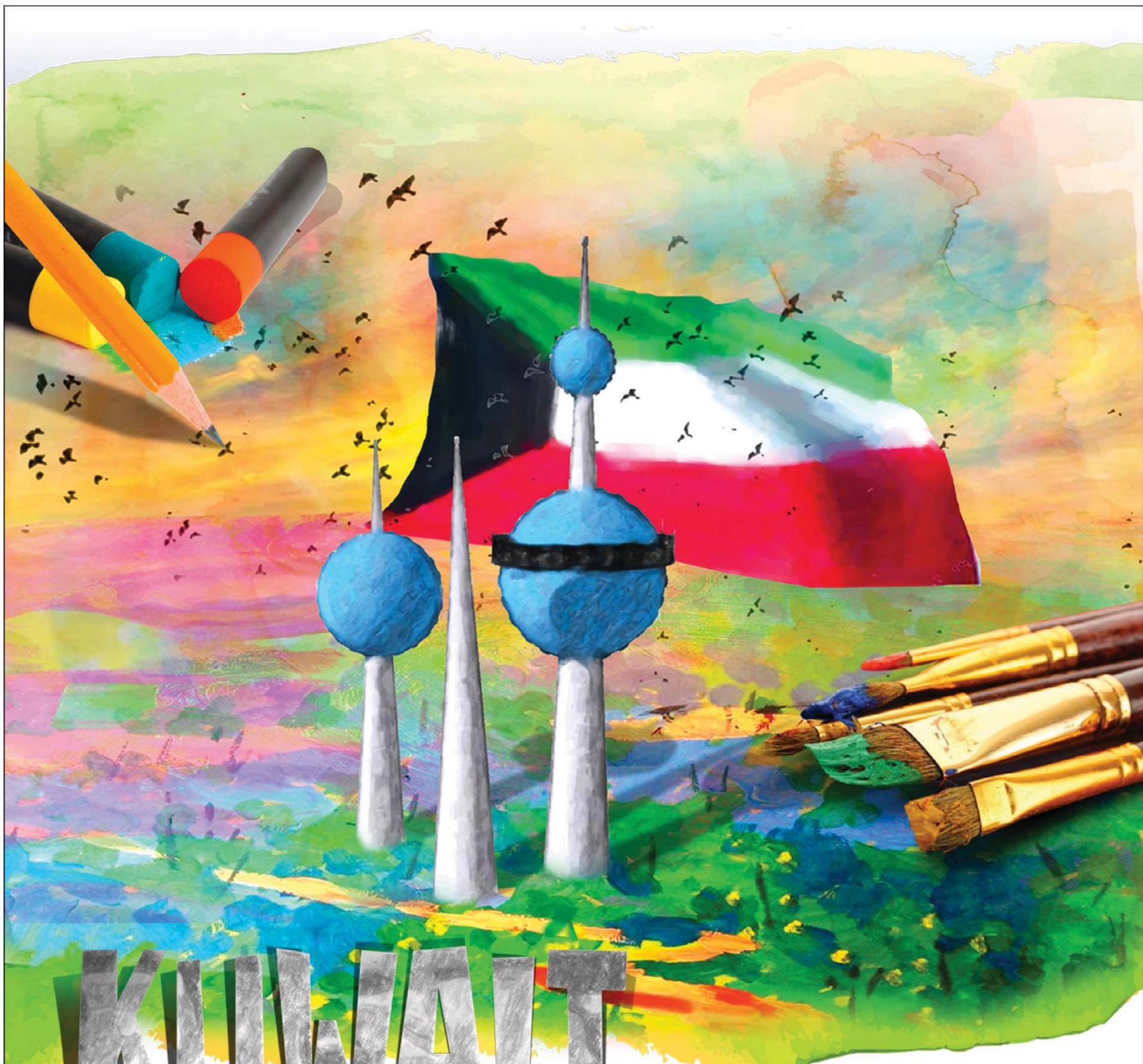
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Good luck to you, our young artists.

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

- the competition will receive an appreciation plaque.
- Any school or individual interested to participate in this competition is welcome to visit the office of Kuwait Times and collect the drawing sheets.
- Drawing sheets will be given to schools FREE of charge.
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Kuwait Times International

SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 2016

TWO INDIAN MUSLIM COWHERDERS LYNCHED, HANGED

Page 11



Interpol urges 'extra vigilance' at borders

Page 10



MACEDONIA BORDER: In this file photo, a Syrian man plays with his one-year-old child as refugees and migrants wait to be allowed to cross the border to Macedonia in the northern Greek border station of Idomeni. — AP

RAIDS 'KILL 39 CIVILIANS' IN IS BASTION

BEIRUT: A wave of air strikes killed at least 39 civilians yesterday in Raqa, the main stronghold of the Islamic State jihadist group in Syria, a monitoring group said. At least five children and seven women were among the dead in IS's de facto capital in the north of the war-ravaged country, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. Five members of IS's self-styled police force were also killed and 60 people were wounded, some critically, according to the monitor, which relies on a network of sources on the ground. The raids came a day after 16 civilians were killed in strikes on the same city. "We cannot know whether the latest strikes

on Raqa are by Syrian or Russian warplanes," said Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman.

"What is clear is that their goal is to try to paralyze IS and to stop it from deploying reinforcements from Raqa to the Palmyra area," he said. IS seized Palmyra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known as the "Pearl of the Desert", last May. In September, satellite images confirmed that Palmyra's famed Temple of Bel had been targeted by IS as part of a campaign to destroy pre-Islamic monuments, tombs and statues it considers idolatrous. UN experts said the main building of the temple as well as a row of columns had

been destroyed. In recent weeks, Syrian troops backed by the Russian air force have been pressing an advance to try to reclaim the ancient city.

18 IS fighters killed

Yesterday alone, at least 18 IS fighters were killed in at least 70 strikes on the Palmyra area, the Observatory said, as clashes pitted loyalist troops against jihadists on the ground. Russia, a key backer of the Syrian regime, on Monday ordered the withdrawal of most of its armed forces from Syria, but continues to strike jihadist targets, particularly around Palmyra.

Senior Russian commander Sergei Rudskoi on Friday said Russian jets were flying around two dozen bombing sorties daily to back up the Syrian government's bid to recapture Palmyra. "Government troops and patriotic forces with the support of the Russian air force are carrying out a large-scale operation to liberate Palmyra," he told journalists in Moscow. Roughly 1,800 Syrian civilians including more than 400 children have been killed in Russian air strikes since Moscow launched its aerial campaign on September 30, according to the Observatory.

Moscow has denied claims that its air force has repeatedly hit civilian and non-

jihadist rebel targets. More than 270,000 people have been killed in Syria since the conflict began in March 2011 with anti-government protests. An unprecedented ceasefire negotiated by Russia and the United States has largely held since February 27 but the truce does not apply to jihadists. UN mediator Staffan de Mistura has urged Damascus to make concrete proposals in the coming days on a political transition, following a week of peace talks in Geneva. But a source close to the regime said yesterday there had been "no progress" at the meetings and criticized the UN envoy for putting pressure on the Syrian government. — AFP

EU-TURKEY PROPOSALS

BRUSSELS: The EU and Turkey are negotiating a controversial deal to curb an unprecedented flow of migrants to Europe in exchange for concessions to Ankara. Here is a summary of the key points under discussion, according to a draft by European Union president Donald Tusk that the bloc's leaders agreed to present to Turkey's premier.

Migrants returned

The key point of the deal: "All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into Greek islands will be returned to Turkey." This includes both refugees fleeing conflict and persecution as well as economic migrants, and it applies irrespective of where the refugees originally come from. The draft says it will be a "temporary and

extraordinary measure which is necessary to end the human suffering and restore public order". To meet international law, migrants will be "duly registered and any application for asylum will be processed individually by the Greek authorities". Those to do not, or whose applications are rejected, will be returned. The UN refugee agency will help with the returns process, according to a clause inserted late on Thursday. All costs will be covered by the EU. The EU also will also "welcome Turkey's commitment that migrants returned to Turkey will be protected in accordance with the international standards." An EU official said it was "in our interest to limit the time between the deal and its entry into force to a minimum so as to avoid the creation of a 'pull factor'."

One for one

For every Syrian refugee being returned to Turkey from Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU. The idea is to reduce the incentive for Syrian refugees to board dangerous smugglers' boats to Europe, as they will have good hope of being resettled directly from refugee camps. Women and children will be prioritized under "UN Vulnerability Criteria." Priority will also be given to those who have not previously been deported from Greece. The EU will use 18,000 spare places from an earlier resettlement scheme, and up to 54,000 places from a slow-moving plan to redistribute refugees in Greece and Italy around the EU. If the numbers exceed 72,000 the scheme will be reviewed.

Visas

The EU agrees to accelerate plans to bring in visa-free travel for Turkish nationals to the Schengen passport-free zone by June 2016 "provided that all benchmarks have been met". In practice it will be almost impossible for Turkey to fulfill the list of 72 requirements demanded by Brussels, especially on a shortened timeline.

More aid

The EU agrees to speed up the payment of three billion euros (\$3.4 billion) in aid for refugees in Turkey, under the terms of an earlier summit in November. It also agrees to mobilize "up to a ceiling of an additional three billion euros up to the end of 2018" but only once the initial three billion has been spent.

New chapters

The EU will "prepare for the decision on the opening of new chapters" in Turkey's long-stalled bid for membership of the EU "as soon as possible." At the request of Cyprus, which has long blocked the opening of new chapters because of tensions with Turkey, a mention of Ankara being involved in the preparations was removed from the proposal. — AFP

SOUTH CHINA SEA ISLANDS; A DECADES-LONG DISPUTE

BEIJING: A decades-long, multi-pronged dispute over territory in the South China Sea escalated this week with the claim that Beijing has put missile batteries on a contested island in the region. Commentators say the 3 million square kilometers of water is a potential flashpoint for regional conflict. Here are five key questions about the sea and the issues around it.

What's there?

It's mostly empty, and hundreds of the small islands, islets and rocks are not naturally able to support human settlement. Significant chains include the Paracels in the north, and the Spratlys in the south. But everyone surrounding the sea—Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, tiny Brunei, Taiwan and, most significantly, China—lay claim to some part of it. Beijing says it has sovereignty over almost the whole area, citing an ill-defined "nine-dash line" originating in 1940s-era maps as proof.

Why the dispute?

Scientists believe that the seabed could contain unexploited oil, gas and minerals, which would be a boon to any country that can establish their claims to the region's waters, especially in resource-hungry Asia. It's also home to abundant fisheries that feed growing populations. But the sea's key value is strategic. Shipping lanes vital to world trade pass through it, carrying everything from raw materials to finished products, as well as enormous quantities of oil. Beijing views the South China Sea as its own backyard, a place where it is entitled to free, uninterrupted rein and where its growing navy should be able to operate unhampered.

Disputes playing out

For years now, various claimants have been fortifying and building up the tiny reefs and islets to bolster their claims to ownership.

China's land-reclamation program has been particularly aggressive. Satellite pictures now show inhabited islands where there was once only submerged coral. Many have multiple facilities, including some with runways long enough for huge commercial or military planes. Beijing insists its intent is peaceful and the features it is constructing are for civilian use, such as maritime rescue, as well as military purposes.

The US and others suspect China is trying to assert its sovereignty claims by changing the facts on the ground, and say that it could pose threats to the free passage of ships through the region's waters and air space. What's happened this week? Commercial satellite operators have published pictures that reportedly show the presence of missile launchers on Woody Island, part of the Paracels chain over which China has had control for decades. Taiwan Wednesday confirmed it believed Beijing had moved batteries there. When challenged, China did not deny the claims, but insisted anything it had done was "consistent with the right to self-preservation and self-protection". Reports on the weapons said they were surface-to-air missiles with a range of about 200 kilometers, which would suggest they are not targeted at anything on land.

What will happen next?

The United States and its ally Australia have carried out a number of so-called "Freedom of Navigation" overflights and sail-bys in the region. They say they are asserting the right of any sovereign nation to use international waters and skies. China calls these operations "provocations" and insists they are violations of its territory. With the South China Sea home to runways capable of launching fighter jets that could patrol over the sea, and now missiles that could threaten wayward planes, the stakes in the dispute have got higher. — AFP



GAZIANTEP: A child looks up at a bird in a cage belonging to Syrian refugee Abdullah Koca, who fled Syria four years ago and has been living at the camp in Islahiye, Gaziantep province, southeastern Turkey. Nearly 300,000 are housed in 26 government-run camps similar to this one. — AP

DRUG LORD GAINS WEIGHT, READS BOOKS IN PRISON

MEXICO CITY: Drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman is getting some self-help advice and gaining a bit of weight in prison under his new, tighter-security regime, but Mexico's formerly most wanted man is apparently not doing so well in the love department. Guzman, who tunneled out of the same prison last July, now has two guards standing outside his cell watching him every minute of the day.

There is a dog whose only job is to test his food before he eats it to make sure it's not poisoned. He no longer has a television, but gets free reading material. Since he was recaptured in January, Guzman has read the classic "Don Quijote," and has now started a Spanish-language translation of "The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here for?" by Rick Warren, a California-based evangelical pastor.

The self-help book contains quotes that might pertain to Guzman, like "A pretentious, showy life is an empty life; a plain and simple life is a full life." And "We are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of it." The description of his post-escape prison life comes from a federal official who was not authorized

to be quoted by name under official policy. The official and a colleague granted the exclusive interview to The Associated Press following a spate of complaints by Guzman's lawyers and relatives who said his health was suffering in prison and that he couldn't sleep.

Before he escaped, Guzman was allowed a four-hour conjugal visit every nine days. In addition, the officials said, he was supplied with Viagra. But Guzman hasn't been given Viagra since he was recaptured and returned to the prison on Jan 8. Nor has he received any conjugal visits. He only applied for permission to renew them this week. The officials said Guzman has gained a small amount of weight and lowered his blood pressure since he was taken back to the Altiplano prison west of Mexico City. He is under constant observation from a ceiling-mounted camera which - unlike the one in the cell from which he escaped - has no blind spots.

Guzman's associates tunneled him out of prison through the thin concrete floor of his shower stall last July in a spot which surveillance cameras were not designed to reach. The floors of the prison's top-secu-



MEXICO CITY: A woman read a newspaper in Mexican City. Mexican actress Kate del Castillo, who met with drug baron Joaquin 'El Chapo' Guzman alongside Sean Penn in October, said she is angry with the US star for using the opportunity for his own glory. Del Castillo has been in the spotlight since it was revealed that she arranged the meeting between herself, Guzman and Penn, which occurred three months before the Sinaloa drug cartel leader's capture. — AFP

ty cells have since been reinforced with a 16-inch (40-centimeter) bed of concrete with a double layer of rebar. During his most recent time on the run, Guzman met with Mexican actress Kate del Castillo, purportedly to discuss a project to document his life in a movie.

But Del Castillo said in interview with ABC aired Friday that Guzman may have just been infatuated with her, or the drug-trafficking character she played in a TV series, Teresa Mendoza.

"He probably had a crush on Teresa Mendoza," Del Castillo told Diane Sawyer. "I think he was never interested in the movie." Prosecutors later said her contacts with Guzman, and the October 2015 meeting with Guzman and American actor Sean Penn in a remote area of northeastern Mexico, helped lead them to eventually recapturing the drug lord. A chain of leaked emails between Guzman and Del Castillo suggest authorities were monitoring their text conversations. Del Castillo said she didn't know she was under surveillance. "No, to be honest I didn't think about it," she said. "I thought he (Guzman) knew what he was doing by texting." — AP

IN ISRAEL, NEW GENERATION OF ULTRA-ORTHODOX INTEGRATING

JERUSALEM: A quiet revolution is arising inside the insular world of Israel's ultra-Orthodox Jewish community - chipping away at the ghetto walls its leaders have erected to protect against what they see as the dangers of secularism. More and more, young ultra-Orthodox insist they can continue to lead pious lives while also embracing technology, the modern workplace and their fellow Israelis.

Experts have long warned that Israel faces long-term economic ruin if its fastest growing sector, known as the Haredim, continues to reject the mainstream education system, enjoy sweeping military draft exemptions, raise large families on taxpayer-funded handouts and devote themselves almost entirely to their cloistered world of scripture and study. The current call for reform, however, is coming from within a community long resistant to outside pressures to change.

Leaving entirely

Some are leaving ultra-Orthodoxy entirely - one in 10 is moving on to more moderate Judaism or secular life. But others like Avigdor Rabinovitch, a single, 25-year-old political science student at The Open University, are building a grassroots movement that strives to transcend a life of poverty and isolation, and to redefine what it means to be an ultra-Orthodox Jew in Israel. "It's a new identity that I call 'Israeli Haredim,'" said Rabinovitch, who organizes events for like-minded reformers. "We're not trying to be like anyone else. We want to be ourselves but to open up to new worlds as well. We want to be involved and not just watch from the side." After generations have shunned military service, more young Haredim are looking to improve their future job prospects by joining combat and intelligence units that have been

set up for them. According to the military, some 2,300 enlisted during the last draft year, up from 288 in 2007. Far more are enrolling in higher education as well. Where only a third of Haredi males had jobs as recently as 2003, the employment rate for Haredi males has now passed the 50 percent mark, according to Gilad Malach, a researcher from the Israel Democracy Institute who specializes in the community.

Haredi women have traditionally been the primary breadwinners, and their employment rates are close to 75 percent, he said. "I think it is a historic change," Malach said. "In the past, in times of crisis, the Haredi world would deal by closing ranks and tightening the ghetto. But they realize that this just doesn't work anymore - socially, culturally and financially."

The Haredim

The Haredim - Hebrew for "those who fear God" - make up about 8 percent of Israel's 8.5 million residents. Many rabbis fear immersion in mainstream society will expose them to secularism and cut into the prayer and study. Leaders speak proudly of centuries-old traditions of learning that they believe have allowed the Jewish people to survive the Spanish Inquisition, European pogroms, the Holocaust and other tragedies. Study in Yeshiva seminaries, they say, is no less important than military strength in protecting the country from modern threats and no less valuable than advanced academic degrees. For decades, a string of secular-led Israeli governments have maintained the status quo, either because of their dependence on ultra-Orthodox political kingmakers or out of fear of an angry backlash from a sector that hasn't hesitated to block roads, clash with police or send tens of thousands of activists into the streets when ordered by their rabbis. —AP



WASHINGTON: Supreme Court Nominee Merrick Garland (right) arrives for meetings on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. — AFP

OBAMA AND THE REPUBLICANS TAKE SUPREME COURT FIGHT TO AIRWAVES

'SEEKING TO SCORE CHEAP POLITICAL POINTS'

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama called again yesterday for Senate Republicans to consider his nominee for the Supreme Court, Merrick Garland. Republicans countered by warning Democrats not to "seek to further divide our nation" by using the Supreme Court fight "to score cheap political points in an election year." In his weekly radio and Internet address, Obama acknowledged that "we're in the middle of an especially noisy and volatile political season."

However, the president argued: "At a time when our politics are so polarized; when norms and customs of our political rhetoric seem to be corroding - this is precisely the time we should treat the appointment of a Supreme Court justice with the seriousness it deserves. Because our Supreme Court is supposed to be above politics, not an extension of politics. And it should stay that way." Obama urged Senate Republicans to "give Judge Garland the respect he has earned. Give him a hearing. Give him an up-or-down vote."

To deny it would be an abdication of the Senate's constitutional duty. It would indicate a

process for nominating and confirming judges that is beyond repair." In the GOP response, Sen Thom Tillis, R-NC, said the battle over the vacancy created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia was unique because an Obama choice would push the court's 4-4 split in the liberal direction and because the vacancy occurred "in the middle of an election year." Scalia died Feb 13.

Tillis repeated the GOP argument that they would give voters a chance to decide the next justice by postponing action until the president elected in November makes a choice. He never mentioned Garland, whom Obama nominated Wednesday. "The president and Democratic leaders aren't exactly thrilled with giving the American people a voice," said Tillis, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Tillis said Republicans were already moving on to addressing drug addiction and the needs of the military and veterans and said the next move was up to Obama and congressional Democrats.

"Will they join us in doing our jobs on behalf of the American people?" he said. "Or will they instead seek to further divide our nation by turn-

ing the Supreme Court process into a blatantly partisan back and forth? Are they going to resort to blocking and sabotaging important legislation and good-faith efforts to help the American people, all in the name of seeking to score cheap political points in an election year?" Shortly after Scalia's death, Tillis cautioned Republicans against ruling out any Obama choice before he announced it, citing the unlikely scenario that the president would pick a candidate as conservative as Scalia. Tillis said a blanket refusal could seem "obstructionist."

On Friday, Illinois Sen Mark Kirk became the first GOP senator to publicly abandon his party leaders' insistence on blocking the process until a new president makes a nomination. "It's just man up and cast a vote," Kirk said on the "Big John Howell" show on Chicago radio station WLS. "The tough thing about these senatorial jobs is you get yes or no votes. Your whole job is to either say yes or no and explain why." Kirk faces a tough re-election contest this fall and is considered one of the most endangered Senate GOP incumbents. —AP



NETANYA: Ultra-Orthodox Jews ride a horse-drawn carriage during the wedding of the grandson of the Rabbi of the Tzanz Hasidic dynasty community, in Netanya, Israel. —AP

WITH LACK OF MAINTENANCE, DC SUBWAY SYSTEM LOSES ITS LUSTER

WASHINGTON: The closure of the subways in the nation's capital in the middle of the workweek to inspect and repair power cables that could otherwise burst into flames was just the latest symptom of a lengthy decline for the Metro system, once a source of regional pride. Metro, which reopened Thursday morning after emergency repairs, is now known for broken escalators, frequent delays, an acrid smell in the stations and aging railcars with carpets caked in decades of grime. The system's board chairman, Jack Evans, says walking into the stations is like entering a "dungeon."

Metro opened in 1976, but its problems date back even farther, to decisions made in the 1960s when construction began and its unusual governing structure was established. Metro belongs to everyone and to no one: Its board of directors includes elected officials from Maryland, Virginia and District of Columbia, and all three jurisdictions have to agree every year to provide the money needed for the system to operate. The federal government provides oversight and Congress chips in with funding, but it comes with strings attached. It's also the only major transit system in the United States without a tax that provides a dedicated revenue stream.

"I am caught in a bind," said Evans, a DC Council member who became the Metro board chairman in January. "I have jurisdictions who won't pay more money, I have people who ride the system who don't want to pay higher fares, and I have labor who

want to be paid more wages." Maintenance has been put off for decades, employees have repeatedly failed to report safety lapses and the system's executives have to answer to the board's often conflicting agendas. The system went most of last year without a general manager as the board debated whether to bring in a traditional transit executive or a corporate turnaround specialist.

In January 2015, one passenger died and

dozens more were sickened after a train filled with smoke inside a downtown Washington tunnel. The smoke was traced to a problem with the electrical third rail, and a similar fire on Monday prompted General Manager Paul Wiedefeld to order the shutdown. He said Wednesday evening that inspections revealed three areas where the cables were so badly damaged it wasn't safe to run trains; that damage was repaired before the system reopened.



WASHINGTON: A Metro train departs the Gallery Place-Chinatown Metro station in Washington. — AP

Pride of the region

In its early years, Metro was praised for having qualities the New York City subway and other transit systems lacked: clean, quiet cars, with carpets and comfortable seating; distinctive architecture in its stations; and a user-friendly, color-coded map that became an iconic symbol of Washington as new stations opened throughout the 1980s. "It was the pride of the region. It was clean; it was efficient; it was safe. Everyone boasted about it," said Rep Gerry Connolly, a northern Virginia Democrat. "I believe we can restore that luster, but it's going to require investment, it's going to require good management, it's going to require a sense of accountability that the commuters and the political leadership impose on Metro."

Despite its lengthy honeymoon period, some argue that Metro is now suffering from money-saving decisions that were made during the construction. Metro's physical layout leaves no room for error. Unlike in New York, each line has just one track going in each direction. That means any time a track is closed or a train becomes disabled, trains in both directions have to take turns on a single track, causing major delays that reverberate throughout the system and linger after the initial problem is resolved.

The system also has choke points, notably a tunnel under the Potomac River that trains on three separate lines are forced to share. Since 2008, Congress has

provided \$150 million a year to Metro for capital improvements, with the District, Maryland and Virginia each chipping in \$50 million. The following year, Metro endured the worst accident in its history, a collision between two trains that killed nine people. Since then, most of those capital dollars have gone toward buying new rail cars. —AP

Job Fair

Hope School for Special Needs

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Bring copies of all necessary documents
English Skills must be good to excellent

Address: Sharq, Block 1, Al Shuhada St, Kuwait

Telephone: 22496600/1/2

PARIS ATTACKS EX-FUGITIVE A MYSTERY MAN: CHAMELEON OR COWARD

PARIS: Beardless, with short-cropped hair and a mild manner, Salah Abdeslam slipped from one world to another as easily as he slipped for four

months through an international dragnet.

The fugitive who evaded several close calls with police - until he was

caught Friday in the neighborhood where he grew up - remains perhaps the biggest mystery among the cohort of men who brazenly attacked Paris cafes and restaurants, a noted concert hall and France's main sports stadium on Nov. 13, killing 130 people. He is thought to have served as the logistics man, renting rooms, shopping for detonators and driving at least one of the killers from Brussels to Paris. It remains unclear whether he was meant to become an attacker himself, as a suicide bomber, and whether he was a chameleon or a coward.

Abdeslam, 26, is a French citizen who lived in the Molenbeek neighborhood of Brussels, the low-income quarter of mainly Moroccan immigrant families and home to most of the at least nine attackers.

He lost one of his two brothers, Brahim, who blew himself up, and his childhood friend Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the suspected ringleader of the bloodbath.

Four days after the attacks, Mohamed Abdeslam, the third brother, said the three siblings grew up normally, seemingly content with life in Europe.

"We were an open-minded family. We never had any problems with jus-

stice," he said. "You have to understand that we have a family, we have a mom and he remains her child."

Brothers Brahim and Salah ran a family cafe in Molenbeek - which police closed down not long before the attacks on suspicion of drug dealing there. The cafe served alcohol, forbidden in the Muslim religion, but that clearly posed no problem for the two young men. Just like the partying that Brahim's friends told The Associated Press their friend did, and reports said Salah did, too.

But since the attacks, Abdeslam was a man on the run who left a trail of unanswered questions in his wake and shown by his absence that he could outwit the biggest manhunt in Europe.

Abdeslam strangely called his contacts in Brussels to come to Paris and fetch him after the attacks, apparently stranded in a southern suburb of the French capital. On their return the following day, the group managed to get through a police checkpoint after a standard stop. Some Belgian media reported that Abdeslam was smuggled out of a house in Molenbeek two days after the attacks under the noses of police - a report never proven. "All we know is that when we came, he wasn't there," Belgian prosecutor Eric Van der Sypt

said recently. Abdeslam was registered in the Schengen information system on suspicion of unidentified criminal activity. But when he was stopped four days before the attacks at a routine traffic check as he drove and two companions drove from Germany to Austria, the group was waved on their way after saying they were heading to Vienna for a vacation.

Abdeslam clearly slipped from role to role with ease, seamlessly orchestrating transitions from regular neighborhood guy to the logistician behind the Muslim extremist attacks. But he may have missed a beat. A suicide vest was found near where his cell phone was last detected in Montrouge - where he awaited a rescue by friends. And the Clio he drove to Paris with some attackers was found abandoned in northern Paris, in a district the Islamic State group said in its claim of responsibility that an attack had occurred. It never did.

In January, the Islamic State group published an online photo tribute to the extremists who killed in Paris. But someone was missing from the photo display of in Dabiq, the IS propaganda magazine: Abdeslam. Belgian jihadi watcher Pieter van Ostaeyen said this may be due to IS's desire to honor only those extremists slain as martyrs. —AP



BRUSSELS: Armed police officers escort Salah Abdeslam to a police vehicle during a raid in the Molenbeek neighborhood of Brussels, Belgium on Friday March 18, 2016. The identity of Salah Abdeslam is confirmed yesterday, by French police and deputy mayor of Molenbeek, Ahmed El Khannouss quoting official Belgium police sources. —AP

INTERPOL URGES 'EXTRA VIGILANCE' AT BORDERS

BRITISH CAPTIVE APPEARS IN NEW IS VIDEO

LYON: Interpol yesterday urged "extra vigilance at border controls" the day after the arrest of top Paris attacks fugitive Salah Abdeslam in Belgium. "The capture of the 26-year-old Belgian-born French national... may encourage any accomplices to attempt to flee Europe, or elsewhere," the world police body warned its 190 member countries. In a statement, Interpol drew particular attention to a blank Syrian passport that was found outside the Stade de France stadium, one of the targets of the November 13 attacks that claimed 130 lives.

The body based in Lyon, France, said the passport had been recorded in Interpol's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database in April 2014, adding that it was part of a batch of 1,452 stolen blank passports. "An advisory sent to all member countries... recommends enhanced checks at control points, particularly against" the SLTD database, it said. The SLTD was created in 2002 after the September 11 attacks in the United States.

The database "holds details of some 250,000 stolen and lost Syrian and Iraqi passports, of which more than 190,000 were reported stolen as blank," Interpol said. "Whilst it is too soon to speculate in which direction the investigation will proceed, anyone linked to Abdeslam will be concerned that their location could be revealed and attempt to run to try and avoid detection," said Interpol Secretary General Juergen Stock. "Belgium is to be congratulated on the arrest of Salah Abdeslam, but this is just one piece in a larger puzzle," he said. Interpol said its global database on "foreign terrorist fighters" contains information on some 6,000 individuals provided by more than 50 countries.

New IS video

In another development, British journalist John Cantlie, who is being held prisoner by the Islamic State group, appeared in a new video released yesterday supposedly filmed in the jihadists' Iraqi stronghold of Mosul. In the latest

installment in a series of propaganda videos released by IS, Cantlie speaks to the camera in the style of a news report. It is unclear when it was shot, but Cantlie last appeared in an IS video in early 2015. In yesterday's video, a gaunt-looking Cantlie says he is in Mosul, IS' main city in northern Iraq.

Dressed in black and squinting in the sunshine, he is seen standing in front of a metal shack he describes as a media kiosk that distributes IS pamphlets, which was destroyed in an air strike by a US-led coalition. Speaking in English with Arabic subtitles, as in previous clips of the same style, Cantlie criticizes and derides the US-led campaign launched in 2014 against IS. He was kidnapped along with journalist James Foley in November 2012 in Syria while covering the war there. Foley then became the first of several hostages to be slain by the jihadists. Media rights watchdog Reporters Without Borders has condemned IS for its "cowardly" use of a hostage in a forced role to push the jihadists' propaganda. —Agencies



The arrest of Salah Abdeslam, the last major suspect wanted in connection with the November jihadist attacks in Paris, has dealt a "major blow" to the Islamic State group in Europe, French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said. —AFP

PENPIX OF PARIS TERROR SUSPECTS

BRUSSELS: Top Paris attacks fugitive Salah Abdeslam, arrested on Friday in a police raid in the gritty Brussels district of Molenbeek, was one of the most wanted men in Europe. Another two suspects are still on the run, while 11 people have been charged in connection with the November 13 assaults in the French capital that claimed 130 lives. Three others are behind bars elsewhere. Here is a summary of the main suspects:

The latest capture

Salah Abdeslam, 26, a Belgian-born French national, is believed to have played a key logistical role in the attacks, and fled across the border to Belgium hours after the killings. He and his brother Brahim, who blew himself up in Paris, had run a bar together in Molenbeek that was shut down by the authorities just weeks before the massacre. Friends and locals had said they were fond of drink and a joint and that there was no sign they were radical Islamists with murderous intent.

Two on the run

Mohamed Abrini, 30, was filmed with Abdeslam on November 11 at a filling station on a motorway linking Paris and Brussels. Abrini and Abdeslam became friends when they were teenagers, according to their families, who are next-door neighbors in Molenbeek. The real name of the second fugitive is unknown. He used false papers in the name of Soufiane Kayal at the border between Austria and Hungary on September 9 when he was travelling with Abdeslam and Mohamed Belkaid, a 35-year-old Algerian who was shot dead on Tuesday during a police raid in Forest, southwest of Brussels. The three men posed as tourists heading to Vienna on holiday and did not raise suspicions. Belgian

investigators say Belkaid "more than likely" used the alias Samir Bouzid.

11 charged in Belgium

Mohammed Amri, 27, and Hamza Attou, 21, brought Abdeslam back to Belgium several hours after the Paris attacks. Lazez Abraimi, a 39-year-old Moroccan living in the Brussels region, was arrested after traces of blood and two handguns were found in his car. Ali Oulkadi, a 31-year-old French national, drove Abdeslam through Brussels the day after the attacks and dropped him off at a safe house used as a workshop for manufacturing of explosive belts. Abdelilah Chouaa, 30: His name was discovered in the prison cell of a man detained in the southern Belgian city of Namur whom Abdeslam phoned on the evening of November 13.

Mohamed Bakkali: A BMW car that he hired was seen in the immediate proximity of three safe houses in which the Paris attacks were prepared. Samir Z: A French national born in 1995 was arrested in late November at Brussels airport when he was on the point of leaving for Morocco. He was freed in February.

Pierre N: A Belgian born in 1987, close to Paris suicide bomber Bilal Hadfi. He was remanded in custody until late December. Abdoullah C: Born in 1985, of Belgian nationality, had on several occasions talked by telephone with Hasna Aitboulhacen, the cousin of suspected Paris attacks mastermind Abdelhamid Abaaoud who was killed along with him during a police raid outside Paris five days after the rampage. Ayoub Bazarouj: a 22-year-old Belgian living in Molenbeek where investigators mistakenly thought they had tracked down Abdeslam three days after the attacks. He was freed on January 22. Zakaria J: Born in 1986 and of Belgian nationality. Reportedly a friend of Abaaoud. —AFP

GREECE SCRAMBLES TO EXECUTE EU-TURKEY MIGRANT DEAL

ATHENS: Greece scrambled yesterday to begin the massive task of implementing an historic EU-Turkey migrant deal aimed at stemming the flow of refugees fleeing war and conflict in the Middle East.

A key part of the agreement will take effect from Sunday midnight when all migrants arriving on the Greek islands will be designated for return to Turkey, a Greek government source told AFP.

Hundreds of security and legal experts are set to arrive in Greece to help with the task, described as "Herculean" by the head of the EU's executive arm. Ahead of the deadline, authorities reported around 1,500 people have crossed the Aegean Sea to Greece's islands in the past 24 hours, more than double the day before and compared with just several hundred per day

earlier in the week.

With over 40,000 migrants already in Greece, the debt-hit country could not take on this new task without major assistance from its European partners, including the immediate deployment of 2,300 experts, Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said.

'Herculean task'

"Four hundred experts in asylum, 400 interpreters and translators and 1,500 security specialists," said Tsipras, detailing the assistance to be sent to manage the migrant deal approved at an EU summit on Friday. In practice, the actual return of migrants to Turkey will begin from April 4, according to German Chancellor Angela Merkel, a key backer of the scheme.

For every Syrian refugee expelled from Greece, the deal

calls for the EU to resettle one refugee directly from Turkey. "This is a Herculean task facing us," European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker has said. In total some 4,000 border officials and other experts will be needed to carry out the agreement that will cost the EU up to 300 million euros (\$338 million) over six months. The assistance includes experts who can address the concerns of rights groups who fear the scheme could fail to protect the rights of those refugees, mainly from Syria and Iraq, to seek asylum. Amnesty International has called the deal a "historic blow to human rights."

'No concessions' on rights

But EU officials have stressed that each application for asylum will be treated individually, with

full rights of appeal and proper oversight. Tsipras also insisted that human rights would be respected. "We will not make any concessions" in that area, he said.

The United States called the agreement brokered by EU and Turkish officials "an important step" and was confident it "will be implemented in full accordance with EU and international law."

Around 4,000 people including women and children have drowned crossing the Aegean Sea from Turkey to Greece in flimsy smugglers' boats, including 400 this year alone. For its cooperation to stem the flow of refugees, Turkey won an acceleration of its long-stalled bid for EU membership, the doubling of refugee aid to six billion euros (\$6.8 billion) and visa-free travel for its nationals to Europe's Schengen passport-free zone by June.

The deal also envisages major aid for Greece, where tens of thousands of refugees are already trapped in dire conditions after Balkan countries shut their borders. As of Saturday, Greek authorities said there were 47,500 migrants in the country, of which 8,200 were on the islands and some 10,500 massed at Idomeni, on the closed border with Macedonia.

In the squalid border camp that a Greek minister described as "a modern day Dachau", refugees pondered the reports of the new EU migrant deal and what step they should take next.

Having come from Damascus, 30-year-old Mohammed says he's ready to take a bus to Athens and enroll in the European program. But another Syrian refugee Yasmine says she will continue to wait at the Macedonian border. "They can't prevent us from joining our husbands who were able to enter Germany this summer," the former resident of Aleppo told AFP surrounded by her two children and two sisters. —AFP



About 3,000 Greeks and migrants from various refugee camps in Attica participated, most of them from Afghanistan, in a protest march organized by the Afghan community and Greek anti-racist unions against the closed borders. —AFP



LONDON: Demonstrators hold banners in support of refugees as they march through central London yesterday. —AFP

BRITAIN'S PRINCE HARRY ARRIVES IN QUAKE-HIT NEPAL



KATHMANDU: Britain's Prince Harry (C) walks with officials after his arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu yesterday at the start of a five-day visit to Nepal. — AFP

KATHMANDU: Britain's Prince Harry arrived in Nepal yesterday for the start of a five-day visit to meet with survivors of last year's devastating earthquake and Gurkha soldiers who helped in rescue efforts.

The prince was welcomed at Kathmandu airport by Nepali government officials on his first visit to the country, which comes as Nepal and Britain mark 200 years of joint relations.

Harry, 31, is scheduled to meet Nepal's prime minister K P Sharma Oli as well as the country's first female president, Bidhya Bhandari, during the weekend. "Prince Harry landed in Nepal today as scheduled," Tara Prasad Pokharel, a spokesman for Nepal's ministry of foreign affairs, told AFP.

"His visit strengthens the historical bilateral relations between our countries." The prince is set to visit heritage sites hit by a devastating 7.8-magnitude earthquake last April that killed nearly 9,000 people, with the country still reeling from the after-effects.

A member of the British army for 10 years before retiring in June, he served alongside

Gurkha soldiers on his two tours in Afghanistan and will meet members of the brigade during his visit. "Prince Harry is greatly looking forward to getting to know the Nepali culture and people," an official press statement said. "But he is also conscious that, almost a year on from the first disaster,

Nepal is once again very much open for business and keen to welcome back visitors," it said.

The prince's tour will also take him to Bardia National Park in western Nepal, famous for its tiger conservation efforts, according to a statement on his official website.

Harry also plans to undertake a trek on the foothills of the Himalayas as well as spending a night at a Gurkha soldier's home. "His visit is very important, and will send a positive message about Nepal to the world," said Ram Hari Adhikari, general secretary of the UK Nepal Friendship Society.

The British army's 2,500-strong Gurkha brigade is made up of soldiers recruited in Nepal and has been part of the army for 200 years. — AFP

MYANMAR ETHNIC REBELS PIN HOPE ON CIVILIAN PRESIDENT

INCOMING GOVT GEARS TO TACKLE INSURGENCY

YANGON: An ethnic rebel group locked in conflict with Myanmar's military is eager to broker peace with the new civilian president, a spokesman said yesterday, as the incoming government gears up to tackle the country's long-running insurgencies. Myanmar's new leadership, steered by Aung San Suu Kyi and her presidential proxy Htin Kyaw, will take office at the end of the month, concluding a protracted power hand-off from the outgoing army-backed government.

One of their toughest tasks will be snuffing out civil wars between the national army and a patchwork of ethnic minorities in the resource-rich borderlands.

A recent surge of violence in northeastern Shan state, which has hosted multiple rebellions over the decades, has displaced more than 6,000 people since early February, according to the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The fighting pits the military against the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), one of several rebel armies that did not sign a broad ceasefire agreement pushed by the government last year. Yesterday a TNLA spokesman said its people are weary by the ongoing clashes and ready to work with the country's new civilian leader Htin Kyaw, who was elected in a parliamentary vote last week.

"The new government has offered hope not only for our ethnic people but also the whole nation. It is an elected government and they really know the people's wishes," Mai Aik Kyaw told AFP, adding that the outgoing administration, led by retired army generals-turned-politicians, had failed to bring the peace it promised. Two other ethnic militias excluded from the army's recent peace talks also joined the TNLA in pledging support for the new president in a statement issued late Friday.

"Our armies are ready to find a real and better

solution for ending the civil wars, seeing through a peace process and rebuilding Myanmar with the hope of national reconciliation by cooperating with the government of president U Htin Kyaw," said the statement from the TNLA, Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) and Arakan Army.

After a landslide win in the freest election in generations last November, Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party is carrying the hopes of millions in a country beaten down by nearly half a century of repressive military rule.

The incoming government has vowed to make peace a priority of their administration and announced plans on Thursday to create a new ministry for ethnic affairs.

But a crucial challenge will be smoothing relations with the military, which has retained a significant wedge of political power and holds the keys to securing a lasting peace. — AFP



SRINAGAR: New recruits of the Indian Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) pose for the media after their commencement parade at a base camp on the outskirts of Srinagar, Indian controlled Kashmir yesterday. 514 newly-recruited CRPF soldiers will join the Indian soldiers fighting separatist Islamic guerrillas in Kashmir and Maoist rebels in different parts of India. — AP

ACTIVISTS SLAM US 'PUNISHMENTS' FOR AFGHAN HOSPITAL ATTACK

KUNDUZ, Afghanistan: Rights campaigners on Friday lambasted US "punishments" handed to officers involved in a catastrophic bombing raid on an Afghan hospital, saying the failure to criminally investigate them is an injustice and insult to the victims. The bombing last October of the Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) hospital in Kunduz—which came as NATO-backed Afghan forces clashed with the Taliban for control of the northern city—left 42 people dead, triggering a storm of global criticism.

US officials Thursday said those involved in the strike have been disciplined, with some suspended from duty and others facing "administrative" action such as "negative counselling" or being told not to do something again. "For good reason, the victims' family members will see this as both an injustice and an insult: the US military investigated itself and decided no crimes had been committed," Human Rights Watch said in a statement.

"The failure to criminally investigate senior officials liable for the attack is not only an affront to the lives lost at the MSF hospital, but a blow against the rule of law in Afghanistan and elsewhere." MSF, which has called repeatedly for an independent international inquiry, said it would seek more details from the US government on the "punishments" before commenting.

The medical charity has previously branded the strike as a "war crime," saying the raid by a AC-130 gunship left patients burning in their beds with some victims decapitated and suffering traumatic amputations. "The (US) punishment is a joke," said Saeed Haqyar, a Kunduz resident who lost his uncle in the bombing. "This barbaric, inhuman crime has pushed bereaved family members to the point of insanity. The perpetrators deserve to be hanged."

'Downward spiral'

The air strike forced the closure of the trauma centre in Kunduz—a lifeline in the war-battered region—as hospitals are increasingly targeted amid a worsening conflict.

"In the last year, attacks against health facilities... have gone up by 50 percent," ICRC president Peter Maurer said in Kabul, warning that the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan is in a "downward spiral." "Every bombed out hospital and every doctor or nurse who is forced to flee, means thousands of people cannot get immediate medical treatment when necessary."

General John Campbell, the US commander in Afghanistan at the time, admitted the Kunduz strike was "caused primarily by human error," prompting a strong rebuke from the charity, which slammed American forces for "gross negligence." President Barack Obama has apologized for the raid and the Pentagon has said it will pay compensation to the families of those killed.

The Pentagon is due next week to publish a version of its report on the bombing, which will be redacted to remove classified material.

The strike came after a resurgent Taliban briefly captured the northern provincial capital in their biggest military victory since they were toppled in 2001. Observers have said the bombing raid, which lasted nearly an hour, had left open the unsettling question of whether those involved had ripped up their own rulebook in a chaotic effort to take out the Taliban. MSF has called for the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission (IHFFC) — an independent body created under international law but which has never been used to probe the incident. However, it would need permission from the United States and Afghanistan to proceed, and neither country has so far agreed. — AFP



NEW DELHI: Models from various countries carry placards as they participate in a march demanding an end to crimes against the girl child and women at Jantar Mantar, an area near the Indian parliament where citizens from across the country assemble for protests, in New Delhi yesterday. Models from 29 different countries are in India for a beauty pageant. — AP

5 HELD AFTER 2 MUSLIM COWHERDS HANGED TO DEATH IN INDIA

NEW DELHI: Police have arrested five suspects in the hanging to death of two Muslims herding cattle in India, in an incident that led to violent protests sparked an outbreak of violence in the eastern state of Jharkhand amid reports the attackers were Hindu vigilantes.

India is the world's largest exporter of beef and its fifth biggest consumer, but the killing of cows is forbidden in some

regions, including in the state of Jharkhand, as many Hindus regard the animal as sacred. The bodies of the two cattle traders were found hanging from a tree in Jharkhand's Latehar district on Friday, stoking violence that injured six policemen, the Hindustan Times reported yesterday. Mazlum Ansari, 32, and Imteyaz Khan, the 13-year-old son of another cattle trader, were residents of Balumath, 110 km

(70 miles) from Ranchi, it said. The area saw clashes between Hindus and Muslims over the eating of beef three months ago.

"Police have arrested five persons and are looking for others involved in the incident," Latehar police chief Anoop Bitharary said by telephone. "So far we have not found any affiliation of these persons with any Hindu radical group. We are still examining," he said.

Opponents have accused Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of seeking to stoke religious tensions in order to polarize voters ahead of crucial state assembly elections in five states in next two months.

"This horrible incident is a result of the sustained communal campaign conducted by the Hindutva outfits," a statement issued by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) said. Despite protests by the local people, the police and the BJP state government in Jharkhand have failed to protect minorities engaged in this trade, the CPI(M) statement said. A BJP state leader in Jharkhand condemned the killings. "This is an unfortunate incident. Our government will take strong action against the culprits," said Ashok Kumar, secretary of the BJP's Jharkhand unit. Attacks on cattle traders, who are typically from the Muslim minority that makes up 14 percent of India's population, have been reported from several parts of India recently. Last September a man in Uttar Pradesh's Dadri village was lynched for allegedly eating beef. — Reuters

BANGLADESH SEEKS FBI'S HELP IN PROBING CB HEIST

DHAKA: Bangladesh has formally sought assistance from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation to track down the cyber crooks who stole \$81 million from its central bank's US account, the interior minister said yesterday.

Unknown hackers breached the computer systems of Bangladesh Bank in early February and attempted to steal \$951 million from its account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, which it uses for international settlements. Some attempted transfers were blocked, but \$81 million was transferred to accounts in the Philippines in one of the largest cyber heists in history.

The central bank governor resigned on Tuesday, as details emerged in the Philippines that \$30 million of the money was delivered in cash to a casino junket operator in Manila, while the rest went to two casinos. "We sought the FBI's assistance when a group of FBI met with me for investigating the central bank heist last month," Interior Minister Asaduzzaman Khan told Reuters.

An US embassy official in Dhaka told Reuters Washington stood ready to assist the government of Bangladesh in its investigation. A senior police official involved in the investigation said that an FBI team was

expected to visit the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police in Dhaka on Sunday. The CID was also coordinating with Interpol to track down the perpetrators. "We are trying to find out what type of security there was, what safety measures were taken, and how the thieves penetrated the fire wall," he said.

The chief of Bangladesh Nationalist Party, the largest opposition party, said on Saturday that if elected they would ensure real autonomy for the central bank.

"There will be no interference or influence from the political party," Begum Khaleda Zia said at a party conference. — Reuters

NW PAKISTAN GIVES CITIZENSHIP TO FIRST NON-MUSLIM

PESHAWAR: Pakistan has awarded a Christian man from a troubled tribal region citizenship in a first for a non-Muslim, officials and his family said yesterday.

Sheharyar Masih, a resident of the northwestern Khyber region bordering Afghanistan, had recently applied for citizenship after turning 18. "Sheharyar has officially been awarded citizenship and he now enjoys all rights that citizens of tribal regions enjoy," senior local official Nasir Khan told AFP.

Sheharyar's father Arshad Masih said he hoped the decision would encourage the roughly 50,000 people from religious minorities in the region to apply for citizenship. Most of those people are Sikh followed by Christian and Hindu, he said. "My son will now have an opportunity to apply for government

jobs or to start his own business," Arshad said, adding that minorities without domicile status did not enjoy equal rights.

His son's was the first case under the recently announced policy, Arshad said. "All non-Muslims in (the tribal regions) can apply for citizenship and I may also do the same," he added. Like other minorities, Sheharyar was previously living in Khyber on a "residential certificate". Discrimination and violence against religious minorities is commonplace in Pakistan, where Muslims account for more than 90 percent of the population.

Christians make up around 1.6 percent of Pakistan's overwhelmingly Muslim population, with large settlements across major cities and around 60,000 in the capital, Islamabad. — AFP



DHAKA: Bangladesh's Supreme Court in January upheld the death penalty given to fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami chief Motiur Rahman Nizami for war crimes during the 1971 liberation war against Pakistan, paving the way for his execution. — AFP

MALAYSIAN FORMER EXEC SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS

SAN DIEGO: A former manager of a Singapore-based company servicing US Navy ships has been sentenced to more than five years in prison after pleading guilty to a fraud scheme that overbilled the maritime branch by more than \$34 million. US District Judge Janis L Sammartino in San Diego also ordered Alex Wisidagama to pay \$34.8 million in restitution to the Navy.

The 42-year-old businessman was the global manager of Glenn Defense Marine Asia, or GDMA, and the cousin of its top executive, Leonard Glenn Francis. Francis,

nicknamed "Fat Leonard" because of his wide girth, is awaiting sentencing after pleading guilty in one of the military's biggest bribery cases.

Ten people, including several Navy officers, have been charged in the case and all but one has pleaded guilty. Wisidagama is the third defendant to be sentenced.

In his plea agreement, he acknowledged creating false price quotations, invoices and other documents to carry out the scheme involving the sale of goods and fuel. He also inflated port tar-

iff expenses. His attorney, Knut S Johnson, said 30 months would have been an appropriate sentence for his client. He said Wisidagama did not receive any of the Navy's money personally and does not have the means to pay back the military. "I expect that no one living in Singapore with Mr Wisidagama's earning potential after this case, (he is debarred from ever working on government contracts), could afford more than about \$200.00 per month," Johnson said in an email to The Associated Press. "At that rate, he would repay the govern-

ment for the money that went to Mr Francis in 14,166 years."

Wisidagama has said the scheme cost the Navy more than \$34 million. He admitted that in 2011 the company charged \$2.7 million for servicing the USS Mustin during a port visit to Thailand, and more than \$1.5 million were fraudulent charges, according to his plea agreement.

GDMA has serviced US Navy ships in Asia for 25 years. The investigation is ongoing and centers on Francis. He has admitted to providing an exhaustive list

of gifts, including paying for prostitutes, concert tickets and luxury hotel stays for Navy officers in exchange for classified information that helped his company carry out the scheme.

Earlier this year, one the highest-ranking Naval officers charged in the case, Cmdr. Michael Misiewicz, pleaded guilty to bribery and admitted to diverting ships to Asian ports where the company either owned the port or the port had lax oversight, allowing GDMA to inflate prices, according to court documents. — AP

CHINA JOURNALIST LINKED TO PETITION ON XI DISAPPEARS

BEIJING: A Beijing-based journalist linked with an online petition calling for the Chinese president's resignation has been missing since he disappeared from the Beijing airport on his way to Hong Kong several days ago, his lawyer said yesterday.

Jia Jia has not been seen since Tuesday, said the lawyer, Yan Xin, in the latest instance of a Chinese government critic vanishing without a trace.

Yan said he could not confirm that the government is holding Jia because local police and airport, airline and immigration officials have all denied knowledge of his case. But Jia's friends believe he may have unwittingly implicated himself when he warned an editor friend about the publication of an anonymous letter asking President Xi Jinping to step down.

Jia's friends believe that his disappearance is related to the petition, which surfaced briefly on the government-linked news site Wujie earlier this month during China's parliamentary session and attracted intense interest among watchers of Chinese politics.

The petition criticized Xi's handling of economic and domestic affairs and noted that more and more factions of the Communist Party oppose the president's tightening grip over speech, government bureaucracy and dissent within the party. The letter was taken down shortly after it had been hacked.

Even though similar letters have been published before, the petition, which was signed "Loyal Communist Party Members," struck a raw nerve because there have been hints of resistance to Xi's rule within the uppermost ranks of the party, said Chinese University of Hong Kong politics expert Willy Lam.

Jia's wife has not heard any word on her husband's whereabouts, Yan said. Chinese

police are required by law to notify family members of a detained person within 24 hours unless the case endangers state security. Detainees in politically sensitive cases are frequently held much longer without any official acknowledgment.

Jia has worked for news outlets in the mainland and in Hong Kong, and his past criticism of state censorship and corruption may have made him a person of interest for government investigators.

In the early hours of March 5, Jia told a group chat in an online messaging app that he had spoken to Ouyang Hongliang, a Wujie editor, to let him know that the petition had been published on the site.

"They're handling it," Jia told the chat group, according to a screenshot seen by The Associated Press. "I bet someone will be fired." Jia denied any involvement in the petition, according to two of his friends. Jia is the latest critic of China's government to go missing. Several booksellers in Hong Kong disappeared in recent months after publishing salacious material about Xi and other Chinese leaders. The booksellers have resurfaced to say that they left for mainland China on their own volition, while their friends maintain they were abducted by Chinese agents but compelled to later say otherwise.

Yan, Jia's lawyer, said he has been fruitlessly inquiring about Jia. He said government agencies would not give information about his client unless a formal case has been brought against him.

"The authorities will only answer our questions if we have a case to refer to, but we haven't received any notification of a case," Yan said. Rights groups have expressed concern about Jia's disappearance, with the Committee to Protect Journalists calling on Chinese officials to disclose if and where they are holding him. — AP



TOKYO: A Japan Self-Defense Force member walks as PAC-3 missile interceptors, far back, are deployed at the Defense Ministry in Tokyo yesterday. — AP

UN CONDEMNS 'UNACCEPTABLE' NORTH KOREA MISSILE TESTS

'PYONGYANG MUST REFRAIN FROM FURTHER VIOLATIONS'

UNITEDNATIONS: The UN Security Council on Friday strongly condemned North Korea over its ballistic missile launches and demanded Pyongyang to refrain from further violations of UN resolutions.

Backed by China, Pyongyang's ally, the council said in a unanimous statement that "all these launches were unacceptable" and "constituted a clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions." The statement was adopted during a closed-door meeting called by the United States after North Korea test-fired two medium-range ballistic missiles, the latest in a string of provocative acts from the reclusive regime.

Council members "strongly condemned and expressed grave concern at the ballistic missile launches" and declared that North Korea "shall refrain from further actions in violation" of UN resolutions. Two weeks ago, the Security Council imposed its toughest sanctions to date on North Korea after Pyongyang carried out its fourth nuclear test and fired a rocket that was widely seen as a disguised ballistic missile test.

US Ambassador Samantha Power said the latest missile launches underscored the importance of implementing the new sanctions resolution, which targets North Korea's mining, trade and financial sectors. "If anybody on the council needed a reminder of why that resolution is so important (...) the North Korean regime just provided another one," Power said.

The launches came a day after US President Barack Obama signed an order implementing the tough sanctions outlined in the recent UN resolution, as well as new unilateral US measures.

Japan's UN Ambassador Motohide Yoshikawa called the latest missile launches "very, very unfortunate" and said Pyongyang had not received "the message" from the council.

British Deputy UN Ambassador Peter Wilson said "this is exactly the sort of thing that they should not be doing." "What we see yet again is the North Koreans defying the will of the international

community and the Security Council," he said.

North Korea escalates

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the firing of the two missiles was "deeply troubling" and urged Pyongyang to halt "these inflammatory and escalatory actions," his spokesman said.

Ban called on North Korea to comply with UN resolutions that bar the country from developing missile technology. During remarks at an event with North Korean women at the US mission, Power took an apparent swipe at China, saying it would be "absurd" to disassociate North Korea's dismal rights situation from its military ambitions.

"Many of North Korea's systematic human rights violations deliberately underwrite the government's nuclear program, including the forced labor carried out by tens of thousands of women and children," said Power. China has opposed discussion in the Security Council of North Korea's rights record, arguing that the forum for this was the Human Rights Council in Geneva. US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said China, Pyongyang's main trading partner and benefactor, could "do a lot more" to get North Korea to change course. North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un this week ordered multiple ballistic missile launches and a nuclear warhead test, sparking fresh concerns about the regime's intransigence. North Korea could carry out another nuclear test at any time, a US think tank has suggested, after analysing satellite imagery from Pyongyang's main testing site.

Activity at the Punggye-ri underground facility suggested the North was maintaining tunnels as well as cleaning up after its detonation in January, the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University said on Friday. "It is highly likely that (the) site is capable of supporting additional tests at any time," it said on its closely watched 38North website.

South Korean military officials said two missiles were launched on Friday from Sukchon in the country's southwest. US defence officials said they believed Pyongyang fired medium-range Rodong

missiles from road-mobile launch vehicles.

The Rodong is a scaled-up Scud variant with a maximum range of around 1,300 kilometres (800 miles). A Rodong test is more provocative, given its greater range, which makes it capable of hitting most of Japan.

South Korea's defence ministry said Friday's launches were clearly the result of Kim's order. "North Korea appears to be speeding up test launches to advance its nuclear capabilities," said ministry spokesman Moon Sang-Gyun. North Korea has been hit by five sets of UN sanctions since it first tested an atomic device in 2006.

Nuclear test site ready

North Korea could carry out another nuclear test at any time, a US think tank has suggested, after analysing satellite imagery from Pyongyang's main testing site. Activity at the Punggye-ri underground facility suggested the North was maintaining tunnels as well as cleaning up after its internationally condemned detonation in January, the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University said on Friday. "It is highly likely that (the) site is capable of supporting additional tests at any time," it said on its closely watched 38North website. Satellite images taken this month supported theories that there were unused test chambers at the site and showed activity around the main support area, with numerous vehicle tracks and footpaths visible, it said.

At one entrance to the test tunnels, snow had been cleared, indicating that they were at the very least being maintained for future tests, the think tank said. North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un has ordered an imminent nuclear warhead explosion test and multiple ballistic missile launches, Pyongyang's state media said this week, ratcheting up Pyongyang's face-off with the international community just days after being slapped with tough UN sanctions. The North carried out its fourth nuclear test on January 6, followed a month later by a long-range rocket launch, apparently a disguised ballistic missile test. — AFP



PHUKET: People lead a demonstration to demand peace in the southern regions of Thailand. Thailand's junta leader ordered the army on March 14 to strengthen security in Muslim-majority southern provinces following a recent surge in violence by insurgents. — AFP

SCANDAL OVER S AFRICAN PRESIDENT DRAWS NIXON PARALLEL

JOHANNESBURG: Speaking in an old fort and prison from South Africa's era of white domination, a former anti-apartheid leader hinted that he would like to see the country's scandal-hit president quit by referring to the 1974 resignation of US President Richard Nixon.

"I wish we can have a long nightmare over in this country," said Mathews Phosa, echoing a similar phrase by Gerald Ford, the vice president who replaced Nixon after the Watergate scandal.

The barb aimed at the South African president, Jacob Zuma, drew chuckles from a crowd celebrating the 20th anniversary of the constitution adopted after the end of white minority rule in 1994. It reflected frustration among many older South Africans who campaigned for a multi-racial democracy decades ago and feel those earlier ideals are being cheapened by corruption allegations enveloping the presidency of Zuma, who denies any wrongdoing.

Accusations that Zuma, himself an activist who was jailed during apartheid, is being manipulated by a wealthy business family are all the talk in South Africa these days. The Guptas, an Indian immigrant family, say they are scapegoats and victims of hate speech.

The phrase "Guptagate" is making the rounds. Blending Zuma and Gupta, an opposition party released "Zupta must fall," a song with an electronic beat.

Besides humor, though, there is a wistfulness among those who recall, with rose-colored glasses in some cases, a heady time when sacrifice, morality and, ultimately, reconciliation seemed clear-cut. Phosa, who helped negotiate apartheid's end, spoke Thursday night at

Constitution Hill, a downtown Johannesburg site that houses South Africa's highest court as well as the Old Fort prison complex, whose inmates included Nelson Mandela. The event marked the opening of "It's a Fine Line," an exhibition of pencil drawings of key figures on both sides of the fight over apartheid, as well as historical images and video footage screened in an old cell block. Guests included Albertina Luthuli, daughter of Albert Luthuli, who was awarded the 1960 Nobel Peace Prize for opposing white rule; Limpho Hani, widow of assassinated anti-apartheid leader Chris Hani; and Pik Botha, a former foreign minister seen as one of the more liberal defenders of apartheid.

History

"I read about him in my textbooks and here he is in the flesh. Oh my goodness!" the moderator, Ayanda-Allie Paine, said of Botha. Also attending was Roelf Meyer, chief negotiator for the apartheid government during the political transition to majority rule in the early 1990s.

While the venue and VIP list were rich with history, South Africa's current political uncertainty, stirred by allegations that the Gupta family has had influence over some appointments to Zuma's Cabinet, seemed to be on everybody's mind. "A good leader is a leader who knows when it is time to go," said Phosa, former treasurer general of the ruling African National Congress party. He referred to recent comments by Kgalema Motlanthe, a former deputy president under Zuma. Motlanthe, who was in the audience, had talked to the City Press newspaper about nurturing new leaders. — AP

CONGO SOLDIERS ACCUSED OF ATTACKING CIVILIANS

BRAZZAVILLE: Soldiers in Democratic Republic of Congo's army have taken part in at least three deadly attacks on civilians and turned a blind eye to other assaults carried out by rebels, a former UN investigator said in a report released on Friday. Spokesmen for Congo's government and army did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the allegations by the Congo Research Group at New York University, headed by Jason Stearns.

More than 500 people have died in a wave of machete attacks and other raids in Congo's east since Oct. 2014, rights groups say. The government has blamed most of them on the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a Ugandan Islamist group that has operated in eastern Congo since the 1990s.

But Stearns said witnesses and other evidence showed soldiers had participated in at least three attacks near the town of Beni between Oct. 2014 and March 2015.

"We have collected matching testimonies on the involvement of (army) soldiers in certain massacres and also several general testimonies of (army) officers that confirm this complicity," the report said. The soldiers' motives were not clear, the report added, but it said there was evidence of past collaboration between army officers and the ADF in timber trafficking. Ethnic rivalries could also be involved in some cases, it said. Two colonels were convicted by a military

court in Nov. 2014 in connection with the assassination of the commander of operations against the ADF near Beni earlier that year.

Millions died between 1996 and 2003 in regional conflicts in Congo's east, mostly from hunger and disease. Dozens of armed groups

continue to prey upon the local population and exploit the area's natural resources. The report said the repeated failure by army units, sometimes stationed close to the attack, to respond promptly suggested some officers had given orders not to intervene. — Reuters



BRAZZAVILLE: A hawker sells food to taxis parked yesterday at the Marche Total, the largest market in Brazzaville, where residents rush to stock ahead of tomorrow's presidential elections. — AFP



ISTANBUL: Emergency services seen at the scene of an explosion on a street in Istanbul, Turkey yesterday. — AP

SUICIDE BOMBING KILLS 5, WOUNDS 36...

Continued from Page 1

declining to be named because the investigation is ongoing. Armed police sealed off the shopping street where half a dozen ambulances had gathered. Forensic teams in white suits scoured the area for evidence. Police helicopters buzzed overhead and panicked shoppers fled the area, ducking down narrow sidestreets. "My local shopkeeper told me someone had blown himself up and I walked towards the end of the street," one neighborhood resident said. "I saw a body on the street. No one was treating him but then I saw someone who appeared to be a regular citizen trying to do something to the body. That was enough for me and I turned and went back."

Istiklal Street, usually thronged with shoppers on weekends, was quieter than normal before the blast as more people are staying home after a series of deadly bombings. Health Minister Mehmet Muezzinoglu confirmed that 36 people had been wounded and seven of those were in serious condition. Twelve of the wounded were foreigners, he said. Israel's foreign ministry confirmed some of its citizens were among the wounded. Broadcaster NTV said six of the wounded were Israeli tourists and two others were from Iceland. "We as a nation are unfortunately now face to face with a situation of unlimited, immeasurable acts that are inhumane, defy human values and are treacherous," Muezzinoglu said.

Deadly bombings

A suicide car bombing in the capital Ankara killed 37 people this month. A similar bombing in Ankara last

month killed 29 people. A Kurdish militant group has claimed responsibility for both of those bombings. In January, a suicide bomber killed around 10 people, most of them German tourists, in Istanbul's historic heart, an attack the government blamed on Islamic State. The attack brought swift condemnation from around the globe. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who was on an official visit to Istanbul, described the bombing as an attack that showed "the ugly face of terrorism".

France condemned the attack as "despicable and cowardly". Germany, which this week shut its embassy, consulate and schools in Ankara and Istanbul over security fears, urged tourists in Istanbul to stay in their hotels. Turkey's Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), a Kurdish-rooted opposition party, condemned the bombing. "Just as in the Ankara attack, this is a terrorist act that directly targets civilians," the HDP said in an e-mailed statement. "Whoever carried out this attack, it is unacceptable and inexcusable."

Turkey is fighting Islamic State in neighboring Syria and Iraq. It is also battling PKK militants in its southeast, where a 2-1/2-year ceasefire collapsed last July, triggering the worst violence since the 1990s. In its armed campaign in Turkey, the PKK has historically struck directly at the security forces and says that it does not target civilians. However, the recent bombings suggest it could be shifting tactics. The PKK is looking to carry out attacks aggressively during the Newroz spring holiday around March 21, the official said. Newroz is largely celebrated by Kurds in Turkey and has in past years seen violent clashes between demonstrators and the security forces. — Agencies

FLYDUBAI JET CRASHES IN SOUTH RUSSIA...

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Later, when the plane crashed, winds near the surface reached 22 meters per second and could have been even stronger at altitude. Several planes had landed in Rostov-on-Don shortly before the Dubai airliner was scheduled to touch down, but other flights later were diverted.

Ian Petchenik, a spokesman for the flight-tracking website Flightradar24, told The Associated Press that the FlyDubai plane missed its approach, then entered a holding pattern, circling for about two hours before making another landing attempt. It said a Russian Aeroflot plane scheduled to land around the same time made three landing attempts but then diverted to another airport. Flightradar24's data indicated that the Dubai plane began climbing again after a go-around when it suddenly started to fall with vertical speed of up to 6,400 meters per minute.

"It was an uncontrollable fall," said Sergei Kruglikov, a veteran Russian pilot, said on Russian state television. He said that a sudden change in wind speed and direction could have caused the wings to abruptly lose their lifting power. He said the pilots would have understood seconds before the crash that they were going to die, but "passengers and the cabin crew likely didn't realize they were facing imminent death." FlyDubai CEO Ghaith Al-Ghaith said the plane attempted to land in line with established procedures. He added that the pilots hadn't issued any distress call and hadn't attempted to divert to an alternate airport.

"As far as we know, the airport was open and we were good to operate," he said, adding that the plane couldn't have landed without air traffic controllers' permission. "Our primary concern is for the families of the passengers and crew who were on board. Everyone at FlyDubai is in deep shock and our hearts go out to the families and friends of those involved," he added.

Al-Ghaith said the plane's pilots, who were from Cyprus and Spain, had 5,965 and 5,769 hours of flying time respectively, making them "quite experienced." The cabin crew included two Russians and citizens of the Seychelles, Colombia and Kyrgyzstan. The plane was built in 2011 and underwent a detailed maintenance inspection known as a C check in January, he added. President Vladimir Putin offered his condolences to the victims' families and top Russian Cabinet officials flew to the crash site, 60 kilometers from the Russian border with Ukraine, to oversee the investigation. Alexander Neradko, head of the Russian state civil aviation agency, Rosaviatsiya, said it was up to the pilot to decide if weather conditions allowed the landing and said that traffic controllers in Rostov-on-Don acted in line with standard instructions. "Our air traffic controllers were acting in full accordance with international rules and there is no reason to talk about any flaws in their work," he said in televised remarks from Rostov-on-Don.

A local online newspaper, Donday.ru, released what it said was the recording of conversations between the Dubai plane's crew and air traffic controllers, in which the pilot, who sounded calm, was inquiring about weather conditions. The authenticity of the tape couldn't be independently confirmed. Russian Transport Minister Maxim Sokolov, who also arrived in Rostov-on-Don, said the airport fully conformed to modern standards. "The airport's complete overhaul was completed last year, and it has received all the necessary clearances, including international ones," he said. Pilot Vitaly Sokolovsky told Rossiya 24 television that a sudden gust of wind could be particularly dangerous at low altitude while the plane was flying slowly at low power and the pilot was throttling up the engines to make another attempt at landing.

Emirati authorities including the president, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, sent condolences to Putin. Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who also serves as the Emirates' vice president and prime minister, expressed his regrets on his Twitter feed. In a statement expressing "shock and grief," Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades confirmed that the pilot was a Cypriot, Aristos Socratous from Limassol. Officials said the plane and bodies of the victims were blown into small pieces by the powerful blast, making identification long and difficult. Investigators, however said the plane's cockpit conversation recorder and another one recording flight data were in satisfactory condition.

Amir sends condolences

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has sent a cable of condolences to UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin over the victims of Boeing 737 plane of FlyDubai which crashed in southern Russia yesterday. His Highness the Amir also sent a similar cable to UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Dubai Ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum. In the cable, His Highness the Amir expressed profound grief for the tragedy, and sympathy with the families of the victims. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah addressed similar cables.

The airline was launched in 2008 by the government of Dubai, the Gulf commercial hub that is part of the seven-state United Arab Emirates federation. It has expanded rapidly in Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union. Dubai is a popular destination for Russian vacationers, and many Russian expatriates live and work in the city. The carrier has been flying to Rostov-on-Don since 2013. The airline says, in all, it operates more than 1,400 flights a week. FlyDubai has a good safety record. In January 2015, one of its planes was struck on the fuselage by what appeared to small-arms fire shortly before it landed in Baghdad. That flight landed safely. — AP

KUWAIT IS 'NOT A FREE-RIDER,' SECURITY CHIEF...

Continued from Page 1

claimed by Islamic State. The bomber was previously unknown to authorities in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia or Bahrain, where he had been in transit, Sheikh Thamer said.

"He wasn't under their radar, they didn't know him. He was radicalized, to our understanding, through either the Internet or through people he might have known," he said. "This is something that is very serious for us, if you don't know the person, how can you defend yourself or how can you protect yourself?" He said countries from the six-nation GCC had been compiling blacklists of suspected militants and shared them with Western allies.

He said Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers had not diminished Kuwait's concerns over Iran. These included militant sleeper cells and spies, involvement in regional

conflicts and the safety of the Bushehr nuclear power plant. Kuwait is the closest major population centre to it. "The security issue from Iran was always there and I think will always continue. It is not something new," he said.

"I salute you for trying your best to work with Iran only on their nuclear program despite knowing what Iran is doing for Hezbollah in Lebanon, for other places in the world, for bombings, for hijacking of aircraft, for assassinations of people," he added.

"I salute them on how they can actually sit down and talk about only the nuclear program with the knowledge they have of how Iran is capable of doing all of these things. I can't do it." He voiced concern about Iraq, where Iranian-backed Shiite militias are fighting alongside government forces against Islamic State. "We are living in a very hot spot in the world," he said. — Reuters

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OBAMA'S CUBA VISIT: WILL THEY PARTY LIKE IT'S 1928?

By Sebastian Smith

The last time a US president visited Cuba-way back in 1928—he got a rock star's welcome and his delegation drank Havana dry. Is a repeat possible when President Barack Obama lands Sunday? Don't bet on it. Nine decades, one Cold War, and a whole lot of bitterness later after Calvin Coolidge's now forgotten trip to Havana, the atmosphere around Obama's visit feels surprisingly similar. Obama, like Coolidge, is a lame-duck president seeking to leave a big foreign policy mark in his last year in office by ending a standoff between Washington and communist Havana that dates back to Fidel Castro's 1959 ouster of the US-backed government of Fulgencio Batista. When Coolidge—or "Silent Cal," as the famously untalkative occupant of the White House is known—came to Havana, he was also on a peace mission. In his case, it was to dampen regional anger over US policy in Latin America.

Coolidge arrived on the battleship USS Texas, at the head of a convoy including a cruiser and three destroyers. Photos published at the time in the Cuban newspaper Bohemia show Cubans packing the seafront and streets. "The crowds were tremendous and enthusiastic," wrote Beverly Smith Jr, a New York Herald Tribune reporter, who penned a tell-all version of events 30 years later in the Saturday Evening Post. As his motorcade wound past cheering crowds "blowing kisses and throwing flowers," the austere Coolidge removed his hat, Smith wrote. The president even found himself bowing to a "bevy of highly painted young ladies" and their "madam" pursuing international relations of a rather different kind.

Unlike Coolidge, Obama will arrive in Havana by air. But the presidential motorcade accompanying Obama's armored limo the "Beast" will still make an arresting, even shocking sight in a city that for decades has prepared for possible war with its giant neighbor. And the welcome is gearing up to be just as lively. Old Havana is crawling with workers painting and cleaning and polishing, while ordinary Cubans are excited to see history

made. "It should have happened a long time ago," said builder Sergio Fundora, 52, during a break in the frantic restoration project.

Dipsomaniacs and diplomacy

Smith described the press corps and officials, freed from the miseries of the US alcohol ban known as Prohibition, going on a drinking spree. "Quite a party of us trooped off," he said. But "Silent Cal" stuck to soft drinks, leading to a near diplomatic crisis when a waiter appeared at a reception with a "big tray of delicate, crystal cocktail glasses, each sparkling to the brim with a daquiri-rum, fresh lime juice and sugar, well shaken," Smith wrote. It took "a masterpiece of evasive action" for Coolidge to dodge the waiter. Today, with

the gradual dismantlement of the US economic embargo and rise in tourists to Cuba, Havana is rapidly regaining its reputation as a party city. In bars like El Floridita, one of the oldest in Havana, the daquiris are flowing and almost everybody on the barstools is foreign.

Barter William Arias, 52, said it was "entirely possible" that the Coolidge delegation had been there, too. "In those times, Americans who came to drink came to this bar," he said. Obama's drinking plans sound rather Coolidge-like so far. "Hopefully, I will have time to enjoy a cup of Cuban coffee," Obama wrote to 76-year-old Cuban Ileana Yaza this week in a symbolic renewal of postal services between the two countries. But history might well repeat itself in the rush to

stock up on rum for the journey home. US law still restricts travelers from Cuba to \$100 worth of alcohol or tobacco. That's not enough for a box of cigars—but you can buy a shelf load of \$7 bottles of rum.

The problem, points out an advice column this month in The Washington Post, is that airline weight restrictions might force you "to choose between your rum or your clothes." It's a dilemma that the 1928 Americans-informed they could discreetly bring back booze from Cuba to Prohibition America—would have sympathized with. Smith wanted to take six half-gallon jars of Bacardi, but they wouldn't fit in his suitcase, leaving the journalist facing the choice described by the Post today. How did he decide? "I emptied out most of the clothes," Smith wrote. —AFP



NEW YORK: President Barack Obama shakes hands with Cuban President Raul Castro before a bilateral meeting at United Nations headquarters in this file photo. Obama will open a new era in the United States' thorny relationship with Cuba during a history-making trip that has two seemingly dissonant goals: locking in his softer approach while also pushing Cuba's communist leaders to change their ways. —AP

POSH PARISIANS REVOLT OVER HOMELESS SHELTER

By Fran Blandy

Shelter for homeless people and refugees in Paris's poshest district? To residents, the very idea is enough to raise the hackles on their fur coats. They fear a planned centre on the edge of the Bois de Boulogne, a forested area west of Paris, will turn their beloved woods into a sprawling refugee camp like the notorious "Jungle" in northern Calais.

With all emergency shelters currently full to bursting, and increasing numbers of migrants arriving in Paris, the city is determined to find new ways to house those left out on the street. Local government officials have argued that the chic 16th arrondissement—a Parisian version of New York's Upper East Side—is not pulling its weight, as not one of the capital's 78 homeless accommodation centers is in the district. Their answer: six pre-fabricated wooden structures in the 16th that will house 200 homeless people.

"People in this neighborhood are outraged," said Bernadette, watching her toddler grandson play in a quiet park near the proposed development, as a few bored-looking ponies stood waiting for rides. "There are not a lot of jobs for people like that. Where will they do their shopping?" said Bernadette, who owns a restaurant nearby. "The supermarkets here are unaffordable, even the Moroccan grocer is too expensive. Obviously people are also afraid they will come closer to the residential area, this park, that they won't have work and will just squat here."

'Caviar protests'

The project has sparked outrage in the calm, residential area with its elegant buildings overlooked by the distant Eiffel Tower. On Monday, angry residents launched a barrage of profanities at officials attending a town hall meeting that had to be cut short as it descended into chaos. "The people of the 16th are known for sitting on their asses, watching TV and eating caviar, but they will defend their interests like anyone else," said the mayor of the district, Claude Goasguen, from the opposition Republicans party who has led the charge against the centre.

The outcry "shocked" Prime Minister Manuel Valls, who weighed in, saying the centre-set to open in June was "essential so that populations in difficulty are not only housed in working-class neighborhoods." Aside from Paris's increasing homeless population, hundreds of north African migrants set up a camp under a bridge which was cleared out last June, and the city has had to find places for them in emergency shelters. "Everyone is saying they are going to rebuild a Calais and they will stay here and never leave," said Bernadette. Thousands of migrants fleeing poverty and war in the Middle East and North Africa have gathered in Calais in grim conditions, trying to reach Britain on lorries crossing the Channel.

However, in reality France has been affected far less by Europe's refugee crisis than other countries. Nearly 80,000 people applied for asylum in France in 2015. In contrast, more than one million people arrived in Germany last year. Faced with growing anger, authorities have insisted the centre will not be dedicated to migrants, but for those who phone an emergency

number used by homeless people seeking a bed. But in reality, many homeless in Paris are asylum-seekers. And the proposal approved by Paris' city council describes the project as necessary to "meet the needs of the homeless and migrants."

Stigmatise the bourgeoisie

Brigitte Andre, 60, who was Nordic walking with a friend, lives opposite the proposed site, which is next to a municipal swimming pool and not far from a horse-racing track. She is worried about the impact on the forest, security, and she is angry that residents were not consulted. "They mustn't stigmatize us by saying the bourgeoisie don't want this. It is a lot more complicated," she said. "We have friends who live (in the north). One must not turn a blind eye, Calais is a devastated city," she said. Paris authorities have dismissed concerns over the environmental impact, saying the structures will be placed on the edge of the woods and not inside it.

Once a hunting ground for France's kings, the Bois du Boulogne, with its idyllic lakes and jogging paths, also conceals one of the city's red light districts. But not all in the area oppose the project. "Why not? It must just not be too big (and) impact the atmosphere and also the architecture, because this is a beautiful neighborhood. It must not be something like Calais," said Elena Lambin, 28. The tumult in the 16th has amused average Parisians who have mercilessly mocked their wealthier neighbors on Twitter. "I remind all the homeless that to fit in in the 16th, your sweater should not go around your waist, but around your shoulders," read one tweet. —AFP

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ENGLAND MEET-UP NOT A BREAK FOR NEVILLE

MADRID: Valencia coach Gary Neville has rebuffed England manager Roy Hodgson's claim that the upcoming international break could come as a relief to the former Manchester United captain after a difficult few months in his first managerial role. Neville will fulfil his commitment as an England coach by leaving Spain to meet up with Hodgson's men for friendlies against Germany and the Netherlands after Sunday's game against Celta Vigo.

When asked about Neville's predicament, Hodgson said he hoped "it will be a nice little break" from the daily demands at Valencia. Neville has overseen just three wins in 15 La Liga games since taking charge in December and was sent to the stands as Valencia bowed out of the Europa League on away goals to Athletic Bilbao on Thursday. "I don't know about refreshing, I don't know if it's the right word. It won't be a break either. It's something we agreed many months ago when I came to Valencia," said Neville.—AFP

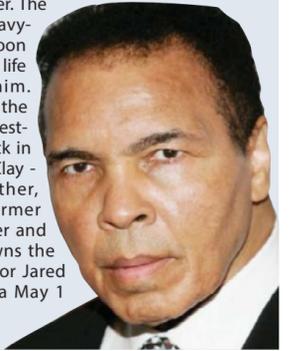


ROSSI SIGNS 2-YEAR YAMAHA EXTENSION

DOHA: Italian motorcycling star Valentino Rossi has signed a two-year extension with Yamaha that will keep the nine-time world champion with the Japanese team beyond his 39th birthday. Rossi returned to Yamaha in 2013 after two unsuccessful years at Ducati and the Italian finished runner-up behind team-mate Jorge Lorenzo last season. Rossi's new deal will see him remain part of the Yamaha line-up until 2018, raising questions over the future of Lorenzo who is out of contract at the end of this season. "I am very satisfied with this decision, because it has always been my plan to compete in motorsports for as long as I can be competitive and find it enjoyable at the same time," Rossi said in a statement. "Ever since I returned to Yamaha in 2013 I have felt like I am home again and this showed in the results. I get great enjoyment out of working with my crew and the rest of the Movistar Yamaha MotoGP team." The new season is set to start today in Qatar.—AFP

ALI'S BOYHOOD HOME RESTORED

LOUISVILLE: As a boxer and humanitarian, Muhammad Ali stood out. So does the bright pink home in Kentucky where he shad-owboxed and played pranks on his brother. The small frame home where the former heavy-weight boxing champion grew up will soon open to fans, allowing a glimpse into Ali's life before the world came to know him. Renovations are nearing completion on the two-bedroom, one-bathroom house in western Louisville. It will be like stepping back in time when Ali - known then as Cassius Clay - lived there with his parents and brother, according to George Bochetto, the former Pennsylvania state boxing commissioner and catalyst for the project. Bochetto co-owns the house with Las Vegas real estate investor Jared Weiss. The developers are aiming for a May 1 grand opening.—AP



ADIDAS AND PAUL POGBA JOIN CREATIVE FORCES

KUWAIT: adidas is proud to announce Tuesday (16 March) Paul Pogba, the world's most in demand footballer, has chosen to sign a long term partnership with the world's biggest football brand.

From his roots in district 77 of Paris, to the biggest stages in world football, Pogba has created hype with every strike, celebration, and hairstyle. One of the most creative athletes in world sport, on and off the pitch, Pogba has now chosen adidas as a reflection of a shared ambition.

Explaining why he chose adidas, Paul Pogba said: "This is the first sponsor contract I've signed and it's a very important decision for me. I chose adidas because we have shared passions and values. adidas has the same vibe as I do, on and off the pitch".

Pogba also referenced adidas' imagination and creativity as proof that it is the right brand for him.

He continued: "I love music, dance and fashion but my biggest passion is football and I needed a brand that would give me the space to express myself and explore new frontiers. In adidas I found a partner with the same goals as me."

Continuing on his extraordinary jour-

ney from the streets to superstar status, Pogba has already won three Italian league titles and three domestic cup trophies, the 2013 FIFA U20 World Cup, the FIFA World Cup Best Young Player award in 2014 and was named in the 2015 FIFPro World XI. He joins the brand's global roster of football talent, which includes Leo Messi, James Rodriguez, Mesut Ozil, Luis Suarez and Gareth Bale.

adidas has also revealed that his first boot - co-created by the player and the brand - will be an exclusive ACE 16+ PURECONTROL model, in Pogba's favourite black and gold colours. Only a small number of pairs of the special boot will be produced and given exclusively to the player.

Speaking about his new creation, Pogba said: "adidas believes in my dream of building hype in the world of football. I hope I can leave a footprint and add something exciting and new to this iconic brand. The best is yet to come. This is Pogboom!" The exclusive boot features a matt black upper and gold sole plate, with the iconic three stripes also picked out in gold. The in-sole carries a special message that speaks to the heart of adidas' partnership with Pogba: "I'm Here to Create".



BRAZIL'S HUGO CALDERANO WINS KUWAIT TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Competition at Kuwait International Table Tennis Championship (Salwa Cup) came to its peak as the final matches for the youth U21 category for both men and women took place yesterday in a fierce exchange that ended with Brazil's Hugo Calderano winning first place and the \$5,000 prize, while second place went to Hong Kong's Ho Kwan Kit who was awarded \$2500 for his efforts. Kuwait's player Salem Al-Hassan lost to the Brazilian earlier with a score of 0-4.

Meanwhile in the ladies competition for the same category Japan's Hina Hayata defeated her compatriot Honaka Hashimoto.

Tournament Director Sanad Al-Ajmi said everything is going as planned and all committees are performing as requested under the supervision of the International Table Tennis Federation.

Member of the higher organizing committee (HOC) Humoud Al-Daihani said the tournament witnessed excellent technical levels that started with the youth and continued in the advanced rounds due to the presence of the seeded players. He said the tournament prizes are the highest and attracts the world stars of the game to Kuwait every year.

Deputy Chairperson of the Organizing Committee Sheikha Naeema Al-Ahmad awarded the winners their prizes in the presence of Sanad Al-Ajmi, Humoud Al-Daihani, Abdelwahab Al-Kandary and Ali Al-Kandary.

Chairman of the technical committee Ali Al-Kandary lauded the distinguished technical level of the tournament in which 40 internationally ranked players are participating, and appreciated the support of ITTF and its supervision both technically and in officiating. He told KUNA that the participation of Kuwait players in this tournament will improve their levels as they face world champions and expected the tournament to continue with its excitement as the top ranked players had qualified particularly those from China, Korea, Japan, Germany and Belarus.

Al-Kandary regretted the attempts of a member of Kuwait Table Tennis Federation to put down this tournament, which has become one of the most important events on the ITTF agenda, then sought to make it a failure using cheap methods that do not go along with a dear name to Kuwaitis which is Sheikha Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad, (may Allah bless her soul), but those attempts failed due to the



efforts of the organizing committee. He said the Kuwaiti youth who are working on having the tournament continue its distinguished success which spanned over 12 consecutive years to become number one in the Grand Prix tournaments. He said that all participants both officials and players lauded the preparations of HOC, he also thanked Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, and all officials at the Public Authority for Sports for their cooperation to bring out the tournament at its best.

BOUBYAN BANK LIFTS PRESTIGIOUS AUB CUP

KUWAIT: Abid Mustaq once again came to the rescue of Boubyan Bank as he struck a vital 36 runs to guide Boubyan Bank to successfully chase a target of 86 runs in the Cup finals of the Ahli United Bank trophy against National Bank of Kuwait at Kuwait Cricket's Sulabiya turf ground.

Kuwait Cricket, the official body of cricket in Kuwait has been conducting cricket tournaments for banks affiliated to Kuwait Banks club and a total of 5 tournaments for bankers are in progress this season.

Boubyan captain Faraaz won the toss and invited NBK to bat first. NBK lost their prolific scorer Shakhthy in the very first over bowled by Abid Mustaq to a very well judged catch taken at deep mid-wicket and a superb reflex catch by Rifkas Ibrahim at short extra cover ended Khurram Rana's innings. Yasser Butt and Kiran Lobo played positively as both the batsmen steadied the innings at an opportune time to slowly take NBK to 50 runs on board. The introduction of double spin attack brought the downfall of NBK batsmen as Alwyn D'Souza and

Hisham Mirza bowled well to stem the flow of runs. Yasser Butt scored 16 runs while Kiran Lobo scored 12 runs. Alwyn bowled extremely well to capture 4 wickets for 24 runs while Mustaq's hostile spell got him 2 for 10.

Boubyan opener Aamir Javed's aggression was obvious from the start as he clouted a six and a four in the opening over but NBK regained some control when their skipper Khurram Rana removed Aamir Javed with a beauty of a delivery which pitched outside the off stump and curved in to uproot the off & middle stump. The NBK bowlers bowled well with the fielding restrictions in place, but the seasoned Boubyan players were well up to the task and comfortably marched to their second title of the season with a six wicket victory. Abid Mustaq struck a watchful 36 runs to rightly earn the Player of the match award. Khurram Rana and Kiran Lobo were the most successful NBK bowlers with 2 wickets each to their credit.

In a rain affected match, Kuwait Finance House scored a comfortable 9 wickets victory over Gulf Bank to win

the Ahli United Bank PLATE final.

Murali Kutticode, Director, Junior & Corporate Cricket of Kuwait Cricket Council welcomed all the teams and congratulated the winning teams and wished the losers better luck. Murali thanked the Sponsors Ahli United Bank Management and all other banks to the likes of Kuwait Banks Club, National Bank of Kuwait, Ahli Bank of Kuwait and Boubyan bank for their support and sponsorship. On behalf of Kuwait Cricket, Iqbal Vanoo, Vice Chairman of KC council presented a memento of appreciation to Richard Groves for AUB's support and encouragement in sponsoring the event. Murali Kutticode thanked Mahmoud Bastaki, KBC Vice Chairman for his contribution to banking league cricket and requested him to continue the good work for a longer term.

The Chief Guest of the event, Richard Groves, Chief Executive Officer of Ahli United Bank presented the Cup final trophy to Faraaz, the skipper of Boubyan Bank and Mahmoud Bastaki, Vice Chairman of Kuwait Banks club presented the

CUP Runner up trophy to NBK skipper Khurram Rana. Iqbal Vanoo, Vice Chairman, Kuwait Cricket Council presented the Player of the Cup

final to Abid Mustaq for his all-round performance. Richard also presented the Plate Final trophy to KFH skipper Faraz Mohammed and

Kutaiba Al-Qadhi, representing Boubyan bank presented the Player of the match trophy to Faraz Mohammed of KFH.



Boubyan cricket team — winners of AUB Cup final with sponsors and Kuwait cricket officials.

SHIFFRIN WINS ANOTHER SLALOM BY HUGE MARGIN AT WCUP FINALS

ST MORITZ: What might have been. Mikaela Shiffrin of the United States won another slalom by a huge margin yesterday, with her closest rivals more than two seconds slower at the season-ending World Cup finals.

Veronika Velez-Zuzulova (2.03 seconds behind) and newly-crowned World Cup winner Frida Hansdotter (2.31) could only smile wryly as Shiffrin crossed the line after another monstrous run from the Olympic champion.

Shiffrin herself didn't celebrate after her fifth slalom victory of the season and her 19th in total, surpassing Sweden's Anja Parson for fifth place among women. The American is unbeaten in slalom racing since February 2015 but missed five races during a two-month

injury layoff and couldn't capture a fourth successive crystal globe in the discipline. "I try not to say 'what if' too much because maybe in a parallel universe maybe I won a fourth globe but we're living in this world and Frida won and I think she really deserves it," Shiffrin said.

"Maybe if I didn't get injured I would have struggled with my speed or something. It happened the way it did and I'm happy," Hansdotter of Sweden clinched the World Cup slalom title earlier this month with a race to spare. Velez-Zuzulova was runner-up, with Switzerland's Wendy Holdener third in the standings.

"It feels amazing. It's been a great season. To have this globe is a dream," Hansdotter said. "I always ski pretty good.

My level has been high all season. That's why I'm standing here as No. 1. (Shiffrin) is skiing so good, she's an amazing girl. It's sad that she was injured. She came back strong and for sure we need to find something for next year to beat her or even to do a battle because she's skiing too fast."

Shiffrin is the first woman to win more than three races in one discipline in a season but fail to reach the podium of the final standings and the 21-year-old admits it was a bittersweet feeling to be a bystander rather than on top of the podium when the crystal globe was handed out. "I'm so glad that I was able to ski well today and win another slalom but definitely there's a sweet spot in my heart for getting the globe," she said. "So

watching (Hansdotter) get it, I have to say I was bummed, but at the same time I'm really, really happy for her because I know the feeling of holding that in your hand.

"You have goals to win a race but then to actually win the globe, it's this whole other contest. I think she deserves it. I've been in her shoes, all you can do is smile." Shiffrin also had hopes of challenging for the overall title before her training mishap in Sweden.

It was a tough second run for many of the favorites as Nastasia Noens and Nina Loeseth, who were second and fourth after the first run, failed to finish. Noens was second, 0.72 behind Shiffrin after the first run but crashed just after the second intermediate check. The race was inter-

rupted as the French skier was helped to the side of the course, where she received treatment before being transported away on a stretcher. Shiffrin was seen lying on her back in the start area with her arms outstretched as she waited for her turn but the interruption had little effect as she posted another perfect run. "It feels really good," Shiffrin said. "It's always nice to end the season on top and it was a really great run so I'm excited."

"It just seems like I'm able to be connected with my skis better and move quicker (than the other women), the rhythm changes don't get me as much and so it all adds up. Two seconds is a lot but it's not that much. So I could easily see them figuring that out and coming right back and beating me." — AP

KUZNETSOV'S PASSING DISPLAY LEADS CAPITALS PAST PREDATORS

WASHINGTON: Evgeny Kuznetsov put on a dazzling passing display and Daniel Winnik scored two goals as the Washington Capitals cooled off the hottest team in the NHL by beating the Nashville Predators 4-1 on Friday night. Kuznetsov's magnificent primary assists, including a no-look pass to T.J. Oshie, gave him 53 on the season. Winnik's goals were his first with the Capitals since they acquired the forward from Toronto at the trade deadline. Andre Burakovsky also scored as Washington moved two points closer to clinching the Metropolitan Division, top seed in the Eastern Conference and home-ice advantage throughout the Stanley Cup playoffs. Braden Holtby made 20 saves to register his league-best 43rd victory. Filip Forsberg, a Capitals first-round pick in 2012, scored his team-leading 29th goal for the Predators, who lost in regulation for just the second time in their past 18 games.

BLACKHAWKS 4, JETS 0

Scott Darling made 28 saves for his first shutout of the season, Andrew Ladd scored against his former team and the Chicago Blackhawks ended a four-game losing streak with a victory over the Winnipeg Jets. Patrick Kane and Marian Hossa opened the scoring 26 seconds apart late in the second period, and Tomas Fleischmann also had a goal for the Blackhawks. It was Ladd's first appearance in Winnipeg since the former Jets captain was traded to Chicago on Feb. 25. Darling earned the second shutout of his two-year career with the Blackhawks in his 20th game of the season. Ondrej Pavelec turned aside 32 shots for Winnipeg, which started a four-game homestand.

SABRES 3, SENATORS 1

Rookie Sam Reinhart had a goal and an assist and the Buffalo Sabres defeated the Ottawa Senators. Nick Deslauriers and Zach Bogosian also scored for Buffalo, and Chad Johnson made 32 saves. Alex Chiasson scored for the Senators, who got 31 stops from Craig Anderson. A third consecutive road loss dimmed the Senators' playoff hopes. Having won two straight at home

entering Friday, Ottawa remained seven points behind Detroit for the final wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

OILERS 2, CANUCKS 0

Cam Talbot made 40 saves for his third shutout of the season, leading the Edmonton Oilers over the Vancouver Canucks. Jordan Eberle and Matt Hendricks scored for the Oilers, who have won two in a row and seven of their last 11. Talbot has 11 career shutouts. Jacob Markstrom stopped 23 of 25 shots for the Canucks, who have lost three in a row. It appeared Vancouver might have gotten a goal five minutes into the second period as a puck slipped under Talbot while defenseman Darnell Nurse and the Canucks' Brendan Gaunce crashed into the net. It didn't count after a video review showed the incidental contact with Talbot.

AVALANCHE 4, FLAMES 3, SO

Mikkel Boedker scored the only goal of the shootout, lifting the Colorado Avalanche past the Calgary Flames. As the second shooter for Colorado, Boedker made a nifty deke to beat Joni Ortio. That left it up to goalie Semyon Varlamov, and he ended it with a stop on Sean Monahan. Varlamov made 30 saves. Erik Johnson, Tyson Barrie and Carl Soderberg scored for Colorado in regulation. Matt Stajan, Mark Giordano and Freddie Hamilton had goals for Calgary.

DUCKS 4, BRUINS 0

Frederik Andersen made 38 saves to earn his fifth career shutout in the Anaheim Ducks' win over the Boston Bruins. Jamie McGinn, Ryan Kesler, Hampus Lindholm and Rickard Rakell scored for Anaheim, which has earned a point in 11 of its last 12 home games. After losing four of their previous five games during their first poor stretch of play since Christmas, the Ducks avoided consecutive home losses in regulation for the first time since Oct. 14-16. Jonas Gustavsson stopped 22 shots for the Bruins, who dropped consecutive games for the first time since Jan. 11-13. — AP



INDIAN WELLS: Novak Djokovic of Serbia in action against Jo-Wilfried Tsonga of France during day twelve of the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells Tennis Garden on Friday in Indian Wells, California. — AFP

DJOKOVIC, NADAL SET FOR S-FINAL SHOWDOWN

INDIAN WELLS: Novak Djokovic dominated both tiebreakers to beat Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 7-6 (2), 7-6 (2) at the BNP Paribas Open on Friday, setting up a semifinal against Rafael Nadal featuring two players who own a combined seven titles in the California desert.

Nadal defeated Kei Nishikori 6-4, 6-3, connecting on 89 percent of his first serves in the match played in 91-degree (32 C) heat under a relentless sun. Nadal is a three-time winner at Indian Wells.

Serena Williams rallied after squandering a 3-0 lead in the second set to beat Agnieszka Radwanska 6-4, 7-6 (1) and reach the final for the first time since 2001, when she won and then boycotted the event for 14 years until returning last year.

"After the last final I had here, I never pictured myself being back," she said, "so it's an interesting feeling." In today's final, Williams will take on Victoria Azarenka, who advanced with a 7-6 (1), 1-6, 6-2 win over Karolina Pliskova.

Williams hit 41 winners and had 29 unforced errors to 18 winners and just 10 unforced errors by Radwanska, who fell to 0-10 in her career against the world's top-ranked player. Radwanska had chances to break Williams in the fifth and seventh games of the first set, when she led 3-1. But Williams earned breaks in two of the last three games to take the set, smacking a forehand winner off Radwanska's second serve on the last point.

Trailing 3-0 in the second after Williams won 11 straight points to start the set, Radwanska won three straight games to tie it up. Williams' backhand volley went wide, giving Radwanska a 6-5 lead. But Williams hit a forehand crosscourt winner on the run to tie it up 6-6, forcing the tiebreaker, which she won with another forehand.

At 34 years and six months, Williams is the oldest finalist in Indian Wells history, a month older than Martina Navratilova was when she won in 1991. "I guess that's awesome to be the grandma in the tournament," she said.

Djokovic crushed Nadal 6-1, 6-2 to win the Qatar Open in January in one of the most lopsided matches in their long rivalry, which Djokovic leads 24-23. "It's a game of cat and mouse, in a way, mentally, who is going to be on top first, who is going to take over the control usually ends up as winner," Djokovic said. "I know that very beginning of the match is very, very important. Going to try to start well."

Shadows had begun creeping onto the main stadium court by the time Djokovic outlasted Tsonga, who has lost to the world's top-ranked player in 13 of their last 14 meetings. Four-time tournament champion Djokovic improved to 20-1 this year heading into Saturday's match against Nadal, who is 12-4.

"The fact that I have played somebody that was feeling good throughout the week, somebody that serves very, very big and plays very quick and efficient, precise forehands that gave me a lot of trouble today to win in straight sets and to win in two tiebreaks, it's going to help definitely my confidence," Djokovic said.

Djokovic capitalized on a slew of errors by Tsonga in the first tiebreaker. The Serb led 3-1 when Tsonga reeled off three straight errors, including two off his forehand that extended Djokovic's lead to 6-1. Tsonga was serving to stay in the tiebreak down 6-2, but he netted a backhand to lose it. Djokovic led 5-4 in the second

set and had two match points on Tsonga's serve in the 10th game. But the Frenchman pulled out a big serve to hold at 5-all. Tsonga came up with another key hold at 6-all with a forehand winner and another serve that Djokovic couldn't handle to force another tiebreak.

Leading 6-2, Djokovic closed out the match on his second serve, which Tsonga returned wide. Nadal trailed 3-1 before he won five of the next six games to take the opening set in 45 minutes. He got an early break in the second to

build a 4-2 lead. His forehand error allowed Nishikori to break back and trail 4-3. But Nadal quickly recovered in the next game to break the sixth-ranked Japanese player and won the match on his serve with a forehand down the line. "He started so quick hitting all the balls very well, very aggressive, and serving great," Nadal said. "Then he started to miss some first serves and I was returning very well the second set serve, returning very aggressive. That was so important." — AP



WINNIPEG: Chicago Blackhawks' Jonathan Toews (19) checks Winnipeg Jets' Marko Danos (56) during second-period NHL hockey game action in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Friday. — AP

NHL Results/Standings

Buffalo 3, Ottawa 1; Washington 4, Nashville 1; Chicago 4, Winnipeg 0; Colorado 4, Calgary 3 (SO); Edmonton 2, Vancouver 0.

Western Conference						
Central Division						
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
Dallas	42	21	9	233	211	93
St. Louis	41	22	9	191	185	91
Chicago	42	24	6	201	176	90
Nashville	36	23	13	197	185	85
Colorado	37	31	4	195	202	78
Minnesota	32	28	11	188	182	75
Winnipeg	29	37	5	182	213	63
Pacific Division						
Los Angeles	43	22	5	194	159	91
Anaheim	39	22	9	179	162	87
San Jose	39	25	6	207	184	84
Arizona	31	32	7	188	212	69
Vancouver	27	37	12	167	202	66
Calgary	30	35	6	196	222	66
Edmonton	29	38	7	179	216	65
Eastern Conference						
Atlantic Division						
Florida	40	22	9	202	172	89
Boston	39	25	8	215	195	86
Tampa Bay	40	26	5	194	171	85
Detroit	35	25	11	179	187	81
Ottawa	33	31	8	206	223	74
Montreal	33	32	6	191	200	72
Buffalo	29	33	10	172	194	68
Toronto	24	35	11	165	206	59
Metropolitan Division						
Washington	51	14	5	225	162	107
NY Rangers	40	23	8	202	186	88
NY Islanders	38	22	9	196	174	85
Pittsburgh	38	24	8	194	176	84
Philadelphia	34	23	12	181	185	80
New Jersey	34	30	7	161	182	75
Carolina	31	27	13	173	192	75
Columbus	28	34	8	181	218	64

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



ST PETERSBURG: Hulk Hogan, whose given name is Terry Bollea walks out of the courthouse on Friday, in St Petersburg, Fla. Bollea was awarded \$115 million in damages in his lawsuit against the gossip website Gawker on Friday. — AP



Kuwait Times
ICC WORLD TWENTY20

PAKISTAN'S 'CRICKET UNCLES' MISS OUT ON INDIA-PAK T20



LAHORE: Pakistani youths gather around a big screen broadcast in Lahore yesterday, of the World T20 cricket tournament match between India and Pakistan in the eastern Indian city of Kolkata. — AFP

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan took on arch-rivals India in a high voltage World Twenty20 game yesterday in Kolkata, they missed two of their key attractions: Cricket 'uncles' Abdul Jalil and Muhammad Zaman.

The two die-hard cricket fans, prominent because of their facial hair, dress and decades spent hitting the stands, missed out on the World Twenty20 championship in India due to visa issues.

Both have supported their team in stadiums across the world wearing the traditional green shalwar kameez and waving the Pakistani flag.

Abdul Jalil, 67, famously dubbed 'Chacha Cricket' (or Uncle Cricket), is recognised by his long white beard, and has been sponsored by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to follow the Pakistan team around the world since 1998, receiving a monthly stipend of 26,000 rupees (\$260).

But this year, he failed to get PCB support for a visa which would have allowed him to travel with the team to India. "This will be the first time since 1998 that I have missed a Pakistan-India cricket match in a stadium. I feel sad about it," he told AFP from Pakistan's port city Karachi, where he is watching the World Twenty20 matches on a mega screen installed

by cricket lovers. "The board stopped sponsoring my travel five years back and they also suspended my monthly stipend three months before," he said.

"Despite that, I had been managing to tour with the team on my own, but this time I failed to even get official support to obtain a visa. "I want to go there and generate support for the Pakistani team among the crowds, to wave my green Pakistani flag in India. I cheer up the crowds and lead them by chanting slogans in my trademark style. I think fans missed it as I am myself missing it," he said.

'LOVE FOR MY CRICKET TEAM'

Forty-eight year old Muhammad Zaman, nicknamed 'Chacha T20' (or Uncle T20) and famous for his long black moustache and big white turban, also failed to make it into the stands this time because he too failed to get visa.

"This is the first time since the mid-1980s that I will miss the watching the game on the ground because the Pakistan Cricket Board did not support me (for a visa)," he told AFP from his small village in Hafizabad district of Punjab province.

Zaman said he visited a company that processes Indian visa applications and was

told to buy tickets online before applying for a visa. "It was not possible for me because I am not computer literate, I wrote to the PCB chairman but could not get help."

Zaman left his job as a driver in the United Arab Emirates in 2012 after his company refused him leave to watch the Asia Cup. "I left the job and went to the stadium to watch the matches. Love for my country and love for my cricket team is in my blood," he said.

"I am missed this opportunity to raise my country's flag in India. I'm not asking for any money or tickets but just seeking PCB support for my visa."

India and Pakistan will grind to a halt Saturday as hundreds of millions of cricket fans gather to watch the World Twenty20 match between the two nations in Kolkata's Eden Gardens stadium.

The cricket-mad neighbours, who have gone to war three times since independence, share one of the world's fiercest sporting rivalries and their rare showdowns on the pitch can bring both to a standstill.

Tensions have prevented the two sides from playing each other in Tests for more than a decade, and the match is only happening because the T20 is an International Cricket Council (ICC) tournament. — AFP

S AFRICA SEEK TO BOUNCE BACK AGAINST AFGHANISTAN

MUMBAI: South Africa will be gunning to get their bid for a first international trophy back on track when they take on Afghanistan today after a dramatic last-over loss to England. The Proteas are desperate to shed their chokers' tag but on Friday they showed scant evidence of the mettle required to win a major tournament as England successfully chased their imposing total.

South Africa looked in the driving seat after posting 229-4 but slack bowling and a commanding 83 by Joe Root helped England set the record for the highest run-chase in World Twenty20 history.

Faf du Plessis's side gave away 26 extras, while fast bowler Dale Steyn conceded 23 runs in just the second over, as Eoin Morgan's England reached 230-8 with only two balls to spare at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium.

"Probably the difference in the game was us conceding too many extras," opening batsman Hashim Amla told reporters yesterday, urging the Proteas' bowlers to bounce back from Friday's disappointment.

"We have a quality bowling attack and I firmly believe they would be really hurt as a team not executing as well as they would have liked. "Hopefully in the next games and the games to follow we can correct that," added Amla, who top-scored for South Africa against England with a 58.

JP Duminy and Quinton de Kock also made half-centuries as the Proteas' top-order batsmen did their jobs.

Afghanistan, the only non-Test side left in the competition, will be looking to be no pushovers during Sunday's clash.

Skipper Asghar Stanikzai's team, who have to play all their matches away from their war-torn home, defied the odds to cruise through the preliminary round before losing by six wickets to Sri Lanka.

'MINNOWS' THREAT

Destructive opener Mohammad Shahzad is their best chance of doing some damage to

South Africa's fragile bowling attack when they meet in the day match at the Wankhede.

Stanikzai said his side were not at the World T20 just to make up the numbers, adding that his squad was full of confidence.

"We're not here only to play. We are trying to beat one or two teams in this tournament," he told reporters at a pre-match press conference yesterday.

South Africa have never won a world cup in T20 and 50-over cricket but were one of the favourites coming into this tournament due to their formidable batting line-up and third spot in the world rankings.

Since their readmission in 1991 after the apartheid-era ban, the Proteas have been the nearly men of world tournament cricket, falling agonisingly short of finals on several occasions.

All-rounder Duminy 31, admitted Friday's Super 10 Group One defeat meant South Africa were now under the cosh.

"There's a long way to go in this tournament and we obviously as a team are now under the pump and we have to pretty much win every game," he said.

Amla insisted South Africa wouldn't be taking Afghanistan lightly. "You can't take any team for granted. The shorter the format the more the minnow teams are in the running," he said.

Teams

South Africa (from): Faf du Plessis (captain), Kyle Abbott, Hashim Amla, Farhaan Behardien, Quinton de Kock, AB de Villiers, JP Duminy, Imran Tahir, Chris Morris, David Miller, Aaron Phangiso, Kagiso Rabada, Rilee Rossouw, Dale Steyn, David Wiese

Afghanistan (from): Asghar Stanikzai (captain), Amir Hamza, Dawlat Zadran, Gulbadin Naib, Hamid Hassan, Karim Sadiq, Mohammad Nabi, Mohammad Shahzad, Najibullah Zadran, Noor Ali Zadran, Rashid Khan, Samiullah Shenwari, Shafiqullah Shafiq, Shapoor Zadran, Usman Ghani. — AFP



KOLKATA: India's Virat Kohli celebrates his team victory during the ICC World Twenty20 2016 cricket match against Pakistan at Eden Gardens in Kolkata, India, yesterday. — AP

KOHLI ANCHORS INDIA TO A 6-WKT VICTORY OVER PAKISTAN

KOLKATA: Cool-headed Virat Kohli scored an unbeaten half century as India cruised to a comfortable six-wicket victory over arch rivals Pakistan at Kolkata's Eden Gardens in the World Twenty20 yesterday. Pre-tournament favourites India put their campaign back on track after suffering a shock loss against New Zealand in the tournament opener, extending their jinx in major tournaments against Pakistan. Chasing 119 on a track that seemed dual-paced, India lost their top three batsmen early only to see Kohli and Yuvraj Singh put together a 61-run, fourth-wicket partnership to help the hosts center home in 15.5 overs in a game reduced to 18 overs a side because of rain.

Kohli (55 not out) and Yuvraj combined caution and aggression to blunt the Pakistan bowling attack, which seemed to miss left-arm spinner Imad Wasim, who made way for Mohammad Sami. Sami did make an impression by sending back Shikhar Dhawan and Suresh Raina in his opening over to be on hat-trick but Pakistan's four-pronged pace attack had no answers to Kohli's batting. Yuvraj (24) fell to Wahab Riaz, but Kohli, who was joined by captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni for the finale, was in cruise control as his 37-ball knock was laced by seven boundaries and a six.

Dhoni joins party

Dhoni (13 not out) swiftly joined the party as he hit a six to level the scores and then hit the winning runs in front of a raucous crowd. Earlier, Ahmed Shehzad and Shoaib Malik played useful cameos to guide Pakistan to 118 for five, a score which looked competitive on a tricky surface. Put in to bat on a moisture-laden pitch that saw heavy rains through the day, Pakistan openers Sharjeel Khan (17) and Shehzad (25) played cautiously at first and then lost their wickets as they tried to accelerate.

Indian spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Suresh Raina looked dangerous in their opening spells on a track that provided turn and bounce, but the Pakistan batsmen did well to show patience. Fresh from his match-winning exploits against Bangladesh, skipper Shahid Afridi (8) promoted himself to number three but the boom was missing from his shots this time around. The hard-hitting batsman could only find a single boundary in his scratchy 14-ball stay as he walked back amid loud cheers from the capacity crowd. Umar Akmal and Shoaib

Malik then stitched together a crucial 41-run stand that helped Pakistan put up what seemed a respectable score. Akmal (22), whose 16-ball knock was studded with a boundary and a six, was caught behind off Ravindra Jadeja's left-arm spin. Innings top-scorer Malik (26), who hit three boundaries and a six in his 26-run innings, soon joined Akmal in the dug-out after trying to force

Ashish Nehra's pace. Wicketkeeper-batsman Sarfraz Ahmed and Mohammad Hafeez finished off the innings as Pakistan got seven off the last over. But Pakistan's efforts were negated by Kohli who deservedly got the man of the match award. India next play Bangladesh in Bangalore on Wednesday, while Pakistan head to Mohali to meet New Zealand on Tuesday. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

KOLKATA: Scoreboard of the World Twenty20 match between India and Pakistan at the Eden Gardens stadium in Kolkata yesterday:

Pakistan	India	
Sharjeel Khan c Pandya b Raina	Rohit Sharma c Malik b Amir	10
Ahmed Shehzad c Jadeja b Bumrah	Shikhar Dhawan b Sami	6
Shahid Afridi c Kohli b Pandya	Virat Kohli not out	55
Umar Akmal c Dhoni b Jadeja	Suresh Raina b Sami	0
Shoaib Malik c Ashwin b Nehra	Yuvraj Singh c Sami b Riaz	24
Sarfraz Ahmed not out	Mahendra Singh Dhoni not out	13
Mohammad Hafeez not out	Extras (lb3, w7, nb1)	11
Extras (b2, lb3, w1, nb1)	Total (4 wickets, 15.5 overs)	119
Total (5 wickets, 18 overs)	Did not bat: Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ashish Nehra, Jasprit Bumrah.	
Did not bat: Mohammad Sami, Wahab Riaz, Mohammad Amir, Mohammad Irfan	Fall of wickets: 1-14 (Sharma), 2-23 (Dhawan), 3-23 (Raina), 4-84 (Singh)	
Fall of wickets: 1-38 (Khan), 2-46 (Shehzad), 3-60 (Afridi), 4-101 (Akmal), 5-105 (Malik)	Bowling: Amir 3-1-11-1, Irfan 2.5-0-25-0, Sami 2-0-17-2, Afridi 4-0-25-0, Malik 2-0-22-0, Riaz 2-0-16-1	
Bowling: Nehra 4-0-20-1, Ashwin 3-0-12-0, Bumrah 4-0-32-1, Jadeja 4-0-20-1, Raina 1-0-4-1, Pandya 2-0-25-1	Result: India won by six wickets.	

BANGLADESH DUO SUSPENDED FOR ILLEGAL ACTION

NEW DELHI: Bangladesh's World Twenty20 hopes were dealt a major blow yesterday when Arafat Sunny and Taskin Ahmed were suspended from bowling for illegal actions, the International Cricket Council announced.

Off-spinner Sunny and fast bowler Ahmed were reported by the umpires during a preliminary World T20 match against the Netherlands last week.

They were ordered to undergo tests in the Indian city of Chennai to determine if their actions breached rules designed to eradicate chucking.

"Independent assessments have found the bowling actions of Bangladesh's Arafat Sunny and Taskin Ahmed to be illegal and, as such, both the bowlers have been suspended from bowling in international cricket with immediate effect," the ICC said in a statement.

The Bangladeshi team would be allowed to call up two replacements during the tournament subject to approval from the event's technical committee, the statement added.

Bangladesh face an uphill task to make the semi-finals of the World T20 for the first time after losing their opening match to Pakistan on Wednesday. Their next game is against Australia in Bangalore on Monday while they must also face New Zealand and India in the group stages.

The ICC launched a crackdown against suspect actions in 2014, which resulted in several leading bowlers being suspended, including the world's former number one-ranked spinner Pakistan's Saeed Ajmal. — AFP



KOLKATA: Bangladesh's World Twenty20 hopes were dealt a major blow yesterday, when Arafat Sunny and Taskin Ahmed were suspended from bowling for illegal action, the International Cricket Council announced. — AP

PAKISTAN WOMEN SHOW THE WAY WITH WIN OVER INDIA

NEW DELHI: Pakistan's women's team showed the way yesterday to their male counterparts by defeating arch rivals India by two runs in a rain-hit match in the World Twenty20 in New Delhi.

India's women posted a modest total of 96 for seven in their 20 overs at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium in the capital. Pakistan had reached 77 for six in 16 overs before their reply was brought to a halt by a heavy downpour which forced the umpires to abandon the game.

Pakistan were then named the winners

under the Duckworth-Lewis method, to the delight of Pakistani captain Sana Mir. "We have won games by one run, and lost games by a couple of runs so as a unit, we take a lot of pride in our fielding and bowling and this is the way forward," said Mir.

"It's really good for us to get these pressure games early in the tournament. Very important win for us." The women's victory came just ahead of the high-voltage clash between the Indian and Pakistani men's teams in Kolkata, which is expected to draw hundreds of millions of television viewers. — AFP



PORTLAND: USA's Trayvon Bromell celebrates after taking the gold in the 60 meters race at the IAAF World Indoor athletic championships in Portland, Oregon yesterday. — AFP

BROMELL STRIKES GOLD ON DAY OF DRAMA

PORTLAND: Rising American sprint star Trayvon Bromell swept to victory in the men's 60 meters to cap a day of high drama at the World Indoor Athletics Championships here Friday. Bromell, who won a bronze medal in the 100m at last year's World Championships in Beijing, gave another demonstration of his talent to come home in 6.47sec, stunning pre-race favourite Asafa Powell of Jamaica. The 20-year-old, who made worldwide headlines in June last year when he clocked an astonishing 9.84sec at the US trials, just edged out Powell with Ramon Gittens of Barbados third in a photo finish. "It was a great race. I know those guys are great competitors so I said to myself 'When I hear the gun go off, you got to go, you got to power out,'" said Bromell.

"I'm just here to have fun, run my race, run my event as best I can as long as I can and have fun with the sport."

It was an agonizing loss for Jamaican veteran Powell, who had looked to be in ominous form after twice clocking 6.44sec in the early rounds on Friday. "I'm happy with a medal but I'm not overly excited because if I'd run a 6.44 in the final I would have won the gold medal," Powell told reporters. Bromell's victory was the final act of a thrilling first full day of competition at the Oregon Convention Center.

NERVE-JANGLING FINISH

Earlier the home crowd had witnessed a nerve-jangling finish to the women's pentathlon, where Canada's Brienne Theisen-Eaton snatched gold with victory in the final event, the 800m.

Theisen-Eaton's hopes of winning a first gold medal in a major championship had looked to be over after she trailed by more than 100 points to Ukraine's Anastasiya Mokhnyuk heading into the race.

But Theisen-Eaton blasted clear of the field in a duel with American Barbara Nwaba before powering home to win in 2min 9.03sec as Mokhnyuk faded badly.

The Canadian's husband-Olympic and world decathlon champion Ashton Eaton — roared support from inside the

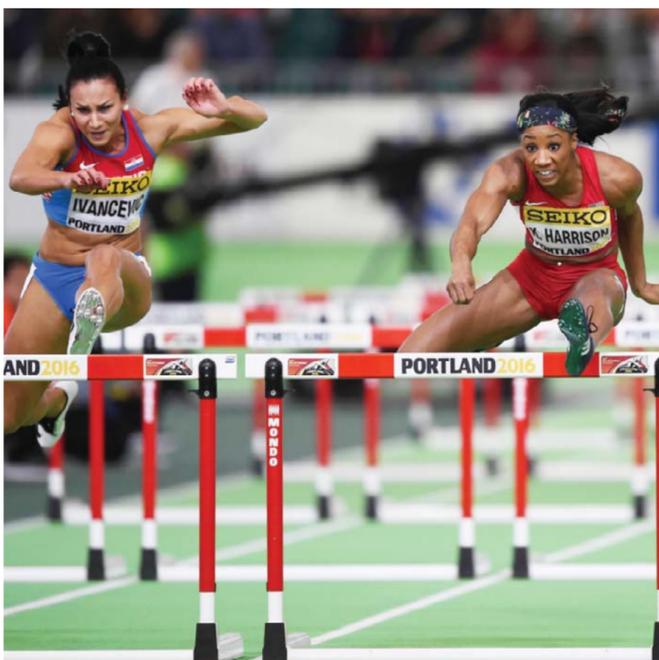
track as she came down the home straight to claim a memorable win before embracing her at the finish line. "To have someone that you share so much with right there being able to experience it with me is so special," Theisen-Eaton said. "Seeing him on the sideline running toward me to help me with something helps calm me down a little bit and being able to celebrate this with him is really awesome and the cherry on top."

Eaton meanwhile remained well-placed to secure an unprecedented hat-trick of indoor gold medals when the heptathlon concludes on Saturday. The reigning world and Olympic champion leads the heptathlon after four events with 3,564 points, ahead of Germany's Kurt Felix (3,501) and Oleksiy Kasyanov of Ukraine with 3,420.

Elsewhere Friday, American athletes dominated with gold medals in the women's long jump and women's 60m hurdles.

Olympic champion Brittney Reese won the long jump at the death, producing a last-gasp leap of 7.22m to overhaul Serbia's Ivana Spanovic, who had seemed poised to win gold after leading with a jump of 7.07m. "If you're going to win you have to put it all on the line," Reese said. "I took everything I had left in me and just jumped." Britain's Lorraine Ugen took bronze with a best jump of 6.93. In the 60m hurdles, Nia Ali successfully defended her 2014 Indoor crown with victory in 7.81secs, just ahead of compatriot Brianna Rollins in 7.82sec. American-born British runner Tiffany Porter won bronze. New Zealand's Tom Walsh won the shot put gold medal after producing a season best throw of 21.78m to easily defeat his rivals, none of whom were able to break the 21-meter barrier.

Walsh registered four throws longer than 21m, and saved his best for last. "I'd been holding back all day and I just decided to let it go," said Walsh, the bronze medalist at the 2014 World Indoors. Andrei Gag of Romania took silver while Filip Mihaljevic of Croatia grabbed bronze. — AFP



PORTLAND: Croatia's Andrea Ivancevic (L) and USA's Kendra Harrison compete during the 60 meter hurdles at the IAAF World Indoor athletic championships in Portland, Oregon on Friday. — AFP

CAVS, THUNDER CLINCH PLAYOFF SPOTS AS WARRIORS THUMP MAVS

LOS ANGELES: Kyrie Irving scored 26 points and added five assists in leading the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 109-103 victory over the Orlando Magic on Friday at the Amway Center. Irving, who had 33 points Wednesday in a victory over Dallas, scored 10 points the decisive fourth quarter.

THUNDER 111, 76ERS 97

Russell Westbrook notched his league-leading 13th triple-double with 20 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists as the Oklahoma City Thunder cruised past the Philadelphia 76ers 111-97 on Friday night at the Wells Fargo Center. Kevin Durant added 26 points, 13 rebounds and six assists, scoring at least 20 points for the 54th straight game.

Raptors 105, Celtics 91

Kyle Lowry poured in a game-high 32 points, helping the Toronto Raptors to a 105-91 win over the Boston Celtics at Air Canada Centre on Friday night. The game marked Lowry's 21st career regular season game with 30-plus points. Toronto (46-21) has now won three straight and 12 of 15.

PISTONS 115, KINGS 108

Marcus Morris had 24 points and matched his career high with six 3-pointers as the Detroit Pistons defeated the Sacramento Kings 115-108 on Friday at The Palace. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope tossed in 23 points for Detroit (35-34) in its second game of a franchise-record nine-game homestand. Reggie Jackson supplied 19 points, nine assists and seven rebounds as every Pistons starter reached double figures for the 24th time this season—an NBA high. Tobias Harris contributed 17 points and Andre Drummond added his league-high 57th double-double with 14 points and 11 rebounds.

ROCKETS 116, TIMBERWOLVES 111

The Houston Rockets came out with noticeable vim and vigor on Friday night and it carried them to a 116-111 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves at Toyota Center. James Harden recorded his 19th double-double and matched his career high for assists in a game. Harden finished with 29 points and 14 assists as all five Rockets starters scored in double figures.

TRAIL BLAZERS 117, PELICANS 112

C.J. McCollum scored 30 points, including a go-ahead 3-pointer with a minute left, and backcourt mate Damian Lillard scored a game-high 33 points to lift the Portland Trail Blazers to a 117-112 victory over the New Orleans Pelicans Friday night at the Smoothie King Center. The Blazers led by as many as 20 points in the first half and did not have to worry about Pelicans star forward Anthony Davis, who injured his left knee late in the first half and left the game with 19 points.

WARRIORS 130, MAVERICKS 112

The last time Golden State visited Dallas, Stephen Curry was nursing a minor injury and didn't play. The game went down as one of the Warriors' six losses on the season. Oh, what a difference having the reigning MVP makes. Golden State shrugged off a sluggish start and pulled away late against a desperate Mavericks team 130-112 in front an early arriving sellout crowd Friday night at American Airlines Center.

SUNS 95, LAKERS 90

Brandon Knight scored 22 points and rookie guard Devin Booker added 21 points, leading the Phoenix Suns to a 95-90 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Friday night at Staples Center. Tyson Chandler collected 12 points and 17 rebounds for the Suns (19-50), who bounced back from a 103-69 drubbing Thursday by the Utah Jazz. P.J. Tucker chipped in 13 points. —Reuters



ORLANDO: Cleveland Cavaliers guard Kyrie Irving (2) drives to the basket against Orlando Magic forward Aaron Gordon (00) and center Dewayne Dedmon (3) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Friday, in Orlando, Fla. — AP

NBA Results/Standings

Cleveland 109, Orlando 103; Oklahoma City 111, Philadelphia 97; Detroit 115, Sacramento 108; Toronto 105, Boston 91; Houston 116, Minnesota 111; Portland 117, New Orleans 112; Golden State 130, Dallas 112; Phoenix 95, LA Lakers 90.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference					
Atlantic Division		Central Division		Northwest Division		Pacific Division			
W	L	PCT	GB	W	L	PCT	GB		
Toronto	47	21	.691	-	Oklahoma City	47	22	.681	-
Boston	39	30	.565	8.5	Portland	36	34	.514	11.5
NY Knicks	28	41	.406	19.5	Utah	33	35	.485	13.5
Brooklyn	19	49	.279	28	Denver	28	41	.406	19
Philadelphia	9	60	.130	38.5	Minnesota	22	47	.319	25
Cleveland	49	19	.721	-	Golden State	62	6	.912	-
Indiana	36	32	.529	13	LA Clippers	43	24	.642	18.5
Chicago	34	33	.507	14.5	Sacramento	26	42	.382	36
Detroit	35	34	.507	14.5	Phoenix	19	50	.275	43.5
Milwaukee	30	39	.435	19.5	LA Lakers	14	55	.203	48.5
Atlanta	40	29	.580	-	San Antonio	58	10	.853	-
Miami	39	29	.574	0.5	Memphis	39	30	.565	19.5
Charlotte	39	29	.574	0.5	Houston	35	34	.507	23.5
Washington	33	35	.485	6.5	Dallas	34	35	.493	24.5
Orlando	29	39	.426	10.5	New Orleans	25	43	.368	33

VETTEL: FERRARI HAVE MORE PACE FOR RACE

MELBOURNE: The gap between dominant Mercedes and the chasing pack appeared as wide as ever after yesterday's much-criticised qualifying for the Australian Grand Prix but Sebastian Vettel still expects his Ferrari to challenge during the race.

World champion Lewis Hamilton captured his 50th pole with a record-setting lap of one minute 23.837 seconds at the season-opener at Albert Park, well clear of team mate Nico Rosberg and nearly a full second faster than third-placed Vettel.

Vettel and Raikkonen, who will line up fourth, had ample time in the third and final qualifying phase to attempt a quicker lap but tellingly stayed in their garage, meaning the session's final minutes wound down without a driver on track.

Four-times world champion Vettel said the Ferrari drivers eschewed the chance to challenge Hamilton's time to preserve their tyres for Sunday rather than throw in the towel.

"I think I said many times that we have done a step forwards, which I think we have," the German told reporters.

"I think especially tomorrow we should be quite a bit closer. We expected them to be strong in qualifying, which they were.

"Very happy with the lap I had in the end, so we called it there and saved the set of tyres for tomorrow.

"We're not on the front row but we still have high hopes for the race and it's going to be a long year. We know this car has a lot of potential, so I think as a starting out, third and fourth, locking out the second row, is a good achievement."

Raikkonen, Ferrari's last world champion in 2007, also played down the gap to the Silver Arrows.

"I wouldn't put too much into that time difference between us and Mercedes here," the Finn said.

"Obviously, we'd rather be in the front but it's a strange weekend so far. "For us, it will be better to have slightly warmer conditions to get the tyres ready and working fine but the car feels pretty good.

"So I think it's too early... to see the real picture. They're (Mercedes) obviously still very fast but I don't think you should be too worried." — Reuters



PORTLAND: USA's Barbara Pierre (R) and Germany's Chantal Butzek celebrate after the 60 meters race at the IAAF World Indoor athletic championships in Portland, Oregon yesterday. — AFP

JAMAICA MISSES OUT ON ANOTHER GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

PORTLAND: Jamaican male sprinters have covered themselves in glory at Olympic Games and outdoor world championships but they will have to wait another two years for a chance to end their indoor 60 metres drought after Asafa Powell took silver on Friday.

With double Olympic champion Usain Bolt, who does not race indoors, sitting out the meet, the responsibility of bringing home a long overdue gold fell on Powell.

Powell had a sizzling run in the opening round, clocking 6.44 seconds, just off the world record of 6.39 set by American Maurice Greene in 1998 and which he equalled in 2001.

In the semi-finals, Powell clocked the exact same time, easing up as he crossed the finish line to suggest both the gold and a world record were within his reach. But a slight stumble out of the blocks by the 33-year-old was all that young American Trayvon Bromell needed to gain the upper hand and he powered home in 6.47 sec-

onds, leaving Powell to miss out on top spot by 3/100ths of a second.

"It is kind of surprising because the last couple of years we have had a lot of great sprinters," Powell told Reuters. "A lot of great starters.

"It is kind of surprising but it's indoors, it's very short." It was the third time Jamaican men have won silver in the indoor glamour event. "The start wasn't as good as the first two rounds," said Powell, who tested positive for a banned drug in 2013 and was handed an 18th month suspension that was later reduced to six months after an appeal.

"Bromell got a perfect start and I think that threw me off a bit in the middle part of the race when he got away.

"Before the final I ran so easy. Three rounds in one day, my legs just couldn't bring back the 6.44.

"I am happy with the medal. I am not overly excited but I am happy with a medal." — Reuters

BAYERN EDGE CLOSER TO BUNDESLIGA TITLE WITH COLOGNE WIN

BERLIN: Bundesliga leading scorer Robert Lewandowski grabbed an early goal to give Bayern Munich a 1-0 victory at Cologne yesterday that sent them eight points clear at the top of the table with seven matches left.

Bayern, on track for a treble of titles after advancing to the Champions League quarter-finals with an extra-time victory over Juventus this week,

are on 69 points, with second-placed Borussia Dortmund in action against Augsburg on Sunday.

The Bavarians are also chasing an unprecedented fourth straight Bundesliga title.

"I have to congratulate my players because it was very hard for them two-and-a-half days after playing 120 minutes in an emotional game against

Juventus," said Bayern coach Pep Guardiola.

"We controlled the game well but we felt how difficult it is to defend our titles this season."

Poland forward Lewandowski notched his 25th goal of the campaign with a well-placed shot in the 10th minute and Bayern were rarely threatened by the hosts in a one-sided game

in which the visitors had more than 70 percent possession.

Hertha Berlin edged past Ingolstadt 2-1 to remain on course for a sensational third-place finish, opening up a four-point gap over Schalke, who are fourth.

Andre Schuerle's last-gasp goal rescued a 1-1 draw for VfL Wolfsburg, who also reached the Champions League

last eight, against Darmstadt 98 and they remained in eighth place.

Hoffenheim gave their hopes of remaining in the Bundesliga a major boost with a 3-1 victory at Hamburg, their third win in the last four matches.

After spending most of the season so far in the bottom two, Hoffenheim's victory lifted them into the relegation playoff spot. — Reuters

EPL Standings

LONDON: English Premier League table after yesterday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Leicester	31	19	9	3	54	31	66
Tottenham	30	16	10	4	53	24	58
Arsenal	30	16	7	7	48	30	55
Man City	29	15	6	8	52	31	51
West Ham	30	13	11	6	47	35	50
Man Utd	29	13	8	8	37	27	47
Stoke	31	13	7	11	34	37	46
Southampton	30	12	8	10	38	30	44
Liverpool	28	12	8	8	43	37	44
Chelsea	30	10	11	9	45	41	41
West Brom	30	10	9	11	30	37	39
Everton	29	9	11	9	51	41	38
Bournemouth	30	10	8	12	38	47	38
Watford	30	10	7	13	30	32	37
Crystal Palace	30	9	6	15	32	40	33
Swansea	30	8	9	13	30	40	33
Norwich	31	7	7	17	32	54	28
Sunderland	29	6	7	16	35	54	25
Newcastle	29	6	6	17	28	54	24
Aston Villa	30	3	7	20	22	57	16

Note: top four teams qualify for Champions League; teams finishing 5th-6th qualify for Europa League; bottom three teams relegated to Championship.

GUZAN HOWLER PUSHES VILLA CLOSER TO DROP



Gylfi Sigurdsson whipped a free-kick towards Fernandez and, with Villa sloppily leaving the Argentina defender unmarked, Guzan raced out to try to punch clear. But instead of making good contact, the American only managed to weakly palm the ball onto Fernandez and it cannoned off his shoulder into the now unguarded net. Lescott should have done better than head straight at Fabianski in a fitting summary of Villa's tame attempt to hit back. —AFP

SWANSEA: Aston Villa slipped closer to relegation as Brad Guzan's howler was punished by Federico Fernandez in Swansea's 1-0 win over the Premier League's bottom club yesterday. Remi Garde's side look certain to return to the second tier for the first time since 1988 after a miserable campaign which hit a fresh low when Villa goalkeeper Guzan gifted the second half winner to Fernandez at the Liberty Stadium.

Woeful Villa have now lost their last six matches and sit 12 points from safety with only seven games left to avoid their first relegation in 29 years. With 18 goals conceded in their last six games, Villa, whose much maligned chief executive Tom Fox abandoned the sinking ship when he announced his resignation this week, are heading towards the Championship with barely even a token gesture of defiance.

Swansea manager Francesco Guidolin was back on the bench after missing the previous three matches because of a chest infection and his return was perfectly timed as the hosts, now 11 points above the relegation zone, effectively guaranteed their survival with a third win from their last four games.

Villa's tally of 16 points was the third lowest in Premier League history after 30 games, so it was hardly surprising that even Garde appeared on the verge of giving up this week when he talked of their almost 'impossible mission' to survive.

Villa desperately needed a fast start to restore a little of their shattered confidence and they had an early sight of goal when Joleon Lescott dragged his shot wide from the edge of the penalty area. Villa appealed for a penalty when Rudy Gestege flicked on Alan Hutton's long throw and it hit Ashley Williams' arm, but the contact was ruled accidental by referee Mike Dean.

Garde's side were on top and Ciaran Clark looped a header just wide from Carles Gil's corner before Gestege tested Swansea goalkeeper Lukasz Fabianski with a header of his own.

For all Villa's dominance, they remained an accident waiting to happen in defence and Aly Cissokho, already on a booking, was fortunate to avoid a red card when he hauled back Modou Barrow soon after the interval. That narrow escape should have served as warning for Villa to refocus, but the team with the worst away record in the division were sunk in typically shambolic fashion in the 54th minute.



SWANSEA: Swansea City's Bafetimbi Gomis, second left, controls the ball watched by Aston Villa's Idrissa Gueye, second right, during their English Premier League soccer match at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea, Wales, yesterday. — AP



LIVERPOOL: Arsenal's Laurent Koscielny and Everton's Romelu Lukaku, right, battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Everton and Arsenal, at Goodison Park, in Liverpool, England, yesterday. — AP

Live Matches on TV (Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Newcastle v Sunderland 16:30

beIN SPORTS 2 HD

Southampton v Liverpool 16:30

beIN SPORTS 1 HD

Man City v Man United 19:00

beIN SPORTS 2 HD

Tottenham v Bournemouth 19:00

beIN SPORTS 9 HD

SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA

Espanyol v Bilbao 14:00

beIN SPORTS 3 HD

Villarreal v Barcelona 18:00

beIN SPORTS 3 HD

Valencia v Celta 20:15

beIN SPORTS 3 HD

Real Madrid v Sevilla 22:30

beIN SPORTS

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE

Atalanta v Bologna FC 14:30

beIN SPORTS 4 HD

Hellas Verona v Carpi 17:00

beIN SPORTS 4 HD

Torino FC v Juventus 17:00

beIN SPORTS 4 HD

Sampdoria v Verona 17:00

beIN SPORTS 9 HD

Sassuolo v Udinese 17:00

beIN SPORTS

Frosinone v Fiorentina 17:00

beIN SPORTS 10 HD

SSC Napoli v Genoa CFC 20:00

beIN SPORTS 4 HD

AC Milan v SS Lazio 22:45

beIN SPORTS 4 HD

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

Stuttgart v Bayer 04 17:30

beIN SPORTS 5 HD

Augsburg v Dortmund 19:30

beIN SPORTS 5 HD

FRENCH LEAGUE

Girondins v Bastia 16:00

beIN SPORTS 6 HD

OGC Nice v Ajaccio 19:00

beIN SPORTS 6 HD

PSG v AS Monaco 23:00

beIN SPORTS 6 HD

GOODISON PARK WIN GIVES WENGER HOPE



LIVERPOOL: Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger was delighted by his team's 2-0 victory at Everton and believes it proves that they still have the ability to win the Premier League.

The north London club's season hit the skids this week as losses to Watford and Barcelona saw Wenger's men dumped out of the FA Cup and Champions League respectively.

Their league form has also been indifferent since the turn of the year and they have fallen behind pace-setters Leicester City and Tottenham Hotspur in the race for the title.

However, yesterday's performance at Everton may prove to have an invigorating effect as first-half goals from Danny Welbeck and 19-year-old Alex Iwobi were enough for them to cruise past an abject home side.

Both goals were typical of Arsenal—a mixture of pace, intelligent passing and vision—and Wenger was thrilled to see his side make such an

impression at Goodison Park. "I am not masochistic enough to consider us out of the race," said the Frenchman, whose side remain 11 points adrift of leaders Leicester.

"Mathematically we have a chance and a game in hand at home. We are not the flavour of the week, but if we don't believe, no-one will do it for us. "We have to be humble and fight in every game like today (Saturday). Then we never know. We need some performances and some (other sides to drop points)."

Welbeck rounded Joel Robles for the opener on seven minutes before Iwobi added a second just before the break, sprinting through on goal and calmly slotting home from Hector Bellerin's ball over the top.

Arsenal more than deserved their 2-0 half-time advantage and Everton did little after the re-start to provide evidence that they could snatch a draw.

'TOO PEDESTRIAN'

The visitors' professional approach to safeguarding victory impressed Wenger and he reserved special praise for Iwobi, the academy graduate, who crowned an impressive all-round showing with his first senior goal.

"He is an intelligent boy who loves football," said Wenger of the Nigeria international. "He is very passionate about the game, keen to learn

and very humble as well. "He has been at our club since the age of eight. I took him in pre-season and I liked what he did. After that he improved very quickly and he's done very well."

Everton's season is well and truly in the doldrums after an eighth home defeat of the league campaign.

They have won just four league matches at Goodison all season and although they are in the FA Cup semi-finals, any hopes of European qualification via the league have long since passed.

They were booed off at the end of this contest and manager Roberto Martinez knows that he has his work cut out to ensure the remaining months of Everton's league campaign do not see them slip further down the table.

"Today was a one-off," Martinez said. "I don't think we were ourselves in any part of the game."

"We were too pedestrian and we allowed Arsenal to have too much movement."

Arsenal looked fresher and had a clearer intent to win the game.

"I don't think we had any period where we looked ourselves. We were very, very slow with our build-up and we had no clarity in our defensive play. "It's a real disappointment because we know the quality that we have. We were second in every action and Arsenal were better than us." —AFP

ATLETICO LOSES AT SPORTING TO STUMBLE IN SPANISH TITLE RACE

BARCELONA: Atletico Madrid stumbled in its pursuit of Barcelona for the Spanish league title after conceding two late goals to lose at relegation-threatened Sporting Gijon 2-1 yesterday.

Atletico looked set to maintain its title challenge after Antoine Griezmann scored from a free kick in the first half.

The visitors' defense resisted Sporting's attack until a late push produced a free kick that Antonio Sanabria blasted in with 11 minutes to play. Sporting's Carlos Castro completed the turnaround with a goal in the 89th with Atletico playing with 10 men after defender Jose Gimenez went down injured after coach Diego Simeone had made all three substitutions. Barcelona leads second-place Atletico by eight points before visiting fourth-place Villarreal on Sunday.

"We always kept clear the objective of this club, which is to finish in third place. The loss goes against any aspirations of finishing as champions," said Simeone, who insists Atletico overachieves by even competing with Barcelona and Real Madrid. Atletico remained four points above Real, which is third.

"We controlled the game until they equalized," Simeone said. "There is no need to look for excuses. The reality is there for anyone to see. We don't have anything else."

Atletico can also chase silverware in the Champions League, with Friday's draw pitting the club against a familiar rival - Barcelona - in the quarterfinals.

Atletico conceded a league-low 12 goals in the previous 29 rounds this season, and only one of those in the last six matches. The game at El Molinon Stadium was following that exact script until Sporting's revival.

After Griezmann curled his free kick over the barrier and just inside the post, the 2014 champions were content to allow Sporting possession

and lock down their defense, despite playing without leading defender Diego Godin due to a leg injury.

And the strategy that Simeone has perfected was working just fine until the last 12 minutes.

Sanabria hit the post, and moments later the striker finally beat goalkeeper Jan Oblak with a powerful free kick struck through the wall that Atletico midfielder Matias Kranevitter deflected, leaving Oblak out of position.

Shortly after, Gimenez pulled up clutching his leg during a sprint to keep up with Sanabria on a counterattack, leaving the latter clear to draw Oblak off his line and pass to Castro with the net open. Castro struck the ball off the bar to the disbelief of home fans but he made up for it in another attack down the left flank that left him needing only to tap home a pass from Jony Rodriguez.

"We have lost three very important points for the league," Atletico midfielder Jorge "Koke" Resurreccion said. "We know they (Barcelona) face Villarreal, but there is now one game less to go."

Elsewhere, Rayo Vallecano defender Ze Castro scored late to earn a 2-2 draw at Granada, which got two goals from Youssef El Arabi before having Isaac Success sent off with a second yellow card midway through the second half. The result left both teams on the edge of the drop zone.

Las Palmas striker Willian Jose also scored for a 1-0 victory at Real Sociedad that moved the Canary Island club away from danger.

Later Saturday, bottom side Levante visits Deportivo La Coruna while Malaga is at Real Betis. Real Madrid hosts fifth-place Sevilla today, a round before Zinedine Zidane's side travels to Barcelona for the second "clasico" match of the season. —AP



GIJON: Atletico Madrid's Slovenian goalkeeper Jan Oblak dives as the ball hits the goal's post during the Spanish league football match Real Sporting de Gijon vs Club Atletico de Madrid at El Molinon stadium in Gijon yesterday. Sporting won the match 2-1. — AFP

Sports

Djokovic, Nadal set for s-final showdown



Kohli anchors India to a 6-wkt victory over Pakistan



SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 2016

BROMELL STRIKES GOLD ON DAY OF DRAMA

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LONDON: Crystal Palace's Damien Delaney, left, Martin Kelly, right, and Leicester's Jamie Vardy challenge for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Crystal Palace and Leicester City at Selhurst Park stadium in London, yesterday. — AP

LEICESTER TAKE ANOTHER STEP TO LEAGUE TITLE



LONDON: More than 15 minutes after the final whistle, Leicester fans were still singing, finally ready to believe their team will become the unlikely of champions.

"We're going to win the league," they chanted continuously in unison after Leicester grabbed a third successive 1-0 victory yesterday at Crystal Palace. "And now you're going to believe us." That includes even those skeptical pundits who predicted a Leicester collapse which has yet to happen. The Selhurst Park announcer eventually tried to

urge the visiting supporters to leave the south London stadium, but they responded in an instant: "We shall not be moved."

Just like their team will surely not be shifted from the Premier League summit. Not when it is provisionally eight points clear with seven matches to go. The lethal double act of Riyad Mahrez and Jamie Vardy combined again to see off Palace, clinching a slender win emblematic of this astonishing pursuit of the trophy. Mahrez arrived unmarked in the penalty area to meet Vardy's low cross across the face of goal in the 34th minute before sweeping in his 16th goal of the campaign.

"The game was very difficult, it was a very good win," Mahrez said. "We have to keep going like this. It's getting close." Exactly a year ago, Leicester sat bottom of the league before winning a late battle against relegation. Now the central England team, which is owned by a Thai retail tycoon, is poised to win the world's richest league for the first time. "Our fans are singing - that is fantastic, but we

have to stay calm and concentrated," Leicester manager Claudio Ranieri said. "I remember at the start of the season, I haven't forgotten: The goal was to save the team."

"Now everybody is speaking about us. Not only in England but around the world." It will be an even better weekend for Leicester if Tottenham fails to close the eight-point gap when it hosts Bournemouth today.

FIRST TIME

At the very least, what seems certain for Leicester is a place in the lucrative Champions League for the first time next season.

"There's seven matches to go until the end - it's not easy for us," Ranieri said. "We are Leicester. We aren't a team like (Manchester) United, (Manchester) City, Chelsea ... we have to fight every match." The scale of Leicester's achievement has been magnified by the struggles experienced by United, City and Chelsea.

Only City is in the top four, 15 points behind Leicester, while Chelsea is a mammoth 25 points behind in 10th place as it meekly surrenders the title to its former manager, Ranieri. Thirteen of Leicester's 31 league games have now been secured by one-goal margins.

And like so often during this improbable bid for a first-ever league title, Leicester's opponent enjoyed most of the possession in London but the visitors clung on for the victory.

"I think they showed in the first half why they are top of the league," Palace manager Alan Pardew said. "We couldn't really make any impact on them. They are very strong, disciplined-wise in terms of their defensive duties. It's very hard to get through them."

MISERABLE RUN

"We couldn't really create anything and they deserved the lead at halftime." Shinji Okazaki came close to extending Leicester's advantage immedi-

ately after the break, striking over and heading wide. But Leicester's defensive doggedness throughout the second half was the hallmark of champions.

Goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel preserved the lead by punching Bakary Sako's shot over and the crossbar saved Leicester in the stoppage time following Damien Delaney's volley.

For Palace, it marked the continuation of a miserable run since December when the club was sixth as it celebrated receiving investment from American sports tycoons David Blitzler and Josh Harris, who co-own the NBA's Philadelphia 76ers and the NHL's New Jersey Devils.

In three months, Palace has gone from being nine points behind Leicester to 33 after winning only once in 17 games and going close to the relegation zone. "It was always going to be a difficult task today," Pardew said as the delirious Leicester fans inside his stadium were still celebrating being another step closer to the title. — AP

FIFA ANNOUNCES NEW SPONSORSHIP DEAL

ZURICH: FIFA president Gianni Infantino said a wind of change was blowing through soccer's scandal-plagued world governing body after announcing a sponsorship deal with China's Wanda Group on Friday.

FIFA has been battered by a series of scandals and the deal, which runs until 2030 and includes the next four World Cups, came one day after the Swiss-based federation announced a \$122 million loss for 2015, its first deficit since 2002.

The deal could help Infantino, elected last month to replace the disgraced Sepp Blatter, fulfil ambitious promises of greater funding for FIFA's 209 member associations which he made during his campaign. FIFA has been thrown into turmoil in the last year with criminal investigations under way into the sport in the United States, where several dozen former soccer officials have been indicted, and Switzerland. Blatter has been banned by the federation's own ethics committee for six years after being engulfed by the scandal.

"I cannot change the past but I can influence the future and make sure we will face all the challenges," said Infantino after chairing his first executive committee meeting. Wanda Group, China's largest commercial property company, last year bought a 20 percent stake in Spanish club Atletico Madrid and Blatter's nephew Philippe Blatter is chief executive of its subsidiary Wanda Sports Holding.

A source close to the deal said the sponsorship amount by Wanda will be "hundreds of mil-

lions of dollars". Wanda, who also bought Swiss sports marketing company Infront Sports & Media AG last year, said it will hold a press conference on Monday to give more details on the deal. "I'm very aware of the potential situations that can exist when you have partners who may have subsidiaries, who have other commercial relationships as well," said Infantino.

"In these circumstances, it's even more important to do the right thing and to make sure that the contracts that you sign are really checked and we make sure that they are compliant with the highest standard."

On Tuesday, FIFA applied to United States authorities for tens of millions of dollars in compensation from ex-officials indicted there, a move Infantino said marked a change in attitude. "FIFA is moving from the defence to the attack and it must be clear to everyone who abuses FIFA and abuses football to enrich themselves that they will not only be excluded from football but you will have to give the money back," said Infantino. FIFA has struggled to find new sponsors since the current crisis erupted in May and has failed to replace top-tier partners Sony and Emirates after their deals expired at the end of 2014. Despite its recent troubles, FIFA on Thursday revised its forecast revenue for the 2015-18 cycle upwards from \$5 billion to \$5.65 billion. FIFA sources have said the federation faces a shortfall of about \$500 million in its predictions if it fails to reach the targets set for sponsorship revenue. — Reuters

FABREGAS CURBS WEST HAM'S TOP-4 AMBITIONS



LONDON: Late equalisers in each half from Chelsea's Cesc Fabregas kept West Ham United out of the Premier League top four following a 2-2 draw at Stamford Bridge yesterday. West Ham had the better of the first half and took a deserved lead through Manuel Lanzini, only for an error by Winston Reid in injury time to give Chelsea a free-kick that Fabregas curled home.

Andy Carroll restored West Ham's lead a minute after taking the field as a substitute, but Fabregas levelled again from a penalty after Chelsea substitute Ruben Loftus-Cheek was tripped by Michael Antonio.

Chelsea have not won for four matches, but remain unbeaten in the Premier League under interim manager Guus Hiddink. West Ham are now unbeaten in eight games in all competitions, but will be kicking themselves for missing a good chance to move into the Champions League places.

The positive for Chelsea was that they showed plenty of spirit in the first match since their season was effectively ended by successive losses to Everton and Paris Saint-Germain in the FA Cup and Champions League. West Ham, looking full of confidence, attacked from the kick-off and took the lead in the 17th minute.

John Mikel Obi was at full stretch to knock the ball out of Dimitri Payet's stride, but it only travelled as far as Lanzini, 25 yards out. The Argentine got the ball on his right foot, looked up and curled it over Thibaut



LONDON: West Ham United's Andy Carroll, second left, is congratulated on scoring his side's second goal of the game by teammate Aaron Cresswell during their English Premier League soccer match against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge, London, yesterday. — AP

Courtois and into the net. Payet then tried an extravagant volley from a cross by Mark Noble that had Courtois scrambling across his goal, and Cheikhou Kouyate, awarded a new five-year contract this week, could only glance a header past the post. Chelsea looked flat and even their main source of inspiration this season, Willian, could not be relied upon when a foul by Kouyate on Kenedy gave him a chance from a free-kick 22 yards out. His shot beat the defensive wall, but dropped a yard wide of the post.

When Reid's poor control in first-half injury time gifted the ball to Oscar and forced the New Zealand

defender to bring the Chelsea man down 25 yards out, it was Fabregas rather than Willian who took the free-kick. This time the ball flew past Adrian's right hand and into the top-left corner. As West Ham sought to restore their lead, Payet sent the ball past Courtois early in the second half, but John Terry was there to clear.

Chelsea took the ball straight upfield, where Oscar could only put Branislav Ivanovic's diagonal cross past the far post when scoring looked easier.

West Ham responded again. Payet sent Aaron Cresswell in and the left-back's shot thundered against the underside of the crossbar. — AFP



Burgan Bank Group earnings up 23% in 2015



KUWAIT: Nasser Al-Sayer, NBK's Chairman, Isam Al-Sager, NBK's Group Chief Executive Officer, Shaikha Al-Bahar, NBK Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer and Salah Al-Fulaij, NBK-Kuwait Chief Executive Officer during the General Assembly Meeting.

NBK HOLDS GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

AL-SAYER: 2015 SAW REMARKABLE GROWTH FOR NBK

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) held its annual General Assembly meeting yesterday (Saturday 19th March 2016) at the bank's headquarters.

NBK reported net profits of KD 282.2 million (\$ 929.7 million) for the year 2015 compared with KD 261.8 million (\$ 862.6 million) in 2014, growing 7.8 percent year-on-year. As at year-end 2015, NBK's Group total assets reached KD 23.6 billion (\$ 77.8 billion) up 8.3 percent compared to year-end 2014, while total shareholders' equity increased by 3.8 percent to KD 2.6 billion (\$8.6 billion).

The General Assembly approved the distribution of a cash dividend equivalent to 30 percent of the nominal value of the share (30 fils per share) to the shareholders of the bank as of the date of the AGM. The AGM also approved the distribution of bonus shares of 5 percent (5 shares for every 100 shares) to the shareholders of the bank as of the last working day prior to the day of the share price adjustment.

Nasser Al-Sayer, NBK's Chairman, highlighted the many achievements and accomplishments NBK Group attained in 2015. NBK's results reaffirm the Bank's well established and solid financial position and its leadership in the Kuwaiti banking sector.

"2015 was a year of deliverables for NBK. We saw a confirmation of our earlier view that Kuwait is moving into a new era of economic development. Activity is picking up as the Government continues to deliver on the awarding and execution of mega projects. This has reflected positively on the growth trends of NBK's operating income. During the year, several multi-billion dollar development projects have been awarded where NBK played a major role in their financing. With the size of our balance sheet, our regional & international presence and relationships, we are the largest beneficiary of the growing government expenditure, leveraging the high growth opportunity in the project finance business," Al-Sayer highlighted.

"Regionally, NBK continued its strategy to strengthen its position in MENA markets with a particular focus on the GCC markets that are characterized by their strong economic scope and promising growth opportunities," Al-Sayer said. Strong Financial Performance and Growth

Isam Al-Sager, NBK's Group Chief Executive Officer said that NBK continued to achieve a strong performance in 2015 thanks to the bank's financial resilience, clear strategy, conservative culture, and high professional standards. In 2015, NBK reported a net profit of KD 282.2 million, once again confirming the superiority of the Bank's conservative strategy, prudent risk management and commitment to the highest standards. Strong growth across business lines proved the effectiveness of the Bank's sound and solid leadership.

Al-Sager added that the financial indicators reflected NBK's strength and resilience. Total Group assets reached at year-end 2015 reached KD 23.6 billion, a growth of 8.3 percent year-on-year. Total shareholders' equity reached KD 2.6 billion, growing at 3.8 percent year-on-year. Deposits also witnessed strong growth of 7.1 percent, reaffirming the reputation of NBK as one of the region's most safest banks.

NBK continued to improve its asset quality ratios with NPL/Gross Loans ratio dropping to 1.34 percent as of year-end 2015 down from 1.50 percent a year earlier, and NPL coverage ratio increasing to 322 percent, up from 276 percent at year-end 2014.

Islamic Banking

In parallel with its regional strategy, NBK continued to reap the benefits from its acquisition of 58.4 percent of Boubyan Bank.

"A fundamental change in Boubyan Bank has been witnessed in growth and profitability trends, continuously increasing its market share since its acquisition by NBK. NBK will continue its strategy to support Boubyan Bank by providing the bank with expertise and guidance. NBK is fully committed to the independence of the two banks according to the provisions of Shari'a law," said Al Sager.

Strong capital base

During 2015, NBK boosted its capital base through issuing USD 700 million Additional Tier-1 (AT-1) securities and KD 125 million of Tier 2 subordinated bonds. "The issuances are used to improve NBK's capital as per Basel III requirements and the directives of the Central Bank of Kuwait and both issuances were highly received by investors attracting two times subscription in both instances. As of end-December 2015, NBK's capital adequacy ratio (CAR) reached 16.8 percent exceeding regulatory requirements," commented Al Sager.

The General Assembly approved to increase the bank's authorized capital from KD 504 million to KD 600 million. The approved increase in authorized capital gives NBK the flexibility to increase its paid-in-capital at a later stage, if needed.

Al-Sager said "This approval will allow the bank to better manage the timing of any potential increase in paid-in-capital to continue capturing growth opportunities, especially in Kuwait as the government's capital spending plan remains intact. Also, this move is in line with the bank's plans to maintain healthy capitalization ratios in light of the Basel 3 implementation and the regulations of the Central Bank of Kuwait in this regards."

Growth and development

Shaikha Al-Bahar, NBK Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer stressed on the marked improvement in the operational environment with the launch of the government's new Five Year Development Plan and the implementation of many mega projects.

Al-Bahar also added that "Despite the large drop in oil prices over the past year, our outlook for the Kuwaiti economy remains positive. Kuwait has ample liquidity and substantial buffers making the impact of lower oil prices relatively less compared to other regional economies. The government has affirmed in several occasions its commitment to continue with its capital expenditure plan mainly on infrastructure projects which we believe will relatively contain the impact of a period of lower oil prices on the operating environment in Kuwait."

Stability and solidity despite turmoil

Al-Bahar highlighted that NBK is progressively implementing its income diversification strategy. "Our regional and international strategy remains on track. We are focusing our efforts on the GCC countries to leverage NBK's strong franchise there and to benefit from the strong economic fundamentals of these economies.

Al-Bahar stressed that despite the large drop in oil prices and the political and social unrest in some markets, the overseas operations proved resilient. The profits of NBK's overseas operations remained very lucrative supporting the bank's income diversification strategy. NBK Group generated 27 percent of the year's profits from its operations outside Kuwait affirming the bank's successful regional and international diversification strategy.

Al-Bahar explained that selling NBK's stake in its Qatari associate, International Bank of Qatar (IBQ), was among the important decisions tak-

years as the political situation stabilizes and continue to view Egypt as a long term investment with significant potential," Al Bahar added.

Highest Rated and Safest

Al-Bahar stressed that NBK retained its leadership position in Kuwait and the region as one of the highest rated banks in the world from the three largest rating agencies: Moody's, Fitch and Standard & Poor's. NBK is rated "Aa3" by Moody's, "AA-" by Fitch Ratings and carries an "A+" rating from Standard and Poor's.

Al-Bahar added that NBK also maintained its leading position as one of the safest banks in the world for the tenth consecutive time. The ranking is an endorsement of the Bank's prestigious reputation and global positioning as NBK is the only bank in the Arab world to maintain this position among global banks for ten consecutive years.

Salah Al-Fulaij, NBK-Kuwait Chief Executive

reflects its strong reputation and its leadership position in the banking sector locally, and regionally. Al-Fulaij highlighted NBK's role in some of the most prominent projects. NBK continued to position itself as the premier bank of choice for both domestic and foreign corporates doing business in Kuwait. During the year, NBK provided support for all of the EPC contractors in Kuwait's largest development project ever, the \$13 billion KNPC Al Zour Refinery Project, with their banking requirements. NBK also was chosen as the initial Underwriter and Mandated Lead Arranger in the \$6 billion Equate syndication deal.

Strategic Relationships

"NBK's role reflects its prestigious reputation and its leadership position in the banking sector locally, and regionally. This positioning of NBK reflects its ability to benefit from the growth opportunities including, most importantly, the pickup in the implementation of mega development projects in Kuwait which is expected to accelerate considerably in the coming year," Al-Fulaij stated.

NBK also continued to build on the Bank's strategic client relationships, making NBK the first choice for expansion plans of major corporates increasing the Bank's market share. NBK landed several noticeable deals including the prominent role of Mandated Lead Arranger for the syndicated financing facility of \$400 million for OSN, the region's leading Pay-TV network. The syndicate facility included 11 international and regional banks and was nearly two times oversubscribed, with NBK being the only Kuwaiti bank participating, a sound testament to NBK's international reach and capabilities in handling sophisticated deals and building relationships with other international lenders.

NBK also participated in an award-winning syndicated facility for global logistics provider, Kuwait-based Agility. The syndicated facility won the "Corporate Finance Award" in the 2015 ACT Middle East Deals of the Year Awards for the impressive structure of the deal.

Absolute Commitment to CSR

Al-Fulaij said that in addition to its financial achievements, NBK remains the largest contributor to society. The NBK Children's Hospital remains an icon of the Bank's social contributions. The Bank continued with its commitments by establishing the first specialized center for marrow transplantation in Kuwait in the Children's Hospital.

Human Wealth

Al-Fulaij explained that the development of human talent remains a top priority for the Bank. Al-Fulaij revealed that NBK hired about 300 Kuwaiti citizens in 2015. In line with the permanent quest to localize and increase the national employment rate, Kuwaiti employees comprise 66 percent of NBK's workforce. The bank maintained its position as a major national employer in the private sector. This confirms NBK's full support of government efforts to employ young national cadres in the private sector and develop the human capital of Kuwait.



en by NBK. The decision came after difficulties to raise NBK's 30 percent ownership to a controlling stake. But the exit from IBQ along with the high returns that NBK achieved from this investment enhanced the Bank's ability to seize better growth opportunities in Qatar and other GCC markets.

Al-Bahar also commented on NBK's investment in Egypt: "Egypt features prominently in NBK's regional expansion strategy. The Bank is confident in the country's medium-to-long term economic growth prospects. To better align with the Group and strengthen the identification with the strong and widely trusted NBK brand, the Bank rebranded Al Watani Bank of Egypt to NBK-Egypt furthering integration and alliance at the Group level. We expect that NBK-Egypt will deliver better performance in coming

years as the political situation stabilizes and continue to view Egypt as a long term investment with significant potential," Al Bahar added.

Al-Fulaij highlighted NBK's profile: NBK is the largest financial institution in Kuwait with highest profits among all companies. NBK is the "development bank" in Kuwait and the most beneficiary of the execution of the mega projects in Kuwait.

Mega Projects Gain Momentum

Al-Fulaij stated that the year 2015 was a remarkable year for the prospects of the Kuwaiti economy. The year saw the launch of several major development projects in which NBK took a leading financing role. NBK's role

BURGAN BANK GROUP EARNINGS UP 23% IN 2015

EARNINGS REACH KD 76 MILLION • 23% GROWTH IN NET INCOME • 12% GROWTH IN REVENUES

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank Group announced yesterday its financial year 2015 results. A solid operating & financial performance continues reflecting a faster than market growth almost in all indicators and mirroring the soundness of Burgan Bank's resilient business model.

Compared to the same period last year, Operating income grew by 12 percent from KD222 million to KD 248 million while Operating Profit before provisions soared to register KD 133 million reflecting a growth of 9 percent. Profit before tax from continuing operations soared by 12 percent reaching KD 74 million. As a result of this solid performance, Burgan Bank Group's net profit for the year 2015 is up by 23 percent reaching KD 76 million while earning per share (EPS) is reported at 32.1 Fils. The board of directors has recommended a payout of 18 fils in cash.

Majed Essa Al-Ajeel, Chairman of Burgan Bank Group said: "I am glad for the continuity of the group's solid performance during 2015 and the last 5 years. The 2015 set of results indicated that once again, Burgan Bank is well posi-

tioned among the top performers not only in Kuwait but also in the region.

"2015 was a year of balance sheet optimization for Burgan Bank Group. Optimizing capital through a mix of well planned and executed initiatives that aimed at adjusting capital to Basel 3 and to solidify our platform for continuous growth. Our capital ratios by December 31st 2015 stand at 11.7 percent for core equity capital (CET1) and a capital adequacy ratio (CAR) of 15.6 percent, well above regulatory levels"

"Asset quality continued to be in reasonable levels. Non-performing assets (net of collaterals) stood at 1.4 percent to gross facilities while coverage ratio (net of collateral) reached 332 percent, very comfortable levels compared to any benchmarks" Added Mr. Al-Ajeel

Majed Essa Al-Ajeel added: "We remain confident of the way forward as our strategy clubbed with a focused execution have proven successful. The positive leading indicators continue to point to the right direction across the group subsidiaries and we continue to reap the benefits of our regional diversification. It

is also imperative to highlight that such strong underlying performance is delivered even after taking a precautionary provisions of KD29 million during 2015"

"On behalf of the board, I take this opportunity to thank our customers and shareholders for their confidence in our capabilities. I would also like to thank our executive management team for their leadership and the excellent execution of the corporate strategy that continues to yield such solid performance, and to our staff for their support and commitment," concluded Al-Ajeel. The consolidated financials encompass the results of the Group's operations in Kuwait, and its share from its regional subsidiaries, namely Burgan Bank-Turkey, Gulf Bank Algeria, Bank of Baghdad, Tunis International Bank, in which Burgan Bank owns a majority stake. Burgan Bank Group has one of the largest regional branch networks with over 180 branches across Kuwait, Turkey, Algeria, Iraq, Tunis and Lebanon.

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and

financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

The bank was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2008, making it the first bank in the GCC, and the only bank in Kuwait to receive such accreditation for the third consecutive year. The Bank also has to its credit the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the



Majed Essa Al-Ajeel

JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twelve consecutive years. Burgan Bank, a subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), is a strongly positioned regional Bank in the MENA region.

KUWAIT OIL PRICE RISES TO \$34.79 PB

KUWAIT: Kuwait oil price rose 41 cents reaching USD 34.79 per barrel in Friday's trades against \$34.38 on Thursday, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said yesterday. Forwards for the American crude oil

have jumped to new high levels for the fifth week in a row due to a forecast accord among producers to freeze output ceiling. Oil prices in general have increased, largely due to low interest. —KUNA

BIG BANKS NEED TOUGHER AUDITS: US REGULATOR

NEW YORK: US banking supervisors should beef up their oversight of large banks beyond stress tests with deep-dive audits and greater use of outside examiners, a top regulator said Friday. Under a "full-scope" exam, a team of regulators would converge on the largest US banks to pull ledgers, check whether loan payments are on time and "systematically review a cross-section of bank portfolios," said Thomas Hoenig, vice chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

Such exams, intended to uncover problems like the profusion of bad mortgages at the heart of the 2008 financial crisis, are routine at smaller banks, but not at the biggest ones, he said. Hoenig, speaking at a conference at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, said the Fed's use of stress tests, which analyze banks' ability to withstand a theoretical severe economic crisis, was helpful but not sufficient to protect the system.

"Supervisors of these firms have become overly reliant on bank models,

model validation reviews, stress tests, and updates from bank management as a substitute for records review and hard questioning to draw conclusions regarding a firm's condition," he said.

"Full-scope examinations delve into the quality of portfolios and their implications for long-term resilience. A full-scope exam is a point-in-time analysis of a bank's full balance-sheet quality and management competence." Hoenig, who has previously supported breaking up the largest US banks, also took a swipe at the Fed's reliance on regulators who are stationed at large banks.

The practice causes regulators to "develop a more insular perspective" that can make it hard to question a bank's assumptions or identify potential disasters.

Hoenig said there is still a place for on-site examiners, but that they should be "subsumed" within a larger regulatory apparatus that includes a team of commissioned examiners who rotate from bank to bank. —AFP



FORT MORGAN: A local wrangler with far-reaching local roots Wendell Wacker removes the wire from a spool of hay while out at dawn feeding cattle during an ice storm, outside Fort Morgan, a small town on the eastern plains of Colorado. Childhood home of big band great Glenn Miller, this little farming community has seen its demographics and economy change steadily over the past decades, most recently with an influx of refugees fleeing violence in Africa and Latin America. —AP

ARGENTINA REACHES DEBT DEAL WITH INDIVIDUAL BONDHOLDERS

NEW YORK: A group of 115 small Argentine creditors has reached a repayment deal with the country to clear their 15-year-old claims on defaulted bonds, a US mediator said Friday. Court-appointed mediator Daniel Pollack said the group had mostly agreed to accept 70 percent payment on their claims against \$155 million in defaulted bonds and, on top of that, unspecified accrued interest.

Some though were weighing an alternative offer of 150 percent of the principal represented by the bonds, Pollack said. The deal adds to about \$6.4 billion that Buenos Aires had already agreed to pay out to settle a total of more than \$9 billion in "holdout" bondholder claims the country has faced since its massive 2001 debt

default. The holdouts are bondholders who declined to join the 93 percent of the country's creditors that agreed to accept large writedowns in 2005 and 2010 to be assured repayment.

Argentina had argued that holdouts, mostly hedge funds the country branded "vultures," lost their rights to repayment by not joining the debt restructuring.

But in 2012 a New York court ordered it to pay the full claims of the holdouts. The government only agreed after Mauricio Macri became president of Argentina in December and reversed policy with an aim to reestablish the country's credibility in global markets. "I am very pleased to report the settlement of claims of 115 individual bondholders, holding \$155 million of

defaulted bonds in cases pending in the Southern District of New York," Pollack said Friday.

"These settlements are not with large, multi-billion dollar hedge funds, but with regular, individual investors who saw the opportunity, for the first time in many years, to settle their claims with Argentina and seized that opportunity in good-faith negotiations."

Earlier this week one group of small bondholders accused Pollack of not supporting them in their attempts to negotiate with the Argentine government, saying they were "frozen out" of talks, and petitioned the court to replace him. On Thursday Pollack rejected their allegations as "baseless." —AFP

CHEAPER FUEL SLOWS INFLATION IN CANADA

OTTAWA: Consumer prices in Canada rose 1.4 percent in February compared to a year ago-but fell 0.6 percent compared to January due mainly to the fall in fuel prices, the government reported Friday.

Excluding gasoline, the consumer price index increased 1.9 percent year on year in February. That followed a 2.0 per-

cent increase the previous month, Statistics Canada said. Gasoline prices were down 13.1 percent year on year in February. That was the biggest contributing factor to the overall deceleration in consumer prices, the agency reported.

The 1.4 percent increase was in line with analysts' expectations. —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.663
Indian Rupees	4.499
Pakistani Rupees	2.884
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.086
Nepali Rupees	2.806
Singapore Dollar	219.690
Hongkong Dollar	38.918
Bangladesh Taka	3.850
Philippine Peso	6.453
Thai Baht	8.622

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.576
Qatari Riyal	83.001
Omani Riyal	784.823
Bahraini Dinar	802.440
UAE Dirham	82.266

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	35.500
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	35.524
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.410
Tunisian Dinar	150.100
Jordanian Dinar	425.860
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.013
Syrian Lira	2.153
Morocco Dirham	31.295

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	302.000
Euro	336.730
Sterling Pound	428.390
Canadian dollar	226.810
Turkish lira	104.680
Swiss Franc	307.070
Australian Dollar	226.650
US Dollar Buying	300.800

GOLD

20 Gram	253.510
10 Gram	129.510
5 Gram	65.600

UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

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

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.050
Canadian Dollar	229.115
Sterling Pound	432.050
Euro	336.620
Swiss Frank	299.080
Bahrain Dinar	799.075
UAE Dirhams	82.480
Qatari Riyals	83.690

Saudi Riyals	81.225
Jordanian Dinar	425.495
Egyptian Pound	33.652
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.084
Indian Rupees	4.489
Pakistani Rupees	2.879
Bangladesh Taka	3.842
Philippines Peso	6.458
Cyprus pound	575.305
Japanese Yen	3.655
Syrian Pound	2.370
Nepalese Rupees	3.800
Malaysian Ringgit	74.070
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.745
Thai Bhat	9.575
Turkish Lira	105.395

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.419857	0.428857
Czech Korune	0.004368	0.016368
Danish Krone	0.040835	0.045835
Euro	0.329413	0.337413
Norwegian Krone	0.031196	0.036396
Romanian Leu	0.074716	0.074716
Slovakia	0.008988	0.018988
Swedish Krona	0.032155	0.037155
Swiss Franc	0.299035	0.309235
Turkish Lira	0.099183	0.109483
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.216770	0.228270
New Zealand Dollar	0.193129	0.202629
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.220541	0.229041
US Dollars	0.297900	0.302400
US Dollars Mint	0.298400	0.302400

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003432	0.004006
Chinese Yuan	0.044925	0.048425
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036822	0.039572
Indian Rupee	0.004280	0.004670
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000019	0.000020
Japanese Yen	0.002576	0.002756
Kenyan Shilling	0.002970	0.002970
Korean Won	0.000243	0.000258
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069488	0.075488
Nepalese Rupee	0.002863	0.003033
Pakistan Rupee	0.002708	0.002988
Philippine Peso	0.006391	0.006671
Sierra Leone	0.000071	0.000077
Singapore Dollar	0.215302	0.221302
South African Rand	0.012881	0.021381
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001707	0.002287
Taiwan	0.009080	0.009260
Thai Baht	0.008293	0.008843

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.794492	0.802492
Egyptian Pound	0.031523	0.036641
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000194	0.000254
Jordanian Dinar	0.421942	0.429442
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020573	0.044573
Nigerian Naira	0.001244	0.001879
Omani Riyal	0.777996	0.783676
Qatar Riyal	0.082241	0.083454
Saudi Riyal	0.079647	0.080597
Syrian Pound	0.001280	0.001500
Tunisian Dinar	0.146597	0.154597
Turkish Lira	0.099183	0.109483
UAE Dirhams	0.081242	0.082391
Yemeni Riyal	0.001365	0.001445



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POSITIVE OUTLOOK ON KUWAIT ECONOMY

BAYT.COM AND YOUTOV SURVEY

KUWAIT: 30 percent of Kuwait respondents have a very positive outlook on the future of Kuwait's economy, according to the most recent Bayt.com Middle East and North Africa Consumer Confidence Index survey, which was conducted by Bayt.com, the Middle East's number one job site, and YouGov, a leading market research agency.

Country's Economic Situation

17 percent of Kuwait respondents believe that the country's economy has 'improved' in the last six months, while nearly a half (48 percent) believe that it has 'receded'. However, 30 percent expect the country's economy to 'improve' in the next six months, almost equalling the 31 percent who expect it to 'get worse'. Almost a quarter of employed Kuwait respondents (23 percent) believe that business conditions are either 'good' or 'very good'; 24 percent believe that business conditions are bad. However, respondents are largely optimistic about the future, with 43 percent of Kuwait respondents who expect business conditions to 'get better' in a year's time.

Personal Economic Situation

According to 45 percent of respondents in Kuwait, their financial situation is the 'same as six months ago' (19 percent say it is 'better' than it was six months ago, while 29 percent claim that it is 'worse'). The outlook in Kuwait is positive: 39 percent of respondents believe that their personal financial situation will 'improve' in the next six months. When it comes to the cost of living in the next six months, eight in 10 respondents expect it to

increase, while one in 10 expect the cost of living to remain the same.

64 percent of Kuwait respondents say that their savings have 'decreased' when compared to last year. 11 percent claim that their savings have 'increased' this year, while 21 percent reveal that they have 'remained the same'.

Consumer Spending in Kuwait

27 percent of those surveyed in Kuwait are planning to invest in a motor vehicle in the next 12 months. Of those, 47 percent are planning to buy a new vehicle, while 33 percent are planning to buy a used one. 63 percent of Kuwait respondents are not planning on purchasing a vehicle.

When it comes to investing in property, a quarter of Kuwait respondents are planning to invest in the next 12 months. Of those who are planning to buy property, 48 percent will invest in an 'apartment', while 30 percent plan to buy a 'villa/townhouse/bungalow' and 17 percent will purchase 'commercial property'. The majority (59 percent) of respondents who are planning to invest in property in Kuwait plan to buy 'new' property in the next 12 months, while 12 percent will invest in 'pre-owned' property.

Regarding consumer goods, 21 percent of Kuwait residents plan to purchase a 'tablet or smartphone' in the next six months, while 19 percent will invest in a 'desktop or laptop' or in 'furniture'. Around 13 percent of respondents in Kuwait are planning to buy 'LCD or Plasma TV' over the same period. A 'washing machine' (12 percent), refrigerator (10 percent) and cooking range (10 percent) are also

among the respondents' list of priorities for this year.

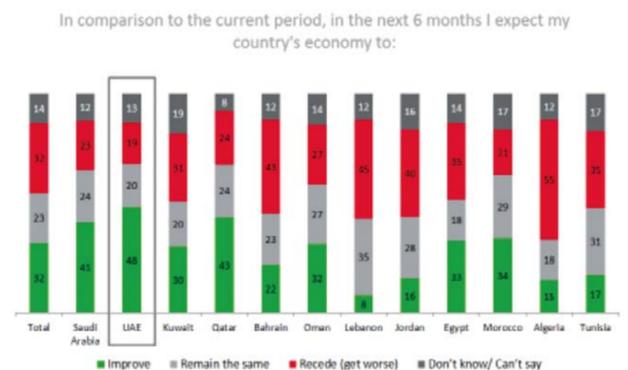
Current Job Perspective in Kuwait

Presently, 29 percent of respondents surveyed believe that there are plenty of jobs available in Kuwait, with 12 percent claiming availability across multiple industries and 17 percent claiming availability across a limited number of industries. 15 percent of Kuwait respondents expect the job availability to 'increase' in the next six months.

24 percent of employed respondents feel that the number of employees in their company over the past six months has 'increased', while 45 percent believe the opposite to be true. Over the course of the next six months, 26 percent of employed respondents in Kuwait expect the number of employees in their organization to 'increase'.

With regards to satisfaction levels, 33 percent of employed Kuwait respondents are satisfied with career growth opportunities, and 30 percent are satisfied with their current compensation. On the other hand, 52 percent are dissatisfied with their current salary and allowances. When it comes to non-monetary benefits, 31 percent of employed Kuwait respondents are satisfied, while 52 percent feel the opposite. 34 percent of employed respondents in Kuwait feel secure in their jobs.

"While the region as a whole has seen a relative dip in consumer confidence, future expectations amongst respondents remain positive and bright," said Suhail Masri, VP of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "At Bayt.com there are currently more than 10,000 jobs



posted on the website on any given day. This augments the tremendous amount of recruitment that takes place via the Bayt.com CV Search functionality for employers who prefer not to immediately advertise their pressing job vacancies, which recruiters can try for free on www.bayt.com/en/search-cv/. Jobseeker registration on our website is growing at over 12,000 new professionals a day and continues to reflect a healthy appetite for jobs across the industrial and career spectrum. In an extra-competitive job market though, we advise professionals to enhance their visibility to employers by creating online profiles on Bayt.com and increasing their visibility on popular search engines. At Bayt.com, we always endeavor to empower the region's job seekers and employers by providing them with the latest

technology and most relevant tools and market insights related to recruitment."

Elissavet Vraka, Research Manager, YouGov, said: "Gauging consumer opinion is a powerful tool for revealing the current attitudes and sentiments about the business and economic conditions in a specific country. Despite the positive outlook on the future, the rising cost of living is negatively impacting residents' ability to save."

Data for the Bayt.com Middle East and North Africa Consumer Confidence Index survey was collected online from January 27 to February 10, 2016, with 3,905 respondents from the UAE, KSA, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. Males and females aged 18 years old and above, of all nationalities, were included in the survey.

KUWAIT EXPECTS OIL PRICE TO RISE TO \$50 IN 2016: OFFICIAL

PRODUCTION LEVEL NEARING 3 MILLION BPD

DUBAI: Kuwait expects the price of crude oil to rise to \$50 per barrel and said the Gulf Arab state exports about 2.1 million barrels per day, state news agency KUNA said citing a senior official. "Kuwait exports around 2.1 million barrels of crude oil per day, and it's expected that the price will reach \$50 per barrel during 2016," KUNA said, citing Nabil Bouresli, managing director of international marketing at Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KPC).

Bouresli cited "increased demand and shrinking supply" as the reason for the expected rise. Given current factors, mainly increase in demand over supply, international oil prices could reach \$50 a barrel in 2016, Bouresli said in the interview.

Kuwait's production level is nearing three million barrels daily; 2.1 million of which as crude exported to world markets and the rest refined locally, he noted, adding "Kuwaiti crude is marketed upon annual, long-term and safe contracts. In case of surplus occurring, it would be in very small quantities."

On the potential agreement between OPEC and non-OPEC members of freezing production at January levels, Bouresli reaffirmed that any oil policy has its pros and cons. "This is where international

marketing at KPC comes in handy through finding opportunities to promote crude and derivatives.

"Kuwaiti oil and other related products are exported to more than 35 countries; 80 percent to Eastern hemisphere, 15 percent to Western hemisphere and five percent to the African Continent," he pointed out.

On future of conventional energy sources and the impact of increasing demand on shale oil as an alternative, Bouresli said shale; despite its huge potential, is facing many challenges, mainly production cost that can reach \$35-50 a barrel, and would lead to an apparent economic unfeasibility when prices decline. The production of shale oil has been hindered because of technical difficulties and costs. In March 2011, the United States Bureau of Land Management called into question proposals in the US for commercial operations, stating "There are no economically viable ways yet known to extract and process oil shale for commercial purposes."

On competition, Bouresli broke it down to three levels; oil quality, demand and supply and finally market share. He explained that density and percentage of sulfur component in oil plays a major role in

promoting it. "Second element of competition is demand and supply, as currently supply is dominant due to increase in production levels in Iran, Iraq and Russia, beside shale oil production in the United States. "Increasing market share through lowering official price is yet another factor effecting competition," he noted.

On impact of Iran coming back to world market, Bouresli noted that both markets and prices are "psychologically" influenced by statements of Iranian officials, especially after sanctions were lifted.

Iranian oil production climbed last month by the most in almost two decades following the end of international sanctions, according to OPEC. Iran increased output by 187,800 barrels a day to 3.13 million a day in February, the biggest monthly gain since 1997, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries said in its monthly report. Supply from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Venezuela, which tentatively agreed with Russia last month to keep output steady, was mostly unchanged. The group lowered estimates for the amount of crude it will need to provide this year amid slower declines in production outside the organization. — KUNA



BEIJING: The CEOs of companies ranging from Facebook to Rio Tinto gather in Beijing with top academics and politicians for a pay-to-play event promising audiences with China's top leadership. — AFP

EXECUTIVES PAY TOP DOLLAR FOR AUDIENCE WITH CHINA LEADERS

BEIJING: The China Development Forum this weekend may be the most important economic summit you have never heard of.

The CEOs of companies ranging from Facebook to Rio Tinto gather in Beijing with top academics and politicians for a pay-to-play event promising audiences with China's top leadership. Participants are invited to make "donations" to the elite event starting at 1 million yuan (\$155,000) and ranging upwards from there, according to documents obtained by AFP.

For 3 million yuan, the companies are allowed to name a panel discussion and "nominate speakers and panellists". Proceeds go to "relevant research projects and administrative expenses of the conference", which is organized by the little-known China Development Research Foundation (CDRF), a proxy for one of the Communist government's planning agencies.

"Other forms of donation are open for discussion," the documents say, with one previous attendee suggesting participants can pay extra to be seated near top leaders.

The forum, which is in its 17th year, directly follows the annual meeting of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's rubber stamp legislature, and is pitched as an opportunity for leaders of the financial and business world to learn about the parliament's achievements.

This year, the NPC approved the country's new five-year plan, which will guide economic and social policy to 2020, and attendees are "keen to hear from the horse's mouth" what the document means for the nation's ailing economy, said the long-time participant, who asked not to be named in order to speak frankly about the event. Even though the panels and speeches are of questionable value, CEOs "fork out a lot

of money to be there," he said. "This year in particular is the best attendance list I've ever seen."

Tiananmen run

When the forum started in 2000, only 19 "delegates" attended, according to that event's website. But 16 years later, following the international financial crisis and China's transformation into the world's second-largest economy, the invitation-only event has become a Who's Who of global power brokers. Return attendees include International Monetary Fund Director Christine Lagarde and the CEOs of major global companies such as Royal Dutch Shell, Siemens, Boeing and IBM.

Former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger, who played a key role in establishing diplomatic ties between Washington and Beijing, is there. But even by previous standards, this year's RSVPs stand out.

Outspoken libertarian and PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel has made time to hear from the world's most powerful Communist Party. And Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg announced his presence in the country that bans his website, with an ingratiating photograph of himself jogging, maskless, through a smog-wreathed Tiananmen Square.

'The debate is over'

Despite, or perhaps because of, the participation of so many of the world's most powerful people, relatively little is known about what goes on at the China Development Forum. Press coverage is largely limited to Chinese-language outlets, including many state-run media, which in the past have portrayed delegates' presence as evidence of Beijing's economic management skills. — AFP

LAGARDE: NEGATIVE RATES BENEFIT GLOBAL ECONOMY

WASHINGTON: Negative interest rates set by central banks in Japan and Europe to fight deflation are good for the global economy, International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde said Friday.

Lagarde told Bloomberg TV that the unorthodox negative short-term rates, in which commercial banks pay central banks to hold their money, had probably supported stronger economic growth. "If we had not had those negative rates, we would be in a much worse place today, with inflation probably lower than where it is, with growth probably lower than where we have it," she told the broadcaster. "It was a good thing to actually implement those negative rates under the current circumstances."

The European Central Bank, the Bank of Japan, and the central banks of Sweden, Denmark and Switzerland have taken rates negative in the past year in efforts to spur commercial banks to push more of their surplus funds into the economy to generate more spending and investment. While in theory the concept should work, economists are closely studying what happens in Europe and Japan amid worries that negative rates could actually provoke businesses and consumers to be more cautious about spending.

Janet Yellen, chair of the Federal Reserve, which raised interest rates in December, said Wednesday

that the Fed is watching the experience of negative rates in other countries. "I guess I would judge they seem to have mixed effects, you know, some posi-

tive and some negative things," she said.

The Fed, for its own part, is "certainly not actively considering negative rates," she added. — AFP



ATLANTA: People attend an employment orientation class at the Georgia Department of Labor office in Atlanta. The Labor Department reports on the number of people who applied for unemployment benefits in the previous week. — AP

SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY					SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %	Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
OIL & GAS	69,339,977	9.12%	1,323,511	2.06%	OIL & GAS	777.92	745.31	4.38%	-4.99%
BASIC MATERIALS	2,668,247	0.35%	949,716	1.48%	BASIC MATERIALS	926.57	917.61	0.98%	-6.06%
INDUSTRIALS	41,300,264	5.43%	3,677,824	5.72%	INDUSTRIALS	973.70	987.16	-1.36%	-6.65%
CONSUMER GOODS	3,453,539	0.45%	2,752,544	4.28%	CONSUMER GOODS	1,060.61	1,096.61	-3.28%	-3.13%
HEALTH CARE	1,468,128	0.19%	304,122	0.47%	HEALTH CARE	961.28	985.04	-2.41%	3.88%
CONSUMER SERVICES	54,543,528	7.17%	4,096,116	6.37%	CONSUMER SERVICES	934.04	940.71	-0.71%	-7.40%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	14,759,210	1.94%	4,307,461	6.70%	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	629.51	633.04	-0.56%	5.16%
BANKS	120,563,999	15.85%	26,461,682	41.16%	BANKS	816.56	827.15	-1.28%	-9.98%
INSURANCE	733,667	0.10%	57,789	0.09%	INSURANCE	1,080.61	1,044.06	3.50%	-4.12%
REAL ESTATE	161,371,506	21.21%	6,610,136	10.28%	REAL ESTATE	832.62	836.72	-0.49%	-11.49%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	288,868,685	37.97%	13,640,315	21.22%	FINANCIAL SERVICES	575.31	575.09	0.04%	-3.37%
TECHNOLOGY	1,637,986	0.22%	114,267	0.18%	TECHNOLOGY	892.51	880.06	1.41%	8.82%

KUWAIT EQUITIES COME UNDER SELLING PRESSURE

KUWAIT: Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) ended last week in the red zone. The Price Index closed at 5,262.07 points, down by 0.43 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index decreased by 1.13 percent after closing at 363.39 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 857.74 points down by 1.60 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover decreased by 5.83 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 12.86 million, whereas trading volume average was 152.14 million shares, recording a decrease of 23.42 percent.

The stock market indicators closed in the red zone last week, as it was subject to the continued strong selling operations executed on most of the traded stocks during the week, of both large-cap and small-cap stocks. Moreover, the stock market initiated the first session of the week with mixed performance to the three indicators, whereas the Price Index increased, supported by the speculative operations executed on the small-cap stocks, while the Weighted and KSX-15 indices declined as a result to the selling pressures and the profit collection operations executed on the large-cap stocks. Also, the three market indicators closed in the red zone in the next session, affected by the continued selling operations executed on most of the listed stocks, despite the presence of some random purchasing operations on some stocks, which lightened the losses by the end of the session.

In the mid of week session, the three indicators closed mixed, whereas the Price Index was able to inverse its direction and realize limited gains due to the quick speculative operations that concentrated on the small-cap stocks, while the selling for profit operations that concentrated on the large-cap stocks in the market forced the Weighted and KSX-15 indices to close in the red zone, which added to the both indices losses, in light of a noticeable drop in the trading activity. The market indicators continued its fluctuation on Wednesday's session, with changing positions, whereas the Weighted and KSX-15 indices were able to realize some gains, supported by the random purchasing operations witnessed by some leading stocks in the market, whilst the Price Index performance decreased as a result to the selling pressures that included most of the listed stocks in the market, which increased the Price Index's annual losses to reach 6.86 percent since the beginning of the year until the end of the same session. However on the end of week session, the market was able to close in the green zone, whereas the three indicators

realized gains for the first time during the same week, supported by the purchasing power that concentrated on the small-cap stocks. As far as KSE annual performance, the price index ended last week recording 6.29 percent annual loss compared to its closing in 2015, while the weighted index decreased by 4.80 percent, and the KSX-15 recorded 4.74 percent loss.

BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

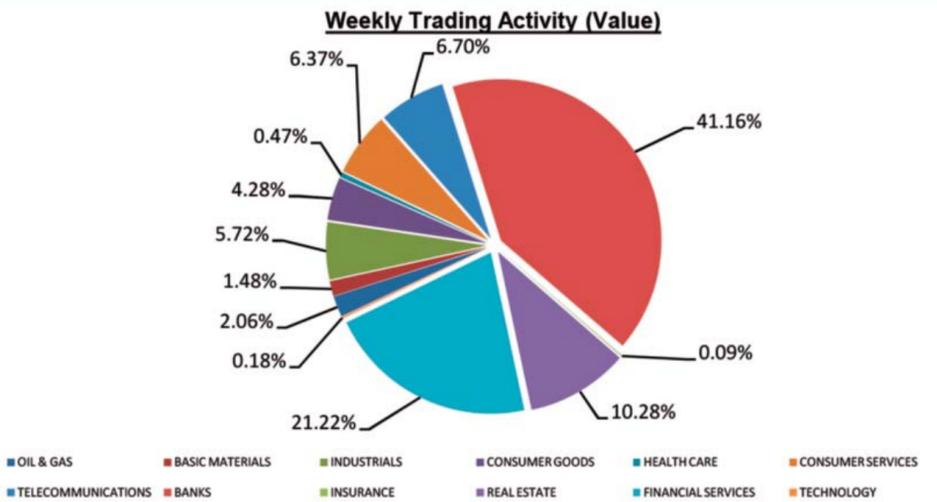
Sectors' Indices

Five of KSE's sectors ended last week in the green zone, while the seven recorded declines. Last week's highest gainer was the Oil & Gas sector, achieving 4.38 percent growth rate as its index closed at 777.92 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Insurance sector's index closed at 1,080.61 points or 3.50 percent increase. The Technology sector came in third as its index achieved 1.41 percent growth, ending the week at 892.51 points. The least growing sector was the Financial Services sector, as its index closed at 575.31 points at a loss of 0.04 percent.

On the other hand, the Consumer Goods sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 3.28 percent to end the week's activity at 1,060.61 points. The Health Care sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 2.41 percent, closing at 961.28 points, the least declining sector was the Real Estate sector, as its index closed at 832.62 points at a loss of 0.49 percent.

Sectors' Activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 288.87 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 37.97 percent of the total market trading volume. The Real Estate sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 21.21 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 161.37 million shares. On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 26.46 million or 41.16 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 13.64 million representing 21.22 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by the Studies & Research Department, Bayan Investment Co.



KSE INDICES				
		Price Index	Weighted index	KSX 15
Weekly	Last week	5,262.07	363.39	857.74
	Previous week	5,284.87	367.53	871.70
	Change (Point)	-22.80	-4.14	-13.96
	Change (%)	-0.43%	-1.13%	-1.60%
Annual	Last year	5,615.12	381.70	900.43
	Change (Point)	-353.05	-18.31	-42.69
	Change (%)	-6.29%	-4.80%	-4.74%

MARKET ACTIVITY			
	Last Week	Previous Week	Ch. %
Volume	760,708,736	993,385,520	-23.42%
Value (K.D)	64,295,482	68,278,420	-5.83%
Deals	17,434	20,384	-14.47%

TOP GAINERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
WETHAQ	38.50	28.50	10.0	35.09%
ENERGYH	39.00	31.00	8.0	25.81%
ALDEERA	35.00	29.50	5.5	18.64%
KFIC	34.00	29.50	4.5	15.25%
NAPESCO	710.00	630.00	80.0	12.70%

TOP LOSERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
ZIMAH	59.00	76.00	-17.0	-22.37%
GFC	26.50	34.00	-7.5	-22.06%
CABLE	315.00	355.00	-40.0	-11.27%
SAFWAN	265.00	295.00	-30.0	-10.17%
KSH	184.00	204.00	-20.0	-9.80%

MARKET FINISHES FIFTH WEEK OF GAINS; S&P 500 POSITIVE

WALL STREET WEEKLY REPORT

NEW YORK: Another strong gain for stocks Friday extended the market's recovery from a dismal start to the year to a fifth week in a row. The Standard and Poor's 500 index closed up for the year for the first time. The Dow Jones industrial average turned positive Thursday. Both had been down more than 10 percent for the year a little more than a month ago. The Dow rose 120.81 points Friday, or 0.7 percent, to 17,602.30. It is up 1 percent for the year. The S&P 500 gained 8.99 points, or 0.4 percent, to 2,049.58, and is now up 0.3 percent for 2016. The Nasdaq composite picked up 20.6 points, or 0.4 percent, to 4,795.65, though the Nasdaq remains down 4 percent for the year.

Stocks had plunged early this year as investors feared that Chinese economy, which has been the engine of global growth, was slowing faster than expected and that China's slide would be enough to pull the US economy into recession. "The market tended to focus on the negative and ignore the good" at the start of this year, said Lowell Yura, head of Multi-Asset Solutions for BMO Global Asset Management. But over the course of the five-week rally, reports on hiring, manufacturing and construction spending showed the US economy is doing fairly well. Industrial, consumer and technology stocks benefited from the more positive outlook in the US Energy and materials stocks climbed as oil and precious metals prices rose.

And this week the Federal Reserve said it expects to slow the pace of interest rate increases this year. Lower rates make stocks look more attractive to investors, and they help boost economic growth by reducing borrowing costs and reducing the risk associated with starting or expanding businesses.

The biggest gainers Friday were health care stocks and banks, the worst-performing parts of the market this year. Companies that make aircraft, machinery and chemicals also rose as the dollar fell against other currencies on hopes that the weaker dollar will boost their sales outside of the US.

Starwood Hotels climbed \$4.18, or 5.5 percent, to \$80.57 after the hotel chain said it accepted a new buyout offer from a group led by Anbang Insurance Group of China. The bid is worth more than \$14 billion. Competitor Marriott, which agreed to buy Starwood last year, said it is considering its options and noted it has the right to make another offer. Columbia Pipeline Group climbed after TransCanada Corp. agreed to buy the company for \$10 billion, or \$25.50 per share, in an attempt to expand further into the US Columbia Pipeline stock advanced \$1.33, or 5.7 percent, to \$24.84.

Health care stocks regained some ground after a rough week. Hospital operator Tenet Healthcare rose \$1.57, or 5.9 percent, to \$28.14 and prescription drug distributor McKesson

gained \$6.62, or 4.4 percent, to \$158.31. Drug companies also ticked upward after days of losses, including Bristol-Myers Squibb, which rose \$1.36, or 2.2 percent, to \$62.83.

JPMorgan Chase said it will buy back another \$1.88 billion in stock, while Bank of America announced an \$800 million stock repurchase.

Chase stock rose \$1.73, or 2.9 percent, to \$60.48 and Bank of America shares picked up 39 cents, or 2.9 percent, to \$13.79. Financial stocks are also getting a boost from the recovery in oil prices. As energy prices tumbled, investors worried that some bank loans to energy companies wouldn't get paid back.

Bond prices have also been rising in the wake of the Fed's announcement, and on Friday the yield on the 10-year US Treasury note dipped to 1.87 percent from 1.90 percent. The euro fell to \$1.1268 from \$1.1316. The dollar inched up to 111.60 yen after closing at 111.50 yen Thursday. Oil prices turned lower, though they remained sharply higher for the week. Benchmark US crude lost 76 cents, or 1.9 percent, to \$39.44 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, the benchmark for international oils, gave up 34 cents to \$41.20 a barrel in London. On Thursday US crude closed over \$40 per barrel for the first time since early December. The price of US crude is up 50 percent since Feb. 11 on hopes that producers will cut output and relieve a global glut.

Metals prices declined after a big jump on Thursday. Gold fell \$10.70 to \$1,254.30 an ounce. Silver lost 22 cents, or 1.4 percent, to \$15.81 an ounce. Copper dipped 1 cent to \$2.28 a pound. In other energy trading, wholesale gasoline fell 1 cent to \$1.43 a gallon. Heating oil lost 2 cents to \$1.24 a gallon. Natural gas gave up 3 cents to \$1.91 per 1,000 cubic feet. Stocks overseas were mixed. Germany's DAX rose 0.6 percent and France's CAC 40 added 0.4 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 fell 0.2 percent. Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 1.2 percent and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index rose 0.8 percent. The Shanghai Composite index in mainland China rose 1.7 percent. — AP



NEW YORK: Trader Vincent Quinones (center) works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Friday. — AP

MARKETS FALL AS OIL RISES

KFH CAPITAL REMARK

KUWAIT: The KSE indices all witnessed losses, however oil has seen a mixed week with oil producers announcing to meet in order to discuss oil freezing proposal. Moreover, the market closed at 5,262.07 down by 0.43 percent. The MUDX Islamic Index was also down by 0.85 percent to close at 512.31 points. While the KSX15 which comprises of the market blue chips closed at 857.74 down 13.96 points.

Equities across the Middle East witnessed mixed trends as Oil prices rise during the week; further, the Brent

Indices	Weekly Indices Performance & their Volatility			Week: 13-Mar-16 to 17-Mar-16		
	Current	Previous	Change	Chg (%)	Volatility Current	Previous
KSE Price Index	5,262.07	5,284.87	(22.80)	-0.43%	8.86%	7.20%
MUDX	512.31	516.68	(4.37)	-0.85%	10.79%	8.10%
KSE Weighted	363.39	367.53	(4.14)	-1.13%	10.45%	1.42%
KSX15	857.74	871.70	(13.96)	-1.60%	11.81%	4.85%

crude witnessed a marginal increase of 0.5 percent compared to last week, currently trading at \$40.88 per barrel. The Weekly volumes reported

760.71 million shares compared to 993.37 million shares in previous week. Among the major contributors the Financial Services Sector (contributing 37.97 percent) witnessed 288.86 million shares of trading compared to 389.28 million shares in the previous week, while Real Estate Sector (contributing 21.21 percent) witnessed 161.37 million shares of trading compared to 269.01 million shares in the previous week.

Sectors with notable volumes included the Consumer Services sector, witnessed 54.54 million traded shares with an increase of 69.05 percent in volumes during the week.

The overall Market Cap was down by a 1.1 percent as it stood at KWD 24.96 billion, the market saw a downward trend in the blue chips during the week. National Bank of Kuwait - NBK (Mcap - KWD 3.72 billion) saw its market cap decrease by 1.98 percent.

While Mobile Telecommunication Co - Zain (Mcap - KD 1.63 billion) saw its market cap steady for the week with no change, and Kuwait Food Co. - Americana (Mcap - KWD 956.76 million) decreased 7.03 percent in market cap wise, after a surge of almost 13 percent the previous week on anticipation of possible sale.

On the total market breadth, Of the 56 Islamic Companies, 16



Note: Indices are re-based on 1,000 as of last week's closing.

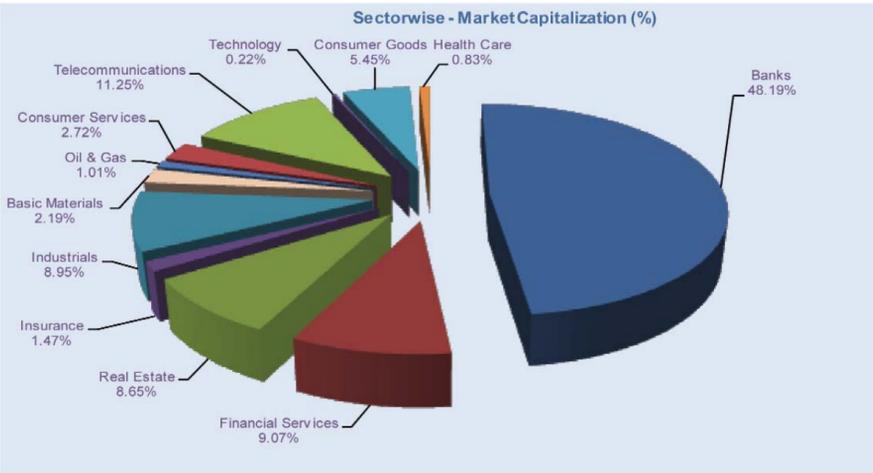
advanced while 23 declined during the week.

The Islamic universe market cap witnessed a negative week to close at KWD 6.25 billion an decrease of 0.99 percent. The universe heavyweights like Kuwait Finance House - KFH (Mcap - KD 2.35 billion) saw a decrease of

2.94 percent in its market cap. While Boubyan Bank (Mcap - KD 876.88 million) saw an increase of 4.94 percent in its market cap. Kuwait Telecommunication Co. - VIVA (Mcap - KD 499.40 million) saw a decrease of 1.96 percent in its market cap during the week.

Weekly KSE Statistics				
Key Parameters	Current	Previous	Chg.	%
Volume (Million Share)	760.71	993.37	(232.66)	-23.4%
Value (KD Million)	64.30	68.27	(3.98)	-5.8%
Deals ('000)	17.43	20.38	(2.95)	-14.5%
Market Cap (KD Bln)	24.97	25.25	(0.28)	-1.1%

Market Movers			
Advance	Decline	Unchanged	Not Traded
49	75	36	28



Most Active Stocks	Current Week ('000 Share)	Prev. Week ('000 Share)	Chng	% Total Mkt	YTD-Turnover	Price Stats- Weekly		
						Current	Prev.	Chng.
Ithmar Bank @	61,240	91,347	-33.0%	8.05%	21.5%	0.036	0.037	-2.7%
Al Safat Energy Holding Co. @	54,610	54,351	0.5%	7.18%	43.5%	0.012	0.011	9.5%
Zima Holding Co. @	50,942	29,091	75.1%	6.70%	121.8%	0.059	0.076	-22.4%
Investors Holding Group @	29,559	46,429	-36.3%	3.89%	36.2%	0.021	0.021	0.0%
Al-Dar National Real Estate Co. @	27,254	27,352	-0.4%	3.58%	178.6%	0.019	0.020	-5.0%

Top 3 Gainers	C. Mkt Cap	Pr. Mkt Cap	Change %	% Total Mkt	Price Stats- Weekly	
					Current	Previous
Wethaq Takaful Insurance Co. @	4.24	3.14	35.09%	0.017%	0.039	0.029
The Energy House Co. @	29.25	23.25	25.81%	0.117%	0.039	0.031
Al-Deera Holding Co.	6.91	5.82	18.64%	0.028%	0.035	0.030

Top 3 Losers	C. Mkt Cap	Pr. Mkt Cap	Change %	% Total Mkt	Price Stats- Weekly	
					Current	Previous
Zima Holding Co. @	5.90	7.60	-22.37%	0.024%	0.059	0.076
Gulf Franchising Holding Co. @	0.86	1.10	-22.06%	0.003%	0.027	0.034
Gulf Cable & Electrical Industries Co. @	66.13	74.53	-11.27%	0.265%	0.315	0.355

Top KSE Islamic Stocks in terms of Market Capitalization (MC)						
Stocks	Current Week	Previous Week	Chg.	% of MUDX	Weekly Volume	YTD-Gain
Kuwait Finance House @	2,358.69	2,430.17	-2.9%	37.7%	16,139,063	-8.3%
Boubyan Bank @	876.88	835.62	4.9%	14.0%	4,633,658	-3.4%
Ahli United Bank @	669.32	677.20	-1.2%	10.7%	886,849	-19.8%
Kuwait Telecommunications Co. @	499.40	509.39	-2.0%	8.0%	741,805	1.0%
Kuwait International Bank @	201.24	205.39	-2.0%	3.2%	630,167	-14.2%

UNEASE OVER UK AUSTERITY FLARES AS MINISTER QUILTS

LONDON: Smoldering tensions within Britain's ruling Conservative Party have exploded as a prominent minister resigned over the government's plans to cut benefits for the disabled while giving tax breaks for the better off.

Iain Duncan Smith quit late Friday, two days after the cuts were unveiled in a sixth consecutive

austerity budget - a plan that has drawn criticism from many members of Prime Minister David Cameron's own party. The work and pensions secretary said he could no longer support policies that he believes are driven more by political ideology than economic necessity.

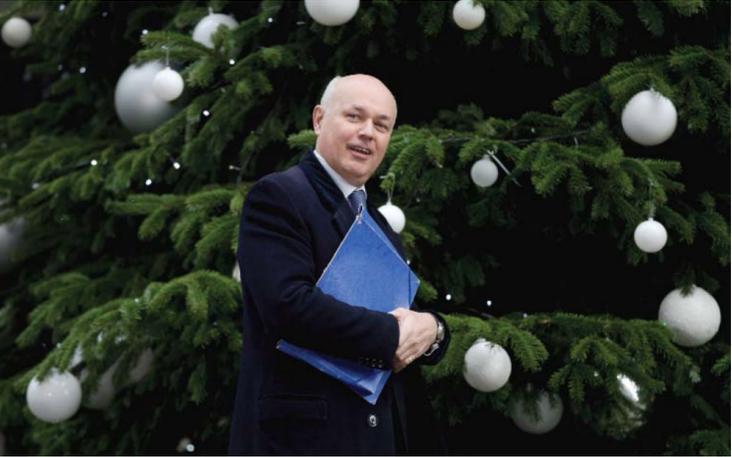
"I have for some time and rather reluctantly

come to believe that the latest changes to benefits to the disabled and the context in which they've been made are a compromise too far," Duncan Smith wrote in his resignation letter. His decision laid bare escalating tensions within the Conservative Party as Britain prepares for a June 23 referendum on whether to leave the European Union. Duncan Smith, a former party leader nicknamed the "quiet man," is a prominent advocate of leaving the EU, while Cameron supports continued membership.

While Cameron has allowed ministers to follow their own beliefs on the EU issue, he has found it a formidable task to hold his government together as the debate heats up. The Sun newspaper captured the internal warfare with a headline that alluded to the ancient rebellion against Julius Caesar and - punning on Duncan Smith's initials - warned Cameron to beware the "IDS of March."

The resignation followed days of uproar over plans to trim personal independence payments for the disabled - a proposal met with such fury that the government had been promising to rethink it.

In his resignation letter, Duncan Smith said the cuts were "not defensible" in a budget that gave benefits to wealthier taxpayers, and he argued for broader reforms that would "focus resources on those most in need." He has long argued that benefits such as fuel subsidies for the elderly should be means tested so they only go to those in need. Cameron nevertheless argued that Duncan Smith had accepted the changes only days ago. "In light of this, I am puzzled and disappointed that you have chosen to resign," he wrote in reply to Duncan Smith's letter of resignation. — AP



LONDON: Britain's Secretary for Work and Pensions Iain Duncan Smith looks to the media as he walks past the Christmas tree in Downing Street ahead of a cabinet meeting in London. Iain Duncan Smith has said on Friday he is resigning as Work and Pensions Secretary, complaining of Treasury pressure to make cuts to benefits. — AP



China's richest man, Wang Jianlin, has built a \$100 billion business empire founded on shopping malls, but now he has set his eyes on a new trophy — building a global sports conglomerate to match his country's economic and political might. — AFP

CHINA PROPERTY TYCOON WANG JIANLIN EYES SPORTING TROPHY

SHANGHAI: China's richest man, Wang Jianlin, has built a \$100 billion business empire founded on shopping malls, but now he has set his eyes on a new trophy-building a global sports conglomerate to match his country's economic and political might.

News on Friday that Wang's company Wanda group had become a top-level sponsor for football's scandal-tainted governing body FIFA was just the latest show of its founder's ambitions.

With Chinese growth slowing and its once buoyant property sector now troubled, observers see Wang's business acumen behind the shift into sports and entertainment. And the move also plays into Chinese government policies for companies to buy up overseas assets, as well as to promote the country's "soft power" abroad. "There are a lot of people following football, so there is a big propaganda effect," Deng Haozhi, a property analyst at Chinese developer Fineland, said of the FIFA sponsorship.

"There is also a political imperative for this," he told AFP. "Many big property developers are participating in the football industry, which is the new preference and goal for China."

Chinese President Xi Jinping, himself a fan, is pushing to turn the nation into a football power despite its dismal national team, ranked 96th in the world by FIFA. The leader has declared his hopes that China will one day host and win a World Cup, prompting a flood of money into its professional teams. Chinese Super League clubs spent a world-beating 331 million euros (\$373 million) on player transfers for the new season. "It's a way to get China more influence in FIFA and get China to host the World Cup eventually, but that's going to be a long way off," said Cameron Wilson, founder of the website Wild East Football, about the Chinese game.

Culture a growth industry
Wanda shopping malls are a familiar feature of China's urban landscape but founder Wang, whose personal fortune is now near \$30 billion, was unknown to the outside world until paying \$2.6 billion for US cinema chain AMC Entertainment in 2012.

In China's biggest-ever cultural takeover, Wanda in January signed a \$3.5 billion deal to

buy Hollywood studio Legendary Entertainment, maker of blockbusters such as "Jurassic World" and "Godzilla". Wang's Wanda Sports Holdings already claims to be the world's largest sports company and has a goal of reaching an annual turnover of \$10 billion.

It already owns Swiss marketing group Infront, a 20 percent stake in Spanish football club Atletico Madrid, and the organizer of the Ironman extreme endurance contests.

Both In front and Wanda Sports are headed by Philippe Blatter, nephew of the former FIFA chief Sepp Blatter who was forced out over a corruption scandal. The Wanda group considers the "cultural industry" - including sports, film, entertainment and tourism - to be a key driver for the future. "This sector is gradually emerging as one of Wanda's core businesses," according to its website. In his own words, Wang sees football as a priority, even though Wanda is not directly involved in a Chinese football club of its own, after selling the team in its origin city of Dalian years ago. "The government leaders care about it very much, and the Chinese administration of sports made several appeals, so I came back and am offering support for Chinese football," he wrote in a recent book.

Mixing business and politics
Under the FIFA deal, Wanda will have sponsorship rights to all FIFA competitions and corporate activities up to and including the 2030 World Cup. Financial terms were not disclosed. "This is what I call vision," said a poster on China's Twitter-like Weibo. "He knows China wants to develop football and his own business can't do without the central government." Like other big private companies in China, ties to the authorities can be good for business. Wang has confirmed that President Xi's brother-in-law has owned shares in one of the group's companies.

Wang, the son of a communist Red Army captain, was himself a soldier before he founded Wanda in the late 1980s, building it up with military discipline. Previously a local government official in Dalian, Wang transformed a failing state-owned property developer after winning a contract to renovate shanty housing, and then grew it into Wanda. — AFP

IRON RANGE INVESTMENTS MAY NOT CREATE MANY JOBS: REPORT

ST PAUL, Minn: A state body that invests in the Iron Range poured \$17 million into a money-losing ski resort, gave financial assistance to businesses that may not have needed it and failed to require job creation in return for many of the loans it doled out, according to an audit of its activities released Friday.

The Office of the Legislative Auditor made those conclusions in its examination of the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation board, just the latest bad news surrounding the state development agency's performance. Dubbed the IRRRB, the board doles out grants and loans meant to spur economic development and diversify an Iron Range economy largely reliant on a volatile iron ore industry.

That mission has become more important since an unprecedented downturn in the domestic steel industry that has resulted in thousands of steelworkers and mine employees being laid off in the last year. The report found several issues that call into question whether the board has lived up to that goal. Commissioner Mark Phillips conceded his

agency needs to improve in tracking its performance but defended, citing proposals that helped bring 1,200 jobs from companies like Blue Cross Blue Shield and Delta Airlines.

"It's hard to imagine what the Iron Range would look like without these critical employers," he said. Of the 15 loans in the review - totaling millions of dollars - the agency granted to companies who promised to create a certain amount of jobs, just two followed through. Seven companies fell short while the remainders are still too early to grade. The report also found many loans and grants that didn't require some job creation metric and suggested the board had granted some financial assistance to businesses that may not have needed public support in order to relocate or expand on the Iron Range. The report also found the IRRRB has plowed more than \$17 million into the ski and golf resort Giants Ridge, which it owns, to subsidize increasing financial losses since 2006. Legislative auditors said the IRRRB needs to get a better handle on the resort's financial performance. The continued losses

raised eyebrows among legislators.

"The subsidies should be going down, not up," said Sen. Mary Kiffmeyer, R-Big Lake. "That's money that couldn't go to something else."

The agency is largely funded through a tax on production of taconite, a low-grade iron ore used to make steel. In response to the audit released to lawmakers on Friday, Phillips said he plans to make several changes, including better monitoring of its grants and loans and a new strategic plan for Giants Ridge. But he also said "rigid contracts" for loans with firm job creation metrics may not ultimately help.

"We will take the report's key recommendations to heart," he said. But a larger issue is lurking behind those problems: The agency's governance structure may be unconstitutional. Nine lawmakers comprise the IRRRB with final approval on spending decisions - an arrangement normally reserved for the executive branch. The audit suggested eliminating the board or having members be appointed by the governor. — AP

AL-DAWLI WINS COMMERZBANK'S AWARD FOR 2015

A NEW TRIUMPH THAT PROVES KIB'S LEADING POSITION

KUWAIT: Once again, Kuwait International Bank affirms its leading position in the Islamic banking industry by winning the Commerzbank's Quality Award for the year 2015 in recognition of its outstanding performance in Straight Through Processing (STP) payments and efficiency in processing international transfers in Euro.

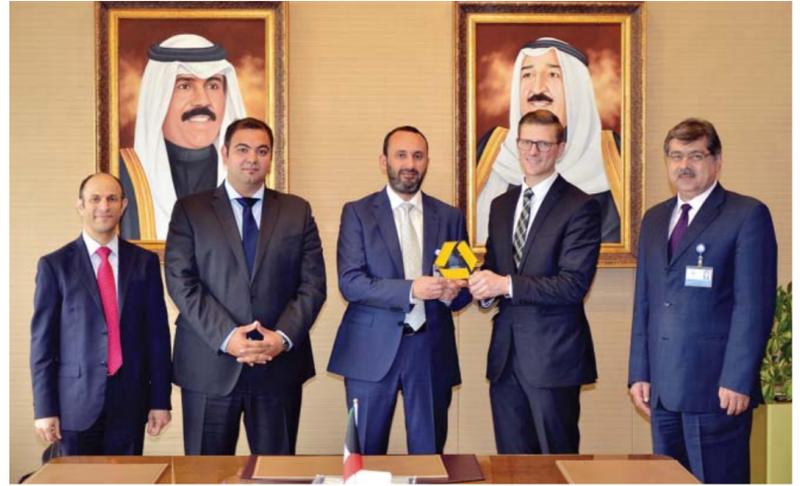
Mohamed Said El Saka, Acting CEO & GM - Financial Control & Planning Department at KIB, commented: "We are very proud to receive this outstanding award that translates the sound success achieved by implementing our new promising transformation strategy at the beginning of this year, which aims at sustaining our leading position locally and abroad by providing quality services that comply with the Islamic Sharia principles".

He added that this award was given to the bank in recognition of its outstanding performance in STP payments and efficiency in processing international transfers that meet our clients' growing needs. He hailed the dedication of the staff that played an important role in achieving the bank's successes, while giving special credit to the operations team headed by Abdulraheem Al-Awadhi,

GM - Corporate Support Department, for their constant hard work and commitment that helped in receiving this prestigious award and positioning the bank at the forefront in its field.

This award is granted to select banks worldwide that meet the strict criteria for processing Euro payments through Commerzbank Bank. In respect of 2015, KIB exceeded the stringent STP performance standards achieving an STP rate of 99.40 percent for the MT103 category of payments.

It's worth noting that Al-Dawli received several prestigious awards in the past few months that strengthen its leading position in the market. KIB earned the JP Morgan Chase 2015 Elite Quality Recognition Award in recognition of its exceptional performance in Straight Through Processing (STP) payments and efficiency in processing international transfers in US dollars at rate of 99.09 percent. Besides, the renowned UK-based financial magazine, World Finance, named the bank "Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait" for the year 2015, and Capital Finance International (CFI) - the specialized magazine in the financial and banking sector - honored KIB with the "Best Sharia-Compliant Bank in the Middle East" Award for the year 2015.



MOHAMED NASER AL-SAYER & TOYOTA CERTIFIED CARS BUILD EXCITEMENT

ANNOUNCES LUCKY WINNER OF THE GRAND RAFFLE DRAW

KUWAIT: Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer and Toyota Certified Cars, one of the Al-Sayer Group Holding Companies have wrapped up the "End of Year" promotion with a grand raffle draw. Khaled Mesfer Marzouk Al-Abdali was selected as the

lucky winner of the draw who won brand new 2015 Toyota Rav4.

According to Johan Heislitz, Senior Business Director Toyota Kuwait "I appreciate the huge participation from all our customer in this pro-

motion making it a big success. Toyota Certified Cars have earned incredible reputation in Kuwait, reflecting same Toyota values of quality, durability and reliability. The latest success is also a testimony of our best in class services and customer care."

The attractive "End of Year" promotion which had commenced on 19 November 2015 lasted till 31 January 2016. During the promotion period customers who bought a Certified Toyota entered a raffle draw to win the grand prize. Apart from this they also benefited with attractive gifts: such as perfume gift set as well as 250 liters of petrol for sedan customers and 500 liters of petrol only for 4x4 customers. In addition to this there were attractive price offers on selected Certified models as well.

Winner of the grand raffle draw Khaled Mesfer Marzouk Al-Abdali said "I am proud and delighted to own a Toyota. Toyota Certified cars offer attractive benefits, value added services and peace of mind. Winning this grand prize doubles the excitement. Rav4 is a stylish crossover sports SUV with great performance and capability. I thank Al-Sayer and Toyota Certified cars for offering this valuable opportunity."



VIVA OFFERS NBK AL-SHABAB VISA PREPAID CARDHOLDERS AN EXCLUSIVE 15% DISCOUNT

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announces a 15 percent special discount for NBK Al-Shabab Visa prepaid cardholders, on monthly voice and internet packages.

With this special offer, NBK Al-Shabab customers will get a 15 percent discount when using their NBK Al-Shabab Visa Prepaid card to pay for their subscription. This exclusive offer also rewards NBK Al-Shabab Visa Prepaid cardholders with VIVA's loyalty program including getting double the loyalty points and 50 welcome points.

VIVA provides its customers with the latest communication technologies as well as offering innovative packages and added-value services with high quality.

VIVA is the fastest-growing telecom

operator in Kuwait. Launched in December 2008, VIVA makes things Possible for its customers by transforming communication, information and entertainment experiences. The company has rapidly established an unrivalled position in the market through its customer centric approach. VIVA's quest is to be the mobile brand of choice in Kuwait by being transparent, engaging, energetic and fulfilling. VIVA continues to take a considerable share of the market by offering an innovative range of best value products, services and content propositions; a state of the art, nationwide network and world-class service. VIVA offers internet speeds of more than 100 Mbps, due to the implementation of the most advanced fourth generation (4G LTE) network in Kuwait resulting in superior coverage, performance and reliability.

GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-DANAH DAILY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 13 March 2016 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 6 March - 10 March 2016. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD1,000 per winner.

The winners are:

(Sunday 6/3): Sadiqa Ali Husain Al-Bululshi, Abdulaziz Ismael Hassan Al-Shatti

(Monday 7/3): Hamdan Jaber Al-Adwany, Mahdi Ahmad Karam Mohammed

(Tuesday 8/3): Maryam Surkham Rustom, Abdulaziz Mohammad Abdulaziz Al-Habeeb

(Wednesday 9/3): Asaf Bader Salim Al-Salim, Fares Jaber Hanoon Njam

(Wednesday 10/3): Abdullah Abdulrazaq Ghadhban Ghanim, Arwa Mousa Jafar Mulla Jomaa

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2016 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day each receive KD1000). Al-Danah's 1st quarterly draw for the prize of KD200,000 will be held on 31 March, the 2nd quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on the 30th of June and the 3rd Quarterly Draw for the prize of KD500,000 will be held on September 29th. The final Al-Danah draw for KD1 million will be held on 5 January, 2017 whereby the

Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:

- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million
- 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000
- 3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day
- 4) The most opportunities to win
- 5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from year to year

Win big, live big, with Al-Danah 2016. Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers who open an account and/ or deposit more will enter the draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2016 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must have an Al-Danah account containing at least KD 200; customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 55 branches, transfer on line, or call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805 for assistance and guidance.

ETIHAD AIRWAYS SIGNS DECLARATION TO HELP PREVENTION OF WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

ABU DHABI: Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, is one of the signatories to the Declaration of the United for Wildlife International Taskforce on the Transportation of Illegal Wildlife Products signed at Buckingham Palace yesterday.

Led by HRH The Duke of Cambridge, the United for Wildlife initiative aims to support efforts to prevent the growing trade in illegal wildlife and products around the world. The taskforce for transportation has identified the specific role that the transport industry can play in helping to support the efforts of what The Duke of Cambridge refers to as 'the race against extinction'.

The ambitious declaration documents eleven commitments which require signatories to commit to supporting global efforts to prevent illegal wildlife smuggling, through putting in place real measures where the transport industry specifically can help shut down routes exploited by traffickers.

James Hogan, Etihad Airways President and Chief Executive Officer, who signed the declaration on behalf of the airline, said: "We recognise the significant role that the airlines can play in preventing the smuggling of wildlife and products. Whilst the airlines cannot act as regulators, we are able to support enforcement authorities and assist in raising passenger awareness. We encourage others in this sector to sign up to this declaration to help

prevent this abhorrent practice."

The declaration focuses on breaking the link between the demand for illegal wildlife products around the world and the escalating poaching crisis in places such as Africa. Airlines are seen as key partners, able to increase passenger awareness, provide capacity building at airports and work closely to support the efforts of customs and law enforcement authorities.

To address the commitments the airline will be working closely with IATA, the global airline association and another signatory to the Declaration, on shared initiatives.

Etihad Airways is also engaged with animal welfare on a broader scale, as part of its efforts to reduce its 'Animal Footprint'. The airline works in partnership with the international wildlife NGO, the Born Free Foundation to ensure the airline's holiday activities and the transportation of animals have a minimal impact on animal welfare and conservation. It is developing policies and programs to reduce this risk.

Etihad Airways began operations in 2003, and in 2014 carried 14.8 million passengers. From its Abu Dhabi base, Etihad Airways flies to or has announced plans to serve 113 passenger and cargo destinations in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas. The airline has a fleet of 120 Airbus and Boeing aircraft, and more than 200 aircraft

on firm order, including 66 Boeing 787s, 25 Boeing 777Xs, 62 Airbus A350s and five Airbus A380s.

Etihad Airways holds equity investments in airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Alitalia, Jet

Airways, Virgin Australia, and Swiss-based Darwin Airline, trading as Etihad Regional. Etihad Airways, along with airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Alitalia, Etihad Regional, Jet Airways and NIKI, also participate in Etihad

Airways Partners, a new brand that brings together like-minded airlines to offer customers more choice through improved networks and schedules and enhanced frequent flyer benefits.



BROOMSTICK FLYING OR RED-LIGHT PING-PONG?

GADGETS AT GERMAN FAIR

HANOVER: Virtual reality and 3D printing are among top technologies showcased by thousands of IT companies attending this year's technology show CeBIT in the northern German city of Hanover. Here are some eye-catching gadgets from the annual fair:

QUIDDITCH ON A BROOMSTICK

Harry Potter fans dying to get a taste of what playing quidditch on a flying broomstick feels like can climb on a plastic lookalike and put on a pair

of virtual reality glasses and earphones offered by LocomotionVR. The German company offers encounters with "dragons, unicorns and magic owls" through its virtual reality technology. Users can imagine scenarios that "do not exist, which are yet to exist or no longer exist," it said.

BELT-TIGHTENING, LITERALLY

A group of students from the University of Applied Sciences at Osnabrueck have created a belt called

Bob that helps its user save money. Linked to a smartphone, the belt tightens itself when the user spends money using his or her mobile phone. To avoid leaving spendthrifts out of breath, Bob stretches back to its original breadth after delivering its message.

RED-LIGHT PING-PONG

For pedestrians who get fidgety while waiting for the green light, German company Urban Invention has

replaced crosswalk signal buttons with touchscreens that offer a modern version of the videogame hit "Pong." The opponent: the pedestrian on the other side of the road.

PRINT YOUR OWN TOYS

Can't find new toys to keep your child entertained? How about letting little ones have fun creating one themselves? TinkerToys offers software allowing a child to make his or her toy, before printing it out with a 3D printer.

Not satisfied with the final product? The bioplastic material is easily recyclable.

AIR QUALITY ARBITRATOR

Too hot? Too humid? Too dusty? Airboxlab created Foobot-a gadget it described as a "good-air guru"-to help the user determine the finer details of air quality-from CO2 levels to optimal temperatures. The device sends the measurements directly to a smartphone. —AFP



BEIJING: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, left, listens as Jack Ma, executive chairman of the Alibaba Group, speaks during a panel discussion held as part of the China Development Forum at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, yesterday. —AP

ZUCKERBERG MEETS PROPAGANDA CZAR IN CHINA CHARM DRIVE

BEIJING: Facebook's co-founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg met China's propaganda czar Liu Yunshan in Beijing yesterday as part of a charm offensive in one of the few markets where the social network cannot be accessed.

The rare meeting, reported by China's state news agency Xinhua, suggests warming relations between Facebook and the Chinese government, even as Beijing steps up censorship of and control over the Internet.

Liu, who sits on the Communist Party's Politburo Standing Committee which is the apex of power in China, praised Facebook's technology and management methods, Xinhua said.

Zuckerberg was in Beijing for the China Development Forum, a government-sponsored conference bringing together top business executives and the country's ruling elite.

China "hopes (Facebook) can strengthen exchanges, share experiences and improve mutual understanding with China's Internet companies", Xinhua quoted Liu as telling Zuckerberg.

Earlier this year, Beijing introduced new rules on online publication, which analysts say may place further curbs on foreign internet businesses trying to operate in China.

Online content publishers should "promote core socialist values" and spread ideas, morals and knowledge that improve the quality of the nation and promote economic development.

Foreign companies in China, especially in media, face political pressure from a range of regulations. The country's military newspaper calls the Internet the most important front in an ideological battle

against "Western anti-China forces".

China, the world's second largest economy, has the biggest Internet population, numbering almost 700 million people.

On Friday, Zuckerberg posted an image of himself running through smog in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, past the portrait of the late Chairman Mao Zedong hanging over the Forbidden City.

The 31-year-old has achieved celebrity status in China, one of the few markets where Facebook and other foreign Internet platforms, including Alphabet Inc's Google services and Twitter Inc, are not available due to tight government controls.

He has long sought to improve his company's relationship with the Chinese authorities, and now sits on the advisory board of the School of Economics and Management at China's elite Tsinghua University.

Zuckerberg began his remarks to the forum in Mandarin, speaking about the promise of artificial intelligence, particularly devices such as self-driving cars and medical diagnostics.

He sidestepped sensitive issues, talking instead about technology and his family.

"The one thing I am extremely optimistic about for China is the emphasis on engineering," Zuckerberg said. He did not respond to a question from Reuters about Facebook's plans to do business in China.

During the forum, Alibaba Group Holdings's Executive Chairman Jack Ma praised Zuckerberg, saying he respected Chinese culture and ran a "great company".

"He respects the Chinese and Oriental culture by instinct," Ma said. "Not because he wants to make money." —Reuters

GOOGLE SPOTLIGHTS RISE IN WEB TRAFFIC ENCRYPTION

SAN FRANCISCO: Google reported that the amount of encrypted online traffic hitting its servers jumped in the past year in a sign of heightened interest in protecting information on the Internet. Google introduced a new encryption, or HTTPS, section in a transparency report released on Tuesday to highlight the need to safeguard data online. Slightly more than 75 percent of requests to Google servers were encrypted as of January in a jump from 50 percent a year earlier, according to the transparency report.

"Implementing encryption is not easy work," Google "HTTPS evangelists" Rutledge Chin Feman and Tim Willis said in a blog post. "But, as more people spend more of their time on the web, it's an increasingly essential element of online security." The encryption section of the report was intended to provide a look at Google's efforts to encourage "everyone" to use the data-scrambling technology on the Internet, according to the post.

All messages sent using Google's free Gmail were encrypted, the report indicated. Google is working to have encryption across all its online products and services. YouTube activity is not encrypted. The vast majority of

unencrypted traffic to Google servers come from mobile devices, many of which might never be updated by makers with improved security, according to the report. Google shone a spotlight on encryption less a week before Apple and the US government are to face off in federal court in Southern California in a legal fight to force the company to break into an attacker's iPhone. Apple on Tuesday filed a written response brief saying the tactic would have appalled the country's founders.

Apple stuck to its argument that the FBI was overstepping legal bounds by using an All Writs Act to compel the company to help break into an iPhone used by one of the shooters in the December terror attack in San Bernardino, California. Apple sees the request as a demand for a "back door" into software powering all iPhones. The government brief, in sharp contrast, argued it is a single case of making a "modest" demand for technical assistance in an important national security investigation. An FBI victory in the case could serve as a legal precedent backing requests for access to iPhones by law enforcement agencies throughout the US. —AFP

TWITTER AN AWKWARD CHILD AS IT TURNS 10

SAN FRANCISCO: As Twitter marks its 10th birthday tomorrow, it is somewhat of an awkward child-having become a powerful communication tool but still struggling to win users and reach profitability.

Since making a star-quality entrance a decade ago, Twitter has become a must-have tool for journalists, activists and celebrities but has struggled to show it can expand beyond its devoted "twitterati" to become a mainstream hit.

While Internet lovers might have trouble envisioning life without Twitter, the San Francisco-based company has seen its stock tank, a chief executive leave, and its staff cut.

Twitter's woes include a slump in its stock price to all-time lows this year-down nearly half from its 2013 stock market debut-and ongoing losses, even as its revenue grows.

Twitter's base of monthly active users remained stuck at 320 million at the end of 2015. While that is a big accomplishment, Twitter has failed to keep pace with fast-growing rivals and to expand beyond its base.

The troubles have forced Twitter to bring back co-founder Jack Dorsey as chief executive, but that has not stemmed rumors about a possible buyout or merger. "It's not dead yet," independent analyst Rob Enderle of the Enderle Group said of Twitter.

"Watching all the metrics, you see they are not getting a lot worse but they don't seem to be getting better either." Some analysts believe Twitter's true value is being demonstrated in the US presidential race, especially by the Republican frontrunner, Donald Trump.

"Eight weeks ago I would have said the days of Twitter are over; I don't say that anymore," Global Equities Research analyst Trip Chowdhry told AFP.

TWITTER HAS 'LEGS'

The analyst said Trump has shown how potent Twitter can be for those who embrace it.

"I think that probably the worst for Twitter is over," Chowdhry said. "This platform has legs."

Chowdhry said Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also used Twitter effectively to win his cam-

paign and Tesla founder Elon Musk has been shaking up the auto sector with the help of the messaging platform. Twitter and other social media have been important tools in movements such as the Arab Spring, and in protests in Turkey, where the government has sought to ban it.

An advantage of Twitter is that it lets users "amplify" messages with tweets that echo on the Internet, and assess public sentiment in real-time by getting quick feedback.

Trump has boosted the number of his followers to nearly seven million, and has managed to beat rivals

Summer Olympics this year may prove pivotal to the success of this strategy," said eMarketer's Martin Utreras.

CHANGE BRINGS RISK

Twitter bears the weight of being measured against Internet titans such as Facebook, which is only a few years older but has eclipsed the billion-user mark.

Flight VC partner Lou Kerner, whose investor group watches emerging companies, said Twitter has done "an amazing job" creating a new communication medium but

has become so cluttered with information that it becomes hard to navigate.

"Twitter is still incredibly relevant when it comes to major cultural events, major news events, the kinds of things people are discussing around the world," said Debra Aho Williamson of eMarketer.

"But anyone who follows just a couple of hundred people can easily be overwhelmed by the amount of information. It becomes work rather than fun," Dorsey currently is managing two firms, Twitter and mobile payments startup Square-both multi-



with a campaign largely based around Twitter.

"I am pretty sure most of his followers are not on Twitter, but they know what he is saying on Twitter," analyst Omar Akhtar of the technology research firm Altimeter Group, said of Trump. "The Twitter effect cannot be ignored. Twitter has a life beyond its platform, the trouble is it doesn't know how to monetize that part." The research firm eMarketer lowered its revenue estimates for Twitter this month, saying its "monetization" efforts-the selling of advertising or "promoted tweets" for those who use the platform without logging in-are falling short.

"Events like the US election and

appears to have leveled off instead of becoming ubiquitous.

"Like any other company, Twitter is judged on growth," Kerner said. "They have stagnated." Even more troubling, Kerner noted, is that engagement at Twitter has been ebbing in an indication that "people have tired of it." While Facebook has evolved with new features, Twitter has changed little since it began, according to Kerner.

"In order to reignite engagement, they would have to make profound changes to what they do," he said.

"The problem is, you can't make a massive change without a massive risk." Some say Twitter has become a victim of its own success-it

billion dollar companies struggling to achieve profitability.

Dorsey said Twitter priorities for this year include making it more intuitive to use; live-streaming video, and making it safer for people to freely express themselves on the platform.

Twitter recently revamped its timeline, allowing the "best" tweets to rise to the top, despite warnings of a revolt from members loyal to the real-time flow of the messaging platform. "If you look at the 10 years as a whole, you will see that Twitter really has revolutionized the way we communicate," Akhtar said.

"To me, it is a utility like electricity or the phone-it is really part of everyday life." —AFP

VIRTUAL REALITY GIRDS FOR TEST IN MARKETPLACE

SAN FRANCISCO: A middle-aged white man sees himself as a young black woman being taunted by a racist. An Israeli grandmother glimpses herself as a Palestinian teen. A star athlete experiences what life would be like in a wheelchair. These are not plots of dystopian movies. They are experiences that take place in virtual reality, which technologists believe will be the next major platform for everything from gaming to social interaction and perhaps even global diplomacy.

Marketers predict VR headsets will soon top wish lists for kids and young adults from the Silicon Valley to Hong Kong. The computer-generated images beamed to devices strapped around a person's head allow users to experience "presence"-the sense that they're entering video games or movies, climbing a

treacherous Vietnamese mountain or scuba diving at a coral reef.

Potential benefits include hands-on teaching with a classroom of far-flung students, or holding a business meeting whose global participants sense they're rubbing elbows. The upcoming rollout of the Oculus Rift-a \$599 headset offering studio-quality VR to the general public-is expected to jump-start industry sales. Sony meanwhile announced at this week's Game Developers Conference in San Francisco it would launch its PlayStation VR headgear priced at \$399 in October. Many others have VR equipment hitting the market. Along with its cousin, augmented reality, VR is forecast as a huge market that could push aside smart phones and computer tablets.

FROM A CALIFORNIA GARAGE

VR has been a dream of futurists and tech geeks for decades. But until recently, devices were relegated to research labs because of their exorbitant cost, clunky construction and quality issues that included motion sickness. At Stanford University's Virtual Human Interaction Lab, experiments were done until 2014 with a \$40,000 device that gave users neck aches; now the lab uses a lightweight Rift at a fraction of the cost.

"I believe in virtual reality and I believed it could be amazing, but that was not a view that was shared by everyone," Rift inventor Palmer Luckey said. The Rift, created in 2011 by Luckey in his parents' California garage when he was 18, uses images and sounds (smell and touch may come later) to convince users' brains they are flying over a city or standing on a skyscraper. At the San Francisco conference, users pivoted to shoot would-be attackers and flinched at imaginary flying objects. "Vision is really important. You rely on it for a majority of your senses," said Jason Rubin, who as head of worldwide studios oversees content development for Oculus. "So if we can take over your eyes, we can get control of your belief system." Oculus, bought by Facebook in 2014 for \$2 billion, is competing with companies such as Google, Samsung and Sony in creating VR devices, with analysts expecting sales of 12 million headsets by the end of this year.

'BIGGER, MORE DISRUPTIVE'

But Tim Merel, founder of technology advisory firm Digi-Capital, says VR will be eclipsed by augmented reality, or AR, within a few years. VR is fully immersive, meaning a user can't walk down a street wearing a headset. AR is partly immersive: a person can do everyday tasks while augmenting them with virtual images, using holograms (such as flying dinosaurs) superimposed on the user's field of vision.

While Merel thinks VR will cannibalize video games and become a \$30 billion market by 2020, he sees AR as taking over the smartphone and tablet market and accounting for \$90 billion in annual sales in the same period. "Our broad view is that AR will be bigger, more disruptive and faster in terms of its effects than mobile was compared to the original Internet," Merel said. While most VR content now focuses on gaming, it has the potential to impact everything from architecture to military training to travel. —AP



WASHINGTON: Eddie Cue, left, Apple's senior vice president of internet software and services, shows his iPhone to people behind him, including Bill Gates, second from right, co-founder of Microsoft as they watch a semifinal at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament. — AP

SYDNEY DARKENS FOR TENTH EARTH HOUR

SYDNEY: Australia's iconic Sydney Opera House and Harbor Bridge went dark on Saturday night, as the Earth Hour campaign to switch off lights to call for action on climate change began rolling out across the planet, organizers said.

Millions of people from 178 countries and territories are expected to take part in WWF's Earth Hour this year, with monuments and buildings such as the Eiffel Tower, Taipei 101 and the Empire State Building plunging into darkness for 60 minutes from 8:30pm local time. In

Sydney, where the Earth Hour idea originated in 2007, many harbor side buildings fell dark as the city switched off for the tenth year in a row.

"We just saw the Sydney Harbor Bridge switch its lights off... and buildings around as well," Earth Hour's Australia manager Sam Webb told AFP from The Rocks area. Earth Hour's global executive director Siddharth Das said organizers were excited about how much the movement had grown since it began in Sydney in 2007.

"From one city it has now grown to over 178 countries and territories and over 7,000 cities so we couldn't be happier about how millions of people across the world are coming together for climate action," he told AFP via telephone from Singapore ahead of the lights out. Das said momentum towards climate action was building in the wake of the global climate talks in Paris last year.

The so-called Paris Agreement sets the goal of limiting global warming to "well below" two degrees Celsius (3.6

degrees Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial levels, with a more ambitious target of 1.5 C if possible. Das said people were experiencing the impact of climate change more now than when Earth Hour began, adding that "climate change has now become a more personal topic."

"No one is denying the fact that the world is at a climate crossroads, but while we are seeing more and more impacts of climate change we are also witnessing a completely new momen-

turn in climate action that is transcending borders and generations," he said. "I feel that there's a renewed vigor among individuals and governments to come together for strong climate action and to fight climate change."

Das said Earth Hour organizers did not collect global statistics on the energy conserved during the 60-minute blackout and that the event has always had symbolic intent, saying it was more a moment of global solidarity about a global problem. — AFP



BEIRUT: Lebanese men play cards and smoke water pipe, as they sunbath during unusually warm weather at the Mediterranean Sea off the Corniche, or waterfront promenade. — AP

NOTHING 'VIRTUAL' ABOUT CLIMATE IMPACT OF EMAILS AND TWEETS

ADJUST LIFESTYLES TO TRIM CARBON FOOTPRINTS

PARIS: Even as people the world over symbolically dim lights to fight global warming on Earth hour, many will join email and social network campaigns that invisibly contribute to climate change. The 10th edition of Earth Day, organized by the WWF and backed by other NGOs to raise awareness about the threat of climate change, will see landmark monuments—from the Eiffel Tower to the Empire State Building to Taipei 101 in Taiwan—go dark at 8:30 pm local time.

Individuals are also encouraged to participate and adjust lifestyles to trim their carbon footprints, thus incrementally reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that drive global warming. Biking or car-pooling to work, eating less meat, turning down the thermostat a notch in winter, becoming an 'eco-responsible' consumer—these are some of the many ways folks can make a small difference, especially in rich countries with higher per-capita CO2 emissions.

Largely unnoticed

At the same time, however, a parallel realm of carbon-polluting activity—ranging from email exchanges to social network chatter to streaming movies on smartphones—has slipped largely unnoticed under the climate change radar. In isolation, these discrete units of our virtual existence seem weightless and without cost.

A short email, for example, is estimated to add about four grams of CO2-equivalent (CO2e) into

the atmosphere. By comparison, humanity emits some 40 billion tons of CO2 every year. But as the digital era deepens, the accumulated volume of virtual messages has become a significant part of humanity's carbon footprint.

"Electricity consumption related to the growth of digital technologies is exploding," notes Alain Anglade of the French Environment and Energy Management Agency. In France it already accounts for more than 10 percent of total electricity use, he said, a percentage that holds for many developed countries. To see the big picture, it helps to break it down.

Sending five dozen of those four-gram emails in a day from your smartphone or laptop, for example, is the equivalent of driving an average-size car a kilometer. The culprits are greenhouse gases produced in running the computer, server and routers, but also include those emitted when the equipment was manufactured. Add a 1-megabyte (MB) attachment—a photo or invitation, say—and the energy consumed would be enough to power a low-wattage lightbulb for two hours. If that email is sent to a mailing list, multiply by the number of recipients.

Cats that look like Hitler

Email tips for the energy-conscious include avoiding unnecessary recipients, slimming the weight of attachments, emptying your trash box. Even not being too verbose is helpful—the carbon

counter is running as someone reads your long-winded missive about that trip to Disney World.

And then there's spam, the notorious canned ham that became a byword for unsolicited advertising. Anti-virus software maker McAfee estimated that upward of 60 trillion spams are sent each year, generating the same greenhouse gas emissions as three million cars using 7.5 billion liters of petrol.

And the next time you look on Google for "cats that look like Hitler" (536,000 hits), remember this: a Web search on an energy-efficient laptop leaves a footprint of 0.2 grams of CO2e. On that clunky desktop, that figure goes up to 4.5 grams. Even no-frills SMS text messages—like the tiniest of atoms—are not without mass, weighing in at about 0.014 grams of CO2e.

And e-readers are not necessarily more eco-friendly than old-fashioned books. It takes about a kilo of CO2e to make an airport paperback, but at least 200 times as much to manufacture an e-reader. That means you would need to read no less than 70 books a year for three years on a digital device to be "carbon neutral" compared to a book.

The WWF has "urged its supporters to take a stand for climate action" by massively using Facebook and Twitter. "Social media knows no physical boundaries and neither does climate change," said Siddharth Das, executive director of the Earth Hour initiative. But it does have a cost, he might add. — AFP

PREHISTORIC PUZZLE NO MORE: ILLINOIS FOSSIL A VERTEBRATE

CHAMPAIGN: For decades, fossil hunters combing the soil near a creek in north-central Illinois have been rewarded with the preserved remnants of a prehistoric creature, its wide-set eyes on stalks and a long, arm-like appendage extending from below them with a pincer-like mouth.

There was no doubt that the Tully monster, Illinois' official state fossil, was "very, very bizarre," said Scott Lidgard, a paleontologist at Chicago's Field Museum. But no one could say exactly what the soft-bodied creature was. That changed Wednesday with a paper published in the journal *Nature*: A group of researchers, Lidgard included, concluded the Tully monster had a precursor to a backbone, making it a vertebrate, or primitive fish.

The origin of vertebrates is still an open question, he said, and there aren't many good examples of preserved, soft-bodied fishes. It's also personally important for Lidgard, who's long been charged with the museum's collection of 1,800 Tully monster fossils, the largest in the world. "I'm pretty excited because I've had to live with this guy, something I wish I knew what it was, for my 32 years here," he said. "And it's been a puzzle."

The fossilized remnants of the Tully monster have not been found outside Illinois, only in the Mazon Creek area, about 50 miles southwest of downtown Chicago. About 300 million years ago, the spot was a warm coastal marsh along a long-gone sea near the equator. This was before the dinosaurs; Tyrannosaurus rex didn't come about until roughly 67 million years ago.

Tully monster

The abundant plant life eventually became coal, and eons later, strip mining dug up piles of earth and shale - and fossilized prehistoric life. Paleontologists consider the area a treasure because of plant and animal life that was, for reasons not fully known, set in stone quickly enough before decay could set in.

An amateur paleontologist named Francis Tully unearthed the first Tully monster in 1958. Thousands of other

examples have since been found by fossil hunters combing the area, much of it now set aside as Mazonia-Braidwood State Fish and Wildlife Area.

Mining faded in the 1970s, and, after decades of fossil hunting, the area does not yield quite as many specimens as it used to, said Colleen Schmidt, an office associate at the state fish and wildlife area. But those who know where to look - "they do have their (secret) spots," Schmidt said - can still find plenty. They leave with oblong nodules of rock, some of which, when broken open, contain fossils; often it's plant life, like prehistoric ferns that are hard to imagine on Illinois' prairie.

The Tully monster fossils show a creature that swam the shallows of that ancient sea and ranged from a few inches long to roughly a foot. There are traces of other, more-familiar animals, Lidgard said, especially the odd mouth and its teeth, known as stylets, that share some characteristics with squids and lampreys. The eye stalks are similar to some snails. But the team of researchers from the museum, Argonne National Laboratory, Yale University and elsewhere focused on some of the fossils' curious raised areas. Those areas were once believed to be remnants of the animal's guts, but that kind of soft tissue would have been pressed flat as it was fossilized, so these areas must have been something harder, more resilient, they thought.

"It has a cartilage skeletal system," Lidgard said the group concluded. "It runs along the midline. Beneath it is the nerve cord ... Sort of a precursor to a spine." Even with the discovery, the Tully monster remains in many ways an enigma. That strange mouth, extended away from its body, may have helped it as a predator, Lidgard said, or maybe it scavenged for food. The wide-set eyes may have given it a greater field of vision for hunting, but no one knows for sure. And Mazon Creek continues to offer more mysteries. "There's an animal called the H animal," named for its odd, H-shaped body, Lidgard said. "We don't know what it is." — AP



This undated reconstruction sketch provided by The Field Museum in Chicago shows what a Tully monster, an oddly configured sea creature.

VOLUNTEERING FOR INFECTION IN HUNT FOR DENGUE, ZIKA VACCINES

WASHINGTON: Forget mosquito bites. Volunteers let researchers inject them with the dengue virus in the name of science - and an experimental vaccine protected them. Next up, scientists plan to use this same strategy against dengue's cousin, the Zika virus.

It's called a human challenge, a little-known but increasing type of research where healthy people agree to be deliberately infected in the quest for new or improved vaccines against a variety of health threats, from flu to malaria. Wednesday's dengue study offered more evidence that what sounds bizarre not only can be done safely, it can offer important clues for how well a shot might work.

"What we're trying to do is accelerate vaccine research," said senior author Dr. Anna Durbin of Johns Hopkins University's school of public health. It may be the best way "to know if you have a stinker before you try to test it in thousands or tens of thousands of people." The dengue candidate proved highly promising, researchers reported in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*.

Dengue fever may have slipped from the headlines as the related Zika virus sweeps through Latin America, but every year mosquito-borne dengue causes devastating outbreaks throughout the tropics and subtropics. While most people survive dengue with few or even no symptoms, more than 2 million a year suffer serious illness and about 25,000 die.

Creating a vaccine has been tough. It must work against four separate strains of dengue, and a shot that's only partially protective might backfire. That's because people who survive one type of dengue can suffer worse symptoms if they're later infected with another strain.

Enter an experimental vaccine created at the National Institutes of Health, made from four live but weakened dengue strains. Initial studies had suggested the shots were safe and promising. But, "we really wanted to have an early clue that it was going to work," especially against the hard-to-prevent dengue serotype 2, said Dr. Stephen Whitehead of NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who led the vaccine development.

Striking results

Researchers at Hopkins and the University of Vermont gave 41 healthy people who'd never been exposed to dengue either a single dose of the vaccine or a dummy shot. Six months later, those volunteers were challenged - injected with a weakened version of that dengue-2 strain.

The results were striking: All 21 people who'd gotten the real vaccine were completely protected - while all 20 who'd gotten a placebo had dengue virus in their bloodstream and either a mild rash or a temporary drop in white blood cell count, researchers reported Wednesday. This kind of study mimics "the closest that it can be to what may happen in natural infection," said Dr. Nikos Vasilakis, a virologist at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, who wasn't involved in the new work but calls the NIH shot "one of the better vaccine candidates." Based in part on the findings, the Butantan Institute in Brazil last month began recruiting 17,000 people, ages 2 to 59, for the final testing needed to prove how well the NIH vaccine works against dengue in real-world conditions, when it is spread by mosquitoes. A competing vaccine, made by Sanofi Pasteur, recently was approved by Brazilian regulators for ages 9 to 45. — AP

HAWAII AIR FORCE UNIT GETTING A POWER GRID THAT USES TRASH

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM: The Air Force unit that defends Hawaii skies will get experimental energy technology that uses trash to generate power and relies on its own small electrical grid - a system intended to keep the unit operating if a bomb, cyberattack or natural disaster knocks out the local utility.

The Air Force Research Laboratory is spending \$6.8 million on a facility that will produce electricity for the Hawaii Air National Guard unit that flies F-22s, the nation's most advanced fighter jet. Under the plan, the facility and accompanying microgrid would be able to break off and operate independently from Hawaiian Electric.

The project will mark one of the first such uses of a microgrid on an Air Force base and the largest test yet of the trash-to-power system. The system is being tested on a small scale in Illinois. US Cyber

Command chief Adm. Michael Rogers has warned it's a matter of when, not if, attackers will target US power systems. A cyberattack on Ukrainian power companies last year highlighted the vulnerability of power grids.

Retired Brig Gen Stan Osserman, a former Hawaii Air National Guard commander who leads a state agency working on renewable energy technology, said the airman must be able to do their job regardless of the circumstances. "If their buildings go off power, or if (Hawaiian Electric) has a cyberattack, or if we have a big hurricane that wipes out all their power lines, these guys still have the mission to do," Osserman said. "It doesn't stop."

Independent power

The ability to generate power independently is key because utilities normally must shut down the

entire grid to safely repair a damaged part. The Hawaii waste-to-energy facility would take plastics, green waste and other trash from the sprawling joint Air Force and Navy base that includes Pearl Harbor and Hickam Field.

It could process as much as 10 tons of trash each day, providing a convenient way to dispose of trees, shrubs and other organic waste that currently must be kept on base to avoid spreading an infestation of coconut rhinoceros beetles, an invasive bug that bores into palm trees.

The facility would also reduce the use of fossil fuel in a state that generates most of its electricity from oil imported on container ships, something that gives Hawaii some of the highest energy costs in the nation.

A similar system could be used on battlefields, said Lt. Col. Scott V. Fitzner, chief of the research laboratory's acquisitions systems support branch. It could allow the Air Force to consider all consumer products sent into a battlefield as fuel and reduce the need for diesel supply convoys that are susceptible to roadside bombs.

Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at the Lexington Institute, noted the military's response to the cyber threat against electrical utilities is very uneven. "The single most important thing that needs to be done is the military must have senior guidance as to what its cyber defense plans are for assuring electrical power. As of today, the utilities are not going to be reliable protectors of their grids because most of them don't think this is a big problem," Thompson said.

The military also doesn't have the authority to tell private utilities what they should do to protect themselves. Fitzner said the Hawaii project will allow the Air Force research lab to evaluate different technologies and determine what makes sense in other areas of the world. "We just can't tolerate not having energy in certain circumstances," Fitzner said. — AP



PEARL HARBOR: Stan Osserman, director of the Hawaii Center for Advanced Transportation Technologies, speaks in front of a new waste to energy facility. — AP

IN DEATH, A CROW'S BIG BRAIN FIRES UP MEMORY, LEARNING

SEATTLE: For nearly every step of his almost 12-mile walk, Darryl Dyer has company. Flocks of crows follow him, signaling each other, because they all know that he's the guy with the peanuts. "They know your body type. The way you walk," Dyer said. "They'll take their young down and say: 'You want to get to know this guy. He's got the food.'"

Scientists for years have known that crows have great memories, that they can recognize a human face and behavior, and can pass that information onto

their offspring. Nowadays, researchers are trying to understand more about the crow's brain and behavior, specifically what it does when the birds see one of their own die. They react loudly to the dead, but the reasons aren't entirely known.

Among the guesses is that they are mourning; given that crows mate for life, losing a partner could be a significant moment for the social animals. There are anecdotes of crows placing sticks and other objects on dead birds - a funeral of sorts.

Complex social relationships
Using masks that look creepy human, researchers showed up at Seattle parks carrying a stuffed crow. They recorded the reactions. It takes one crow to signal an alarm, and then dozens show up. They all surround the dead crow, looking at it as they perch on trees or fly above it, a behavior called mobbing.

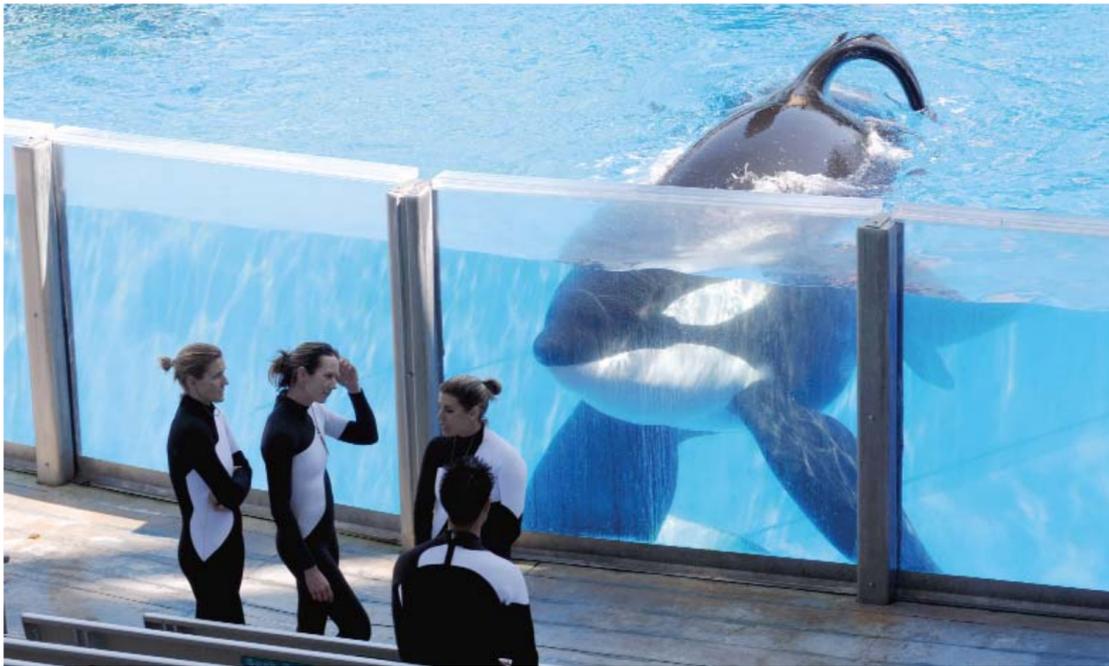
"Crows have evolved to have these complex social relationships, and they have a big brain," said Kaeli Swift, a University of Washington graduate student who led the study. How big of a

brain? Crows are on par with smart mammals, like dolphins and primates, in brain-to-body proportion. They have been known to be problem solvers and are among the few animals recorded to use tools.

In another part of the experiment, using slightly radioactive tracers, researchers measured the brain activity of crows after they were shown a dead bird. The scans showed the section of the hippocampus - the part involved in memory formation - light up at the sight of death. "In that particular situation at

least, that crow was learning about a place, or a face, or a situation and associated it with that dead crow," said John Marzluff, the lead researcher.

To Marzluff, this and upcoming research on crows highlight a special relationship humans have with a bird that has thrived in its cities and civilization. "When you see its brain is using the same parts of the brain to remember things that we do, or to learn fearful situations like we do, maybe it gives you a little more sympathy to the bird, or maybe kinship with the bird," he said. — AP



ORLANDO: In this Monday, March 7, 2011, file photo, killer whale Tilikum, right, watches as SeaWorld Orlando trainers take a break during a training session at the theme park's Shamu Stadium. — AP

SEAWORLD STOPS ORCA BREEDING, MAKING THEM PERFORM TRICKS

ORLANDO: After years of pressure, SeaWorld made a surprise announcement on Thursday: It no longer breeds killer whales in captivity and will soon stop making them leap from their pools or splash audiences on command.

Surrendering finally to a profound shift in how people feel about using animals for entertainment, the SeaWorld theme parks have joined a growing list of industries dropping live animal tricks. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is retiring all of its touring elephants in May. Once-popular animal shows in Las Vegas have virtually disappeared.

"Society's attitude toward these very, very large, majestic animals under human care has shifted for a variety of reasons, whether it's a film, legislation, people's comments on the Internet," said SeaWorld Entertainment CEO Joel Manby. "It wasn't worth fighting that. We needed to move where society was moving." SeaWorld's 29 killer whales will remain in captivity, but in "new, inspiring natural orca encounters," according to the company. SeaWorld's orcas range in age from 1 to 51 years old, so some could remain on display for decades.

Attendance at SeaWorld's parks declined after the 2013 release of "Blackfish," a highly critical documentary. Some top musical acts dropped out of SeaWorld-sponsored concerts at the urging of animal rights activists, who kept up a visible presence demonstrating outside the parks' gates. Still, the decision shocked advocates who have spent

decades campaigning against keeping marine mammals captive, and it represents a sharp U-turn from SeaWorld's previous reaction to the documentary.

In August 2014, SeaWorld announced major new investments in the orca program, including new, larger tanks, first in San Diego and then at its parks in Orlando and San Antonio, Texas. But the California Coastal Commission didn't approve the \$100 million expansion until last October, and when it did, it banned orca breeding as part of the decision. SeaWorld sued, arguing that the commission overstepped its authority, but said it would end its San Diego orca shows by 2017.

'Blackfish'

Meanwhile, SeaWorld brought in a new leader with more experience in regional theme parks than zoos and aquariums, which have been fending off such protests for decades. Manby was hired as SeaWorld CEO last March 19 after running Dollywood and other musically-themed parks. He said Thursday that he brought a "fresh perspective" to the killer whale quandary, and soon realized that "society is shifting here."

Orcas have been a centerpiece of the SeaWorld parks since shows at the Shamu stadium in San Diego became the main draw in the 1970s. But criticism has steadily increased in the decades since and then became sharper after an orca named Tilikum battered and drowned trainer Dawn

Brancheau after a "Dine with Shamu" show in Orlando in 2010.

Her death was highlighted in "Blackfish," and it wasn't the first for Tilikum. The whale also killed an animal trainer and a trespasser in the 1990s. "Blackfish" director Gabriela Cowperthwaite said she applauds SeaWorld's decision, "but mostly I applaud the public for recalibrating how they feel ethically about orcas in captivity."

The new orca shows will begin next year at the San Diego park, before expanding to its San Antonio park and then to Orlando in 2019, Manby said. What about shows involving dolphins and other marine mammals? "Stay tuned on that," Manby said. "A lot of people don't understand how hard it is internally to make these kinds of decisions. We need to execute this well. We need to make sure we have the organization in the same direction. Then we will apply those learnings elsewhere."

SeaWorld has not only discontinued breeding orcas through artificial insemination; it also feeds the whales birth control medication, Manby said. One of SeaWorld's most prolific breeders has been Tilikum. The 35-year-old whale has sired 14 calves during his 23 years in Orlando, but he's gravely ill now and not expected to live much longer.

"So you're saying you're ending your breeding program? Well, guess what? Your breeding program is ending anyhow. I think it's green washing," said Ric O'Barry, who directs the DolphinProject.net advocacy group. — AP

GRANDPA JOINS SPACE STATION

BAIKONUR: Three new crew members have joined the International Space Station, including a US grandfather who is poised to enter the record books during his time there, NASA said.

The Russian spacecraft carrying the astronauts docked at 0309 GMT yesterday some 407 kilometers above the Pacific Ocean, off the western coast of Peru, according to the American space agency.

Just over two hours later, crewmates Oleg Skripochka and Alexey Ovchinin of Russia, plus Jeff Williams, a US grandfather of three who is a veteran of long-duration space missions, floated into the orbital outpost after hatches were opened to allow their entry. "Welcome to @Space_Station! Hatches are opened and the crew onboard grows from 3 to 6 members," NASA tweeted.

According to NASA, the trio orbited the earth four times in their approximately six-hour journey to the ISS. "Can't believe we just left the planet and we're here already," said Williams, in a call to friends and family gathered back on Earth, which was broadcast online by NASA TV.

By the end of his half-year trip aboard the ISS, Williams "will become the American with the most cumulative days in space — 534," NASA said. Williams is also now the first American to be a three-time, long-term ISS resident, the US agency said. The rocket took off in windy conditions from Russia's space base in Kazakhstan at 2126 GMT Friday. The craft is decorated with a portrait of the first man in space, Soviet hero Yuri Gagarin, whose pioneering orbital flight was made nearly 55 years ago, on April 12 1961.

Williams to break Kelly record

The previous US record for most cumulative days in space was set by astronaut Scott Kelly earlier this year. Kelly, 52, spent nearly a year in space and returned to Earth

earlier this month with a total of 520 days in space, as part of an experiment to test the effects of long-duration spaceflight on the body and mind ahead of a potential future mission to Mars.

The all-time record for cumulative days spent in space is held by Russian cosmonaut Gennady Padalka, who racked up 879 days over his career and wrapped up his final mission in September 2015. Before arriving at the space station, Williams had notched up over 362 days in space, including three spacewalks.

His previous missions were flown aboard the space shuttle Atlantis in 2000, as well as a trip in 2006 when the station was far smaller-with only two modules and three crew members. In 2009 and 2010, Williams served as a flight engineer for three months and later commanded the ISS for the remainder of his half-year mission.

Williams, Skripochka and Ovchinin joined US astronaut Tim Kopra, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Malenchenko and the European Space Agency's British astronaut Tim Peake at the ISS to continue Expedition 47. Over five months the crew will conduct more than 250 science investigations in fields ranging from biology to technology development, NASA said.

Among these will be a test of the effects of a large fire in space, carried out by setting off a blaze inside an orbiting unmanned space craft. The astronauts will also study how soil behaves in microgravity and test a gripping device for use in harsh space conditions that was inspired by geckos. The ISS has been orbiting the Earth at roughly 28,000 kilometers per hour since 1998 and has been continuously occupied since the first expedition in November 2000. Space is one of few areas of cooperation between Moscow and the West that has not been disrupted by tensions connected to violence and separatism in Ukraine. — AFP



BAIKONUR: In this photo taken with long time exposure the Soyuz-FG rocket booster with Soyuz TMA-20M capsule carrying a new crew to the International Space Station, ISS, blasts off. — AP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

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—Photos by Joseph Shagra

TASTE OF Q8 FOOD FESTIVAL HELD AT MARINA CRESCENT

By Faten Omar

The Taste of Q8 food festival, the biggest consumer event in Kuwait, was inaugurated recently. The three-day event took place at Marina Crescent from 17-19 March, 2016. The event celebrated Kuwait's great culinary diversity and offered visitors the opportunity to experience items from many different cuisines, presented by local restaurants, bakers and gourmet grocers, as well as seeing live

cooking demonstrations presented by celebrity chefs. Around 50 restaurants and cafes participated in the festival. The event also featured a 'kid's zone', shopping booths, farmer's market, music and entertainment, as well as VIP lounges.

Tim Hollands, a participant, told Kuwait Times about his participation in Taste Q8 food festival. "I am from Victoria; a state in the south-east of Australia," he said. "I was born in Tokyo, Japan and have been living there for 13 years.

That is where my cooking style came from; when I was exposed to the Japanese food. I was really lucky to come to Kuwait. My family and I were excited to come here because I have never been to the Middle East before."

Hollands pointed out that the Taste Q8 food festival is a very well run event where people can meet with international chefs from all over the world. He added that people in Kuwait are friendly and welcoming, adding that this is his third Arab country to visit after the United Arab

Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

About 'Dairy Australia', he said that it is the national services body for the dairy industry in his country. Their role is to help farmers adapt to a changing operating environment, and achieve a profitable, sustainable dairy industry. It acts as the 'investment arm' of the industry, investing in projects that cannot be done efficiently by individual farmers or companies. The dairy supply chain is highly interdependent. Each sector, from farming to processing and

exporting, relies on the other to generate business. A key role for Dairy Australia is investing across the supply chain to facilitate profitable partnerships.

Tim Hollands is sponsored by the Australian Embassy. He is the owner and head chef of Tims Foods and Tim Hollands Catering. He provides specialized consultation to major food industry companies throughout Australia. HBIS mission is to bring Australian products to the table informatively and fashionably.

JUMEIRAH MESSILAH BEACH HOTEL AND SPA WELCOMES FAMILIES FOR MOTHER'S DAY



Celebrate Mother's Day at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa with special treats and surprises across the resort. Choose from a number of dining experiences, or spa breaks in the surroundings of this luxurious resort.

The hotel's award-winning chefs are treating mothers and their families to a special buffet on Monday 21 March at the international all-day dining restaurant Garden Café. The lavish buffet is priced at 19.5 KWD per person. For every booking of five persons and above, one mother will enjoy a complimentary lunch buffet.

General Manager, Hakan Petek, said: "Year after year, we dedicate this day at our hotel as a tribute to mothers in Kuwait. On this occasion we would like to welcome our guests and their mothers to celebrate together in sheer luxury and comfort in our idyllic resort."

Talise Spa, the renowned luxurious haven for relaxation, is offering guests a luxurious day filled with pampering. Tailored with mothers in mind, the Mother's Day Renewal experience offers a 90-minute combination of a welcoming foot ritual, followed by a soothing full body massage and concludes with a divine renew facial all priced at KD70.

MAXXIS REWARDS LOYAL CUSTOMERS

Gulfex Al-Babtain the exclusive agent for Maxxis tires in the state of Kuwait run a "Maxxis" Exclusive Promotional campaign announcing Six exciting prizes through raffle draws with an objective of promoting Maxxis brand of tires across Kuwait and seeking its loyal customers' satisfaction as always.

The six raffle draw prizes offered by Maxxis Al-Babtain includes Grant Raffle of \$2,000 cash and five iPhone 6s. Every customer who purchases four Maxxis passenger tires receives a coupon which entitles him/her to enter the raffle draw.

Maxxis tires holds its brand ranking amongst the top ten brands in the world due to its very high quality standards in terms of performance, reliability and safety, maintained in line with other international brands. Maxxis Al-Babtain partnership will continue offering the best in class products and an unbeatable after sales service to all segments of motorists, through Gulfex Al-Babtain's state of art retail outlets located at strategic locations across the state of Kuwait.



Greetings



Happy birthday to Arnold - may God guide and protect you as you continue to be a blessing to the family. Greetings from dad, mom, Aunty Chinenye, Aunty Oluchi, Brother Nnaemeka, uncle Willy and family, uncle Tony, Uncle Martins, friends and well-wishers.



—Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

HOURANI EXHIBITS QALANDIA - 2067 AT CONTEMPORARY ART PLATFORM

By Faten Omar

Palestinian artist Wafa Hourani visited Kuwait to install Contemporary Art Platform's (CAP) latest acquisition: Qalandia - 2067. The Qalandia series (2006-2009) particularly expresses the involvement of the artist through the vision of a Palestinian reality projected a hundred years after the great events of its history: the Palestinian exodus (Qalandia 2047), the six-day war (Qalandia 2067) and the first Intifada (Qalandia 2087).

"Emblematic of the artist production, the works which reconstitute one of the main

check-points and Palestinian refugee camps as an architectural model were separately exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery in London," said Fatma Al-Saffar, CAP Gallery Coordinator. "And then Amer Al-Hunaidi bought the Qalandia - 2067 model to remain in CAP. So that is the first Palestinian refugee camp model in Kuwait."

Saffar told Kuwait Times that Hourani came to Kuwait for five days to install the artwork and talk about the concept and development of this major installation from 2008. She further pointed out that CAP, a non-profit art center, aims to encourage and support emerging or established artists and any art

lover by organizing art exhibitions as well as offering a public arts library, a studio space, workshops, lectures and film screenings.

The story

The story of Qalandia 2067 began when Hourani saw Qalandia refugee camp in December 1961. When he did fieldwork in Palestine/Israel in 1984-85, he drove by it, on his way between Ramallah and Jerusalem. In summer 2008, his last trip, he waited for long periods at the checkpoint, which is the site of a huge Israeli checkpoint that controls travel between East Jerusalem (annexed by Israel in 1967) and the West

Bank. So he builds a model of the checkpoint, and one of the separation apartheid walls at Qalandia.

Wafa Hourani, based in Ramallah, Palestine, combines photography and sculpture in future cities to address the social, political and economic realities of Palestinian life, developing grim and apocalyptic predictions for the residents of the West Bank. Qalandia - 2067 takes its name from the main checkpoint crossing through the West Bank Security Barrier which divides the cities of Ramallah and Ar Ram; a site of political unrest and human rights concerns. Dating his piece 2067 - one hundred years

after the Arab-Israeli Six Day War - Hourani has constructed five scale models envisioning the future of a refugee camp, which seems to have regressed with time, rather than evolved. Basing each segment on an actual site - the airport, border crossing, and 3 settlements - the buildings are rendered as war-ravaged and crumbling, crowned by implausibly archaic remnants of TV antennae. Each building is a miniature light-box illuminating glimpses into the private lives of the residents. The film strips, placed in the windows, are an unnerving reminder that this science fiction horror is, for many, an everyday experience.



OOREDOO HONORS HALA FEBRUARY ORGANIZERS, PRESENTS GRAND PRIZES TO LUCKY WINNERS

Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of international Ooredoo Group, has recently conducted an awards ceremony to present Hala February Shopping Festival lucky winners with their prizes. The Awards ceremony was held at Ooredoo's headquarters in Kuwait City.

Hala February is the biggest annual festival

in Kuwait which attracts nationals, residents as well as visitors from the region, Ooredoo's partnership with Hala February reflects the company's belief in its social responsibility toward the community and in the importance of effectively taking part in national events and activities.

On this occasion, Ooredoo's Director of

Corporate Communications, Mijbil Alayoub said: "I would like to also congratulate all lucky winners of the renowned Hala February Shopping festival, which was conducted in Kuwait's mall throughout the festival period, and thank them for joining our ceremony today" added Alayoub.

30 Lucky winners of Hala February

Shopping Festival draws won grand prizes, where 15 of them won cars presented by Northern Gulf Trading Company, Hyundai's sole agent in Kuwait and the other 15 won 1000 KD cash prizes presented by Ooredoo. Two of the lucky winners entered the draw after purchasing from Ooredoo branches and automatically entered the draw.

The massive national event included cultural, religious, entertainment and sports activities, such as Hala February camp in Bneider, five musical concerts, Hala February Carnival, Shopping Festival, Hala February Marthom in addition to The Graffiti 'For the Love of Kuwait' competition and The Equestrian Championship.



amc

01:20 Once Upon A Time In Queens
03:00 To Kill For
04:35 The Kentuckian
06:20 Rich Kids
07:55 Little Sister
09:30 Waking Up In Reno
11:05 Of Mice And Men
12:55 Sharks' Treasure
14:30 The Aviator
16:05 One More Time
17:40 Agent Cody Banks
19:20 Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination London
21:00 The Joshua Tree
22:40 Geronimo: An American

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:50 River Monsters
01:45 Alien Sharks: Close Encounters
02:40 Monster Croc Invasion
03:35 Tanked
04:25 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
04:50 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
05:15 Gator Boys
06:02 Treehouse Masters
06:49 Monster Croc Invasion
07:36 Monkey Life
08:00 Monkey Life
08:25 Animal Maternity Ward
09:15 Monster Croc Invasion
10:10 Treehouse Masters
11:05 Tanked
12:00 Animal Maternity Ward
12:55 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
13:50 Monster Croc Invasion
14:45 Gator Boys
15:40 Treehouse Masters
16:35 Tanked
17:30 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
18:00 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
18:25 River Monsters
19:20 Gator Boys
20:15 Tanked
21:10 Into The Pride
22:05 Treehouse Masters
23:00 Gator Boys
23:55 Gator Boys

BBC FIRST

00:40 Doctor Foster
01:35 Happy Valley
02:30 Happy Valley
03:20 Casualty
04:15 Frankie
05:05 Death In Paradise
06:00 Eastenders
06:30 Casualty
07:25 Frankie
08:20 Call The Midwife
09:15 Doctor Who
10:05 Casualty
10:55 Death In Paradise
11:50 Frankie
12:45 Call The Midwife
13:45 Doctor Who
14:35 Casualty
15:25 Frankie
16:20 Call The Midwife
17:20 Doctor Who
18:05 Doctors
18:40 Doctors
19:10 Death In Paradise
20:05 Unforgotten
21:50 Luther
22:50 Death In Paradise
23:45 Doctors

Blooming TELEVISION

00:00 What'd You Miss?
01:00 Charlie Rose
02:00 First Up With Angie Lau
03:00 First Up With Angie Lau
04:00 Trending Business
05:00 Trending Business
06:00 Asia Edge
07:00 Bloomberg West

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05:00 Trending Business
06:00 Asia Edge
07:00 Bloomberg West



FAST & FURIOUS 6 ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

08:00 Charlie Rose
09:00 Countdown
10:00 Countdown
10:30 On The Move
11:30 On The Move
12:00 The Pulse
13:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
14:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
15:00 Bloomberg Go
16:00 Bloomberg Go
17:00 Bloomberg Go
18:00 Bloomberg Markets
19:00 Bloomberg Markets
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 The Heat
02:30 News Update
03:00 Global Business
03:00 News Update
03:00 Dialogue
03:30 News Hour
04:00 Global Business
04:00 News Update
10:30 Sports Scene
11:00 Global Business
12:00 News Update
12:30 Culture Express
13:00 Africa Live
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 The Heat
20:00 Africa Live
21:00 Global Business
21:30 Dialogue
22:00 News Update
22:15 China 24
23:00 News Update
23:15 World InSight

CNBC

01:00 Inside China
01:30 Managing Asia
02:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
03:00 Asia Squawk Box
05:00 Asia Street Signs
07:00 Report
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

crime & investigation network

00:00 Gangsters: America's Most Evil
01:00 The Killer Speaks
02:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
03:00 Diabolical Women
04:00 The First 48
05:00 The Killer Speaks
06:00 Gangsters: America's Most Evil
07:00 The FBI Files
08:00 The FBI Files
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 Beyond Scared Straight
11:00 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
12:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
14:00 The First 48
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 Deadly Wives
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 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
23:00 Monster In My Family

Discovery CHANNEL HD

00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 Gold Rush
02:00 Diamond River Hunters
02:50 Pacific Warriors
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
09:40 Garage Gold
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Chasing Classic Cars
10:35 Gold Rush
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12:15 Pacific Warriors
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Discovery CHANNEL HD

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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
09:40 Garage Gold
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Chasing Classic Cars
10:35 Gold Rush
11:25 Diamond River Hunters
12:15 Pacific Warriors
13:05 What's In The Barn?
13:30 The Liquidator
13:55 Garage Gold
14:20 Flying Wild Alaska

Discovery CHANNEL HD

00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 Gold Rush
02:00 Diamond River Hunters
02:50 Pacific Warriors
03:40 What's In The Barn?
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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?
17:40 The Island With Bear Grylls
18:30 Men, Women, Wild
19:20 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
20:10 The Liquidator
20:35 Garage Gold
21:00 The Island With Bear Grylls
21:50 Men, Women, Wild
22:40 So You Think You'd Survive?
23:30 Wheeler Dealers

ID. INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY

00:40 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
01:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
01:30 The Haunted
02:20 Ghost Lab
03:10 Swamp Murders
04:00 China 24
04:00 True Nightmares
04:45 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
05:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
05:30 The Haunted
06:20 Fatal Encounters
06:50 Fatal Encounters
07:10 On The Case With Paula Zahn
08:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner
08:50 On The Case With Paula Zahn
09:40 Fatal Encounters
10:30 Murder Shift
11:20 Deadly Affairs
12:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
13:00 The Will

13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 California Investigator
15:05 Dr. G. Medical Examiner
15:55 Fatal Encounters
16:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn
17:35 Murder Shift
18:25 I Almost Got Away With It
19:15 The Will
20:05 Deadly Affairs
20:55 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
21:45 California Investigator
22:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
22:35 Who On Earth Did I Marry?

DISCOVERY SCIENCE

00:35 Race To Escape
01:20 How It's Made
01:44 How It's Made
02:08 You Have Been Warned
02:55 Cosmic Collisions
03:42 Science Of The Movies
04:29 Race To Escape
05:16 You Have Been Warned
06:03 Cosmic Collisions
06:50 Unchained Reaction
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 Unchained Reaction
10:38 How It's Made
11:00 How It's Made
11:23 Mega Builders
12:08 Cosmic Collisions
12:53 Unchained Reaction
13:38 Race To Escape
14:23 How It's Made
14:46 How It's Made
15:10 Science Of The Movies
15:57 Mega Builders
16:44 Cosmic Collisions
17:31 Unchained Reaction
18:18 Science Of The Movies
19:05 Race To Escape
19:50 Food Factory
20:15 Food Factory
20:40 How The Universe Works
21:25 How It's Made
21:50 How It's Made
22:15 Science Of The Movies
23:00 Food Factory
23:22 Food Factory
23:45 How The Universe Works

Discovery world

00:40 HMS Ark Royal
01:30 Zero Hour
02:20 Origins
02:40 Chasing Classic Cars
03:05 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
03:50 Bush Plots
04:35 Collapse: When Structures Fail
05:20 Extreme Engineering
06:05 Codes And Conspiracies
06:50 HMS Ark Royal
07:35 Origins
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
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Discovery world

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23:00 Origins
23:25 Origins
23:50 Codes And Conspiracies

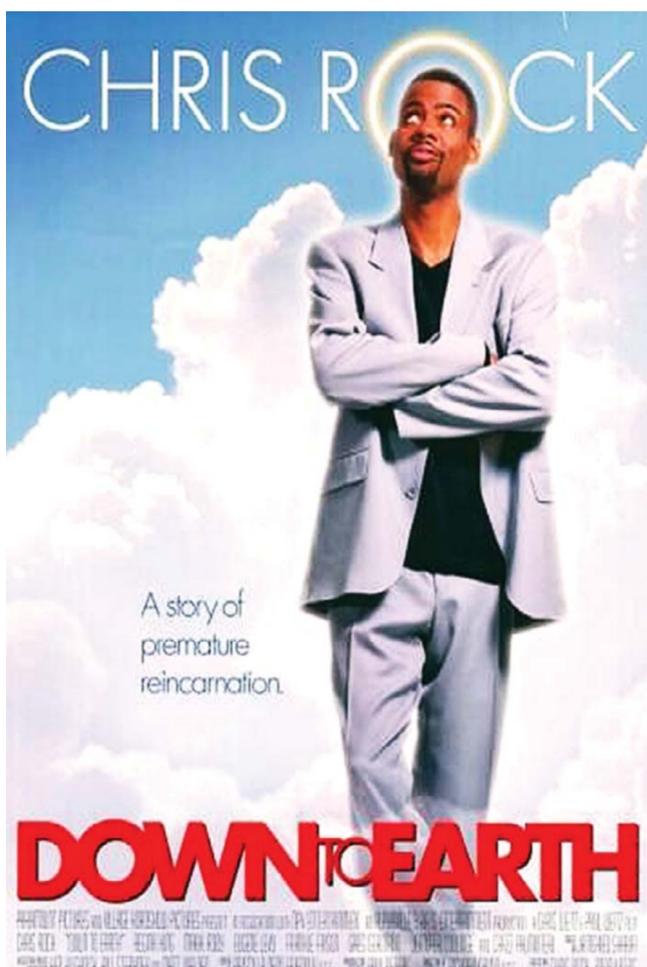
Disney JUNIOR

00:05 Henry Hugglemonster
00:20 Calimerio
00:35 Zou
00:50 Loopeddoo
01:05 Art Attack
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster
01:45 Calimerio
02:00 Zou
02:15 Loopeddoo
02:30 Art Attack
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Calimerio
03:20 Zou
03:30 Loopeddoo
03:45 Art Attack
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
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04:45 Loopeddoo
05:00 Art Attack
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
05:35 Calimerio
05:50 Zou
06:00 Loopeddoo
06:15 Art Attack
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
06:50 Calimerio
07:00 Zou
07:20 Loopeddoo
07:35 Art Attack
08:00 Calimerio
08:10 Zou
08:25 Loopeddoo
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
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14:50 Doc McStuffins
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15:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
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22:50 Gummi Bears
23:20 Lilo And Stitch
23:50 Zou

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00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
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01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
02:05 Binnie And The Ghost
02:30 Violetta
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03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binnie And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Loirock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
07:40 Jessie
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 That's So Raven
09:20 That's So Raven
09:45 Austin & Ally
10:10 Austin & Ally
10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:00 A.N.T. Farm
11:50 Jessie
12:15 Cars Toons

00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
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10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:00 A.N.T. Farm
11:50 Jessie
12:15 Cars Toons



DOWN TO EARTH ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

12:20 Miraculous Tales Of 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 Violetta
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 Violetta
20:20 The Next Step
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O
22:00 Binnie And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer

00:05 Henry Hugglemonster
00:20 Calimerio
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11:00 A.N.T. Farm
11:50 Jessie
12:15 Cars Toons

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 Boyster
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 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
15:40 Wander Over Yonder
16:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
16:30 Kirby Buckets
16:55 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:25 K. C. Undercover
17:50 Supa Strikas
18:15 Lab Rats
18:40 Mighty Med
19:10 Annedroids
19:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
20:00 Kirby Buckets
20:25 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:55 K. C. Undercover
21:20 Pickle And Peanut
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Mighty Med
22:40 Super Matrak
23:05 Super Matrak
23:30 Boyster

00:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
01:25 The Grace Helbig Show
01:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
02:20 E! News
03:15 Hollywood Cycle
04:10 The E! True Hollywood Story
05:05 E! Entertainment Special
06:00 Kourtney And Kim Take Miami
06:55 Kourtney And Kim Take Miami
07:50 Style Star
08:20 E! News
09:15 Giuliana & Bill
10:15 Giuliana & Bill
11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
12:05 E! News
13:05 House Of D'Vey
14:05 Fashion Bloggers
14:30 Fashion Bloggers
15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
17:00 Giuliana & Bill
18:00 Fashion Police
19:00 WAGs
20:00 Christina Milian Turned Up
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
22:00 E! News

00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes
02:00 Mystery Dinners
02:30 Mystery Dinners
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
05:00 Iron Chef America
06:00 Chopped
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:50 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

00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes
02:00 Mystery Dinners
02:30 Mystery Dinners
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
05:00 Iron Chef America
06:00 Chopped
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:50 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

02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Big Star's Little Star
03:25 Tracey Ullman's Show
03:55 Raised By Wolves
04:20 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
05:15 Come Dine With Me Couples
06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:00 Eggheads
07:30 Tracey Ullman's Show
08:00 Raised By Wolves
08:25 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
09:20 Big Star's Little Star
10:15 The Chase
11:05 Eggheads
11:35 Come Dine With Me Couples
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 Remember Me
17:25 Hiding
18:20 Emmerdale
18:45 Coach Trip
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 Come Dine With Me Couples
20:30 Remember Me
21:25 Hiding
22:20 Coronation Street

NAT GEO people HD

00:10 Eat Street
00:35 Eat Street
01:00 David Rocco's Dolce India
01:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
01:50 Tales From The Bush Larder
02:15 Eat Street
02:40 Eat Street
03:05 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
03:30 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
03:55 A Marriage Of Flavours
04:20 Confucius Was A Foodie
05:10 Eat Street
05:25 Eat Street
06:00 The Best Job In The World
06:25 Winerados
06:50 David Rocco's Dolce India
07:15 David Rocco's Dolce India
07:40 Tales From The Bush Larder
08:05 Eat Street
08:30 Eat Street
08:55 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
09:20 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
09:45 A Marriage Of Flavours
10:10 Confucius Was A Foodie
11:00 Eat Street
11:25 Eat Street
11:50 The Best Job In The World
12:15 Winerados
12:40 David Rocco's Dolce India
13:05 David Rocco's Dolce India
13:35 Tales From The Bush Larder
14:00 Eat Street
14:30 Eat Street
14:55 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
15:25 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
15:50 A Marriage Of Flavours
16:20 Confucius Was A Foodie
17:15 Eat Street
17:40 Eat Street
18:10 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
18:35 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
19:05 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
19:30 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

00:00 The Siege Of Firebase Gloria
01:45 Backdraft
04:15 Christmas Twister
06:00 Fast & Furious 6
08:15 The X Files
10:30 The League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen
12:30 The River Wild
14:30 Fast & Furious 6
16:45 Don't Look Back
18:15 The League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

00:00 Pretty Woman
02:00 Down To Earth
03:45 Almost Christmas
06:21 The Other Sister
08:45 Pitch Perfect
10:45 Down To Earth
12:30 500 Days Of Summer
14:15 Bottle Rocket
16:15 Pitch Perfect
18:15 Happy Gilmore
20:00 Revenge For Jolly!
22:00 The Hooligan Factory

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR RENT IN BAYAN

New villa, good for an embassy large flats system. Each flat has saloon, 4 rooms, 5 baths, maid's room, laundry room, outdoor parking and in basement (no middle men please)

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FOR LEADING EXCHANGE CO.

Requirements:

- Transferable residence (ITEM 18).
- Multi Languages.
- Good Knowledge in Computer/ Typing Etc.
- Nationalities accepted are: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Philippine, SriLankan

CV TO BE SENT BY EMAIL:
hr19792016@outlook.com

Required for American Nursery Early Childhood Teachers

- English Native Speaker (American, British, Canadian, Western).
- Love to work with kids.
- Excellent oral and written English Language.
- Experience 1 year or more in the early childhood field.
- High school or diploma or bachelor degree.
- Age between (21-35).

For further information please contact us or send your cv:

www.q8littleleaders.com
 youngleaderskw@gmail.com
 66979905

NOTICE
 February 10, 2016

Mr. Libin Kottampallilaya Thomas son of Mr. Kuttampallil Thomas Thomas, resident of Kuttamballilaya Vilyaril, Kizhakkumbhagom P.O. Niranam Pathanamthitta, Kerala and Miss Pretty Jose daughter of Mr. Sabu Antony, resident of Thannickal House, Chethy P.O., Arthunkal, Alappuzha, Kerala - 688530, both Indian nationals, presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

(Krishan Kumar Pahal)
 First Secretary (Consular) and Marriage Officer
 Embassy of India, Kuwait.
 Ph.00965-22533315

10/10

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 FARWANIYA: Galleria Complex (Dejeer), Shop No. 2 & 15, Tel: 24314839 / 24318720 - E-mail: bhasin@qualitynot.net
www.bhasinkuwait.com

Kuwait CINEMA

SHARQIA-1

TRIPLE 9	11:30 AM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT 9:15 PM
SOLACE	1:45 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT 11:45 PM
TRIPLE 9	4:00 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE
SOLACE	6:15 PM	11:45 PM
TRIPLE 9	8:15 PM	MUHALAB-1
SOLACE	10:30 PM	KAPOOR AND SONS- Hindi 11:45 AM
TRIPLE 9	12:30 AM	UNNATURAL 2:30 PM

SHARQIA-2

KUNG FU PANDA 3	12:00 PM	UNNATURAL 2:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	2:00 PM	THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT 9:45 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	4:00 PM	UNNATURAL 12:15 AM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	6:00 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 12:15 AM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	8:00 PM	12:05 AM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	10:00 PM	12:05 AM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:05 AM	12:05 AM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	10:00 PM	1:00 AM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	1:00 AM	1:00 AM

SHARQIA-3

THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	12:15 PM	12:15 AM
ZOOTOPIA	2:45 PM	2:45 PM
ZOOTOPIA	5:00 PM	7:15 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	7:15 PM	9:45 PM

MUHALAB-2

SOLACE	11:30 AM	11:30 AM
SOLACE	1:30 PM	3:30 PM
SOLACE	3:30 PM	5:30 PM
ZOOTOPIA	5:30 PM	7:45 PM
SOLACE	7:45 PM	9:45 PM
TRIPLE 9	9:45 PM	12:05 AM
TRIPLE 9	12:05 AM	12:05 AM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	9:45 PM	9:45 PM

MUHALAB-3

LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:30 PM	12:30 AM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	12:30 PM	12:30 AM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	2:30 PM	4:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	4:30 PM	6:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	6:30 PM	8:30 PM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	10:30 PM	12:30 AM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:30 AM	12:30 AM

FANAR-1

ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME	12:30 PM	12:30 AM
ZOOTOPIA	2:30 PM	4:30 PM
UNNATURAL	4:45 PM	6:45 PM
ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME	6:45 PM	8:45 PM
UNNATURAL	10:45 PM	12:45 AM

FANAR-2

KUNG FU PANDA 3	11:30 AM	11:30 AM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	1:30 PM	3:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:30 PM	5:45 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	5:45 PM	7:45 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	7:45 PM	10:00 PM
THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	10:00 PM	12:30 AM
THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	12:30 AM	12:30 AM

FANAR-3

KAPOOR AND SONS- Hindi	12:45 PM	12:45 PM
THE WAVE	1:30 PM	3:45 PM
KAPOOR AND SONS- Hindi	3:45 PM	6:00 PM
KAPOOR AND SONS- Hindi	6:00 PM	9:00 PM
THE WAVE	12:05 AM	12:05 AM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:05 AM	12:05 AM

MARINA-1

SOLACE	11:30 AM	11:30 AM
SOLACE	1:30 PM	3:45 PM
TRIPLE 9	3:45 PM	6:00 PM
SOLACE	6:00 PM	8:00 PM
TRIPLE 9	10:00 PM	12:15 AM
TRIPLE 9	12:15 AM	1:00 AM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	1:00 AM	1:00 AM

MARINA-2

LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:00 PM	12:00 PM
ZOOTOPIA	2:00 PM	4:15 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	4:15 PM	6:15 PM
ZOOTOPIA	6:15 PM	8:30 PM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	8:30 PM	10:30 PM
LONDON HAS FALLEN	10:30 PM	12:30 AM

MARINA-3

THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	1:30 PM	1:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3 -3D	3:30 PM	3:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3 -3D	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	9:30 PM	11:15 PM
THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	12:05 AM	12:05 AM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:05 AM	12:05 AM

AVENUES-1

EMELIE	11:30 AM	11:30 AM
EMELIE	1:15 PM	3:15 PM
ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME	3:15 PM	5:15 PM
EMELIE	5:15 PM	7:15 PM
ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME	7:15 PM	9:15 PM
EMELIE	9:15 PM	11:15 PM
ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME	11:15 PM	1:15 AM

AVENUES-2

UNNATURAL	12:45 PM	12:45 PM
UNNATURAL	2:45 PM	4:45 PM
UNNATURAL	4:45 PM	6:45 PM
UNNATURAL	6:45 PM	8:45 PM
UNNATURAL	10:45 PM	12:45 AM

SAYYED SATELLITE

Installation, maintaining and programming all satellites.

Arabsat - Nilesat - India - Turkey - Russia.

Delivering all cards | beIN sports log

9999 66 09

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Joseph Stephen Socour Crasto, holder of Indian Passport No. Z3083099, H No. 89 ward 1, Rua De Abreu, behind head post office, Panaji, Goa, hereby change my name to Jose Estevam Socorro Crasto.

(C 5147)
 19-3-2016

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 Email: Info@Eigcoman.Com

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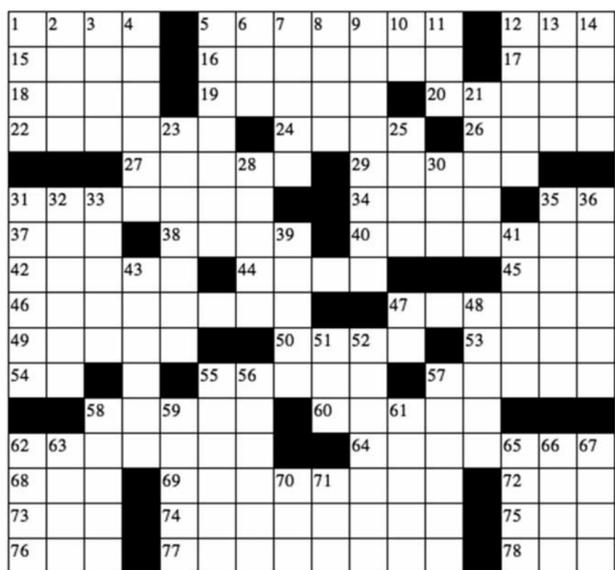
In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Sunday 20/3/2016				Departure Flights on Sunday 20/3/2016			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
JZR	239	Amman	00:25	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	MSC	404	Asyut	00:55
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	MSC	416	Sohag	01:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35
ETH	3402	Addis Ababa/Riyadh	01:30	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	ETH	3403	Addis Ababa	03:05
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	THY	769	Istanbul	03:45
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:25	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:55
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	OMA	644	Muscat	04:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	FDB	068	Dubai	04:00
THY	768	Istanbul	02:50	MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:15
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	KKK	6508	Istanbul	04:20
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:55
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	LMU	511	Cairo	05:05
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20	THY	765	Istanbul	05:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	CEB	7695	Manila	05:20
KAC	544	Cairo	03:35	JZR	560	Sohag	06:10
LMU	510	Cairo	04:05	FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
PGT	860	Istanbul	04:15	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	THY	771	Istanbul	07:05
QTR	8511	Doha	06:10	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
BAW	157	London	06:40	QTR	8512	Doha	07:40
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	QTR	1087	Doha	08:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	BAW	156	London	08:45
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	OMA	642	Muscat	08:55
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00	KAC	171	Frankfurt	09:05
OMA	641	Muscat	08:00	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
KAC	354	BLR	08:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30	KAC	117	New York	09:55
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	08:30	KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	KAC	561	Amman	10:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50	KAC	671	Dubai	10:05
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:25
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	QTR	1089	Doha	10:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10	KAC	381	Delhi	10:35
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	JZR	502	Luxor	10:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	10:40
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	10:50
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	11:00
IRC	528	Ahwaz	10:00	ALK	230	Colombo	11:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	GFA	220	Bahrain	11:25
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	UAE	860	Dubai	12:20
SYR	341	Damascus	11:25	QTR	1083	Doha	12:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KLM	417	Dammam/Amsterdam	12:25
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	205	Islamabad	12:30
SAW	701	Damascus	12:20	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	12:55
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	FDB	060	Dubai	13:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	13:10
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	KAC	415	Kuala Lumpur/Jakarta	13:40
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00				
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10				

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1201



ACROSS

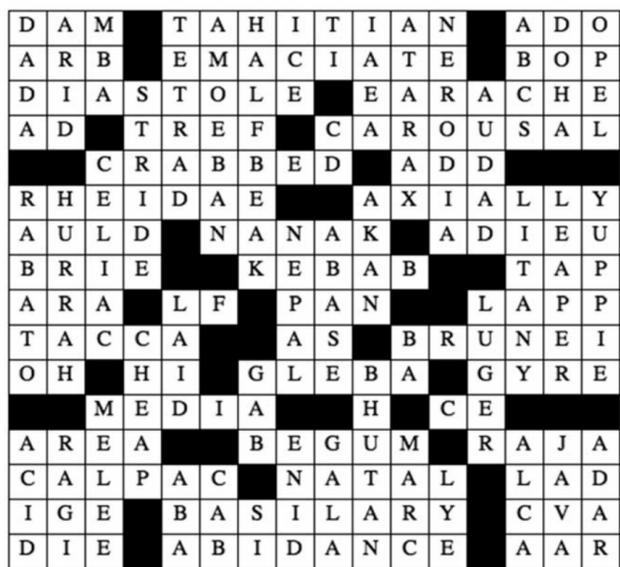
- 1. The act of scanning.
5. Letter carrier's shoulder bag.
12. The portion of the vertebrate nervous system consisting of the brain and spinal cord.
15. The closing section of a musical composition.
16. Of or relating to the enteron.
17. Headdress that protects the head from bad weather.
18. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
19. Sorghums of dry regions of Asia and North Africa.
20. Lower in esteem.
22. Shrub bearing round-fruited kumquats.
24. An independent group of closely related Chadic languages spoken in the area between the Biu-Mandara and East Chadic languages.
26. The biblical name for ancient Syria.
27. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
29. A native-born Israeli.
31. Arranged or displayed systematically in table form.
34. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
37. Devoid of warmth and cordiality.
38. In bed.
40. French physicist who invented the alcohol thermometer (1683-1757).
42. A person of subnormal intelligence.
44. One of a set of small pieces of stiff paper marked in various ways and used for playing games or for telling fortunes.
45. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
46. Light carriage.
49. Income from capital investment paid in a series of regular payments.
50. A large mountain system in south-central Europe.
53. (archaic or Scottish) Faithful and true.
54. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
60. A communist state in Indochina on the South China Sea.
62. A curve or surface whose equation (in Cartesian coordinates) is of the second degree.
64. An uneasy state.
68. Irritate or vex.
69. Lacking and reflecting lack of pity or compassion.
72. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
73. (meaning literally 'born') Used to indicate the maiden or family name of a married woman.
74. American gurnard.
75. A benevolent aspect of Devi.
76. Primitive predaceous North American fish covered with hard scales and having long jaws with needle-like teeth.
77. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
78. A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.

DOWN

- 1. A fraudulent business scheme.
2. (Greek mythology) Daughter of Zeus and Demeter.
3. The sixth month of the civil year.
4. A city in western Kenya.

- 5. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
6. United States musician (born in Japan) who married John Lennon and collaborated with him on recordings (born in 1933).
7. The base part of a tree that remains standing after the tree has been felled.
8. A three-tone Chadic language.
9. Armor plate that protects the arm.
10. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
11. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
12. Green algae common in freshwater lakes of limestone districts.
13. An independent agency of the United States government responsible for aviation and spaceflight.
14. (linguistics) The form of a word after all affixes are removed.
21. Found along western Atlantic coast.
23. A motley assortment of things.
25. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
28. Any of several tall tropical palms native to southeastern Asia having egg-shaped nuts.
30. The cry made by sheep.
32. Absence of the pupil in an eye.
33. English romantic poet notorious for his rebellious and unconventional lifestyle (1788-1824).
35. Hard greenish-brown wood of the lignum vitae tree and other trees of the genus Guaiacum.
36. An authoritative person who divines the future.
39. Any of various hard resins from trees of the family Dipterocarpaceae and of the genus Agathis.
41. Laborer who works in a mine.
43. Bid over an opponent's bid when one's partner has not bid or doubled, in Bridge.
47. A note appended to a letter after the signature.
48. Austrian painter influenced by art nouveau (1862-1918).
51. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
52. A member of the majority people of Punjab in northwestern India.
55. A former British gold coin worth 21 chillings.
56. A dry scab formed on the skin following a burn or cauterization of the skin.
57. A chain of connected ideas or passages or objects so arranged that each member is closely related to the preceding and following members (especially a series of patristic comments elucidating Christian dogma).
58. A person who makes deceitful pretenses.
59. (of something seen or heard) Clearly defined.
61. (Sumerian and Babylonian) A solar deity.
63. The chief solid component of mammalian urine.
65. The twelfth month of the civil year.
66. Avatar of Vishnu.
67. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
70. A large vase that usually has a pedestal or feet.
71. Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may show an interest more in cultural or literary affairs regarding the spending of money than with just merely collecting material goods. There is a desire to do something completely different from your usual routine. Try to keep some sense of reality in your interactions with friends. Tensions between you and a loved one may increase due to a difference in opinion-agree to disagree. Soon you and your loved one will see a fun slant on the subject. The integration of your creative thinking with a partner's realism and practicality could prove most rewarding. Learning about others is personally satisfying. You will do well in activities that include children, young people and your home and surroundings. You enjoy good support.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Today you might consider enrolling in a night school or taking a correspondence course. You are unusually self-assertive today with all the proper finesse that makes people respond happily. Your willingness to be true to yourself makes you more magnetic and appealing. Your power is showing and you are using it well. This is a time when circumstances bend to your will and things have a way of working out smoothly. Here are real opportunities to complete and work out any difficulties and projects that require both long-term effort and a high degree of discipline. There are many positive love signals in your sign now. Sex, power and money are compelling aphrodisiacs now. Secrets, taboos and mysteries appeal to an instinctive yearning.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

If you want to reach your full potential now you will have to explore your intuitive nature. Theories are important but they cannot come into fruition without some creative, intuitive help. This could be a time when everything around you in your living situation seems to be in flux and turmoil. You may feel opposed and challenged by others. Working through problems acted out with others will be the order of the day and hard to avoid. Lady luck may smile brightly on you today-nothing seems to slow your progress. You will plan a way to reach out to others in order to help those who suffer. This could come about through a community program. No matter what you decide to involve yourself with, it will have a positive outcome.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

A little extra enthusiasm is available to sort out some of those relationship problems you have been pushing aside for another day. A new sense of self, a more assertive personal style and a more dynamic approach to life are the order of the cycle that begins for you now. Doubts fade into the background and reserve is more and more outdated. There are people around you that keep up with the news and it would not hurt for you to do the same. Keeping up-to-date will help you to make suggestions on product improvements. You are charming and graceful with eloquence in speech and writing. Consider writing in the form of short stories, especially if you have not tried your hand at this work yet. Travel and education may be on your mind today.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

This is a good time to enjoy some time away from the everyday routine. An instinctive urge to get serious about taking care of yourself at many levels is emphasized. The balance of diet, exercise, work and home life come to your attention. This may be the time to bring someone with you to enjoy that new spa today. You may discover a new friend while you become immersed in the spa experience. Personal priorities gain your attention this afternoon and you enjoy taking this day to just go with the flow. When you return to the domestic scene, someone needs your direction. You enjoy teaching problem-solving techniques and being an important member of your family. You are content to snuggle with the family this evening.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You talk a friend into buying a cup of tea, especially today. You will accomplish a lot today-the end of some project is not far away-patience. Later this afternoon you and a friend may work together to run errands and help each other complete a few difficult tasks. Create a new goal for yourself: every day gives you some special, private time to daydream and relax. This evening you may find a past love has returned-this time, he or she may deliver all the right words or action that makes you believe a change or improvement is in the works. Pace yourself in whatever type of relationship you have become involved. Give yourself plenty of leeway to gain a clear understanding of just where you want this relationship to go.

WORD SEARCH

Baseball

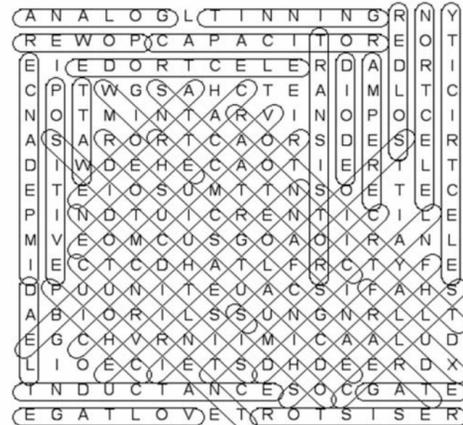
Find and circle all of the Baseball words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Humphrey Bogart quotation.



- APPEAL, BALK, BASE, BATTER, BUNT, CATCH, COACH, DEAD BALL, DEFENSE, DOUBLE HEADER, DUGOUT, FAIR BALL, FAIR TERRITORY, FLY BALL, FORCE PLAY, FORFEITED GAME, FOUL BALL, FOUL TERRITORY, FOUL TIP, GROUND BALL, IN FLIGHT, INFIELD FLY, INFIELDER, INNING, INTERFERENCE, LEAGUE, LINE DRIVE, LIVE BALL, MOUND, OBSTRUCTION, OFFENSE, OUTFIELDER, OVERSLIDE, PENALTY, PITCHER, PIVOT FOOT, RETOUCH, RUN DOWN, RUNNER, SCOREBOARD, SHORTSTOP, STRIKE, TAG, THROW, TIE GAME, TRIPLE PLAY, UMPIRE, WILD PITCH

Yesterday Solution

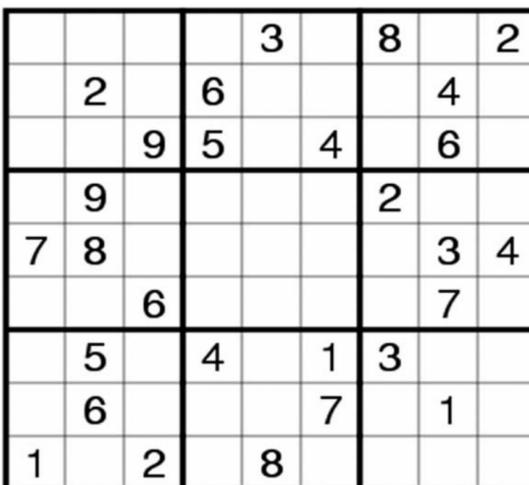
Electronics



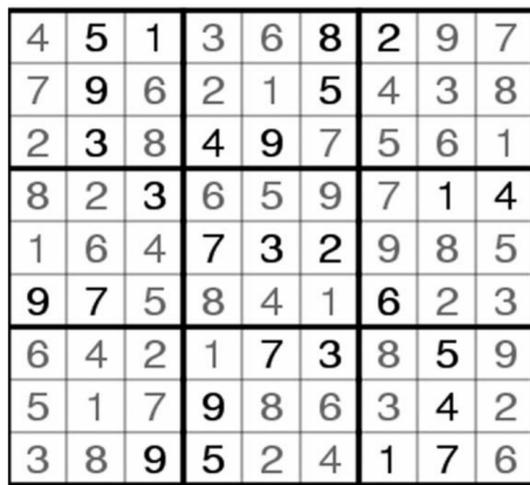
- AMPERE, ANALOG, ANODE, CAPACITOR, CATHODE, CELLS, CHIP, CIRCUIT, CONDUCTOR, CONTACTS, CURRENT, DIGITAL, DIODE, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRODE, FARADS, FLUX, GATE, IMPEDANCE, INDUCTANCE, INSULATORS, LEAD, NEGATIVE, OHMS, POSITIVE, POWER, RESISTANCE, RESISTOR, SILICON, SOLDER, SWITCHES, THYRISTOR, TINNING, TRANSFORMER, TRANSISTOR, VACUUM TUBE, VOLTAGE, WATT, WIRE

The hidden item is: LIGHT EMITTING DIODE

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128



PHARMACIES
ON 24 HRS DUTY

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Hospitals

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

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadisiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khalidiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khalidiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	0026		

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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DAY: Saturday

19/03/2016

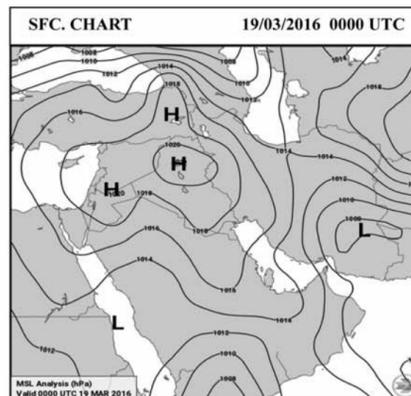
Issue Time 07:00

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Sunny with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h

BY NIGHT: Fair with light variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	26 °C	18 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	27 °C	11 °C
ABDALY	28 °C	13 °C
BUBYAN	25 °C	16 °C
JAHRA	29 °C	16 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	25 °C	15 °C
SALMIYAH	22 °C	18 °C
AHMADI	22 °C	17 °C
JAL ALIYAH	27 °C	12 °C
QAROH ISLAND	26 °C	19 °C
UMM AL-MARADEM	24 °C	19 °C



DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	03/20	Sunny + raising dust	30 °C	12 °C	S-SE	15 - 45 km/h
Monday	03/21	Partly cloudy + scattered rain	31 °C	17 °C	SE-NW	15 - 38 km/h
Tuesday	03/22	Sunny	29 °C	15 °C	VRB	06 - 20 km/h
Wednesday	03/23	Sunny	29 °C	16 °C	VRB-NW	10 - 32 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:34
Sunrise	05:53
Zuhr	11:56
Asr	15:23
Sunset	17:58
Isha	19:15

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	27 °C
MIN. Temp.	12 °C
MAX. RH	60 %
MIN. RH	16 %
MAX. Wind	S 32 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	00 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. U.P.O

2016/03/19 02:58 UTC V1.00 T2.3 2-1/ع.ق



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s. Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdalateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid	MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC
Assistant Professor Of Medicine	Head, Division of Cardiology
Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib	2611555-2622555
MD, PH.D, FACC	
Inaya German Medical Center	
Te: 2575077	
Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists / Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707	Noor Clinic 23845955	William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677 Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677
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Gossip



Kim stuffs handbag with her daughter's cheesy snacks

The 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians' star, who is worth an estimated \$85 million, doesn't like to carry a changing bag with her and prefers to ram everything she needs for little North, two, and Saint, three months, into her Hermes Birkin. Taking to her website KimKardashianWest.com she said: "My Birkin carries all of my essentials. Find out exactly what I carry with me! Annie's Homegrown Cheddar Bunnies, \$7, North loves these cheesy snacks!" She also pops in a few packets of Black Forest Gummy Bears because "they're another favorite snack." But her lavish tote isn't just limited to messy foods as the 35-year-old reality TV also likes to make sure she has a change of clothes for her children, whom she has with her husband Kanye West, a selection of nappies and a pot

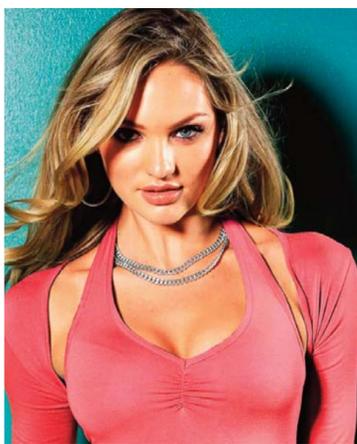
of wet wipes. Referring to Jessica Alba's The Honest Company, the brunette beauty said of the wipes, costing \$5: "These are the best wipes—so soothing and soft." And, in order to keep little North entertained while they're travelling, Kim doesn't leave without her trusty iPad. Meanwhile, although Kim prefers to stash everything she needs into her Birkin bag, the starlet also carries a backpack with her when she travels in case she needs to downsize. She explained: "I always bring a little backpack, and throw a diaper and some snacks in there so I don't have to carry the bigger diaper bag all the time."

Peter Andre wants his son to be a scientist

The 'Mysterious Girl' hitmaker's eldest child Junior - who he has with ex-wife Katie Price - is desperate to launch an acting career when he's older, and though the 43-year-old singer will support the youngster's ambitions, he would prefer it if the 10 year old sought a more academic job. He said: "Junior is so passionate about football and he's a really good player, but he also really loves drama. I think he'll end up being in entertainment. I've just got him into a London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art course at his school and he's really enjoying it. "He's very confident and he's never had the doubt I had when I was younger but the only thing with this industry is you have to be very thick-skinned." Speaking to OK! magazine, Peter added: "I guess there's only so much I can teach him. I will encourage him as much as I can until he's 18 but of course my dream is that he's going to go to university and become a scientist. "But you've got to be realistic about their strengths."



Candice Swanepoel is pregnant



The 27-year-old supermodel and her fiance Hermann Nicoli, who have been dating for over 10 years, are reportedly set to welcome their first child into the world in early September. A source told E! News: "They are very happy. They plan to spend the summer in New York." And the Victoria's Secret beauty is thrilled she's not the only one in her friendship group expecting, as her best pal Behati Prinsloo and her husband Adam Levine are also rumored to be pregnant with their first child. The insider added: "Candice and Behati are best friends and they are not far apart from each other in pregnancy due dates. They both have been experiencing the first stages of being pregnant together and are happy to have each other who understand. They can't wait to be mummies!" Candice and her handsome beau got together when she was just 17 years old after they met in Paris and, after nine years of dating, finally got engaged last year. Meanwhile, the South African-born beauty has made no secret of the fact she wants a little family of her own. Speaking prior to their engagement last year, she said: "I would love to have children."



Maisie doesn't 'have it to flaunt'

The 'Game of Thrones' actress insists she's never been interested in wearing revealing clothes because she isn't particularly curvy. She said: "I feel like I've always had a good sense of what I wanted to look like." "I've never wanted to look older. I've never wanted to wear revealing dresses. I don't have it, so I don't want to flaunt it." The 18-year-old star also admitted she has got people "fooled" into thinking she is much more wise than she really is. She said: "People always say [I'm] really wise, but that scares me because sometimes I do things like this - I've got nasty stuff written on my fingers because I did drinking games with my friends last night. "There's nothing wise about me. "Sometimes I'm like, 'I've got so many people fooled.'" But Maisie admitted she isn't as confident as she was when she began her career on 'Game of Thrones' - on which she plays would-be assassin Arya Stark - at the age of just 12. She told InStyle magazine: "I struggled with the hours when I was young. It was an adult show. I had to fit into a much bigger wheel. "But being 12 I didn't find any of that daunting at all. The naivety of it... I look at all the conversations I used to strike up with actors like Sean [Bean] and people on set and I think, 'How did I used to do that?' "I wasn't fazed by anything at all. And I do want to grasp some of that back because I have lost a bit of it. In this industry, it's easy to lose your confidence."



Perrie Edwards doesn't want a boyfriend

The Little Mix singer had her heart crushed last year when her then-fiance Zayn Malik dumped her via text following four years of dating, and she has now admitted the gut-wrenching experience has put her off finding love again. Speaking to Notion magazine, she explained: "I don't think a woman should ever feel the need for a man. "I love doing my own thing - it just makes me feel independent. I always say I like my own company - to the point where that person would have to compete!" Despite loving the single life, the 22-year-old beauty has been romantically linked to a number of handsome men - including model Leon King and ex-'The Only Way Is Essex' star Joey Essex - since her split from the former One Direction singer but the flings seemed to fizzle out quickly. Zayn, 23, on the other hand, has wasted no time jumping straight back into another serious relationship and is now dating 20-year-old model-of-the-moment Gigi Hadid. But, despite his new love interest, it seems Perrie is still very much on his mind as he recently confessed he penned his new single 'It's You' about the 'Black Magic' hitmaker. He said at the time: "I just felt like I needed to put myself out there on that just because it was a form of therapy for me and it did help get me through some stuff."



Stefani interviewed 67 nannies to find the perfect one



The 'Voice' star has three children with her ex-husband Gavin Rossdale - Kingston, nine, Zuma, six, and Apollo, two - and has revealed the lengths she went to in order to ensure they receive the best care. Speaking about her home life, Gwen said: "The kids have changed me... I'm super-unorganized, a real procrastinator, time management is non-existent. When I had them, I realized I couldn't be selfish anymore. "My time away needs to be productive, and my time with them needs to be productive. It's a lot of depending on a lot of other people. I had to interview 67 nannies alone, in this room, to get the people I have now." The past 12 months have been "crazy" for Gwen because of the break-up from her ex-husband. And despite still feeling "awkward" talking about the events in public, she channeled her pain into writing

her new album 'This Is What The Truth Feels Like'. Gwen told Stylist magazine: "This last year has been particularly crazy... It's awkward to talk about it. But things feel good now, and I'm excited about the album, but I also feel pretty protective over it. "I feel like I'm in the middle of so much. This is the first week of me really thinking about all this, and talking about it. I feel so weird about it. But if this music helps people, that would make it all worth it."

Azalea considered suicide last year

The 'Fancy' hitmaker contemplated driving off a cliff to end her life numerous times throughout 2015 after she was plagued with harsh criticism about her music and race. Speaking about the difficult time, she said: "It can make a person feel, 'Well what do I have left to live for?' There were times when I just wanted to quit life. Sometimes I would drive through the canyons to get to my horses, and I'd be like, 'What if I just kept driving off the canyon?' "But it wasn't just the backlash and the online trolls that affected the 25-year-old beauty as she was also terrified her

career would come crashing down and she would have to return to her native Australia after spending the last 10 years living in the US on a work visa, which would become invalid once she stopped working across the pond. Speaking in an interview on Power 106 FM, she explained: "My whole life is here, so that's a lot for somebody to deal with. For somebody to come when I didn't really feel like I did anything to be deserving of that much hate, to be like, 'Okay, well now we're taking everything from you,' what you do, your friends, everything could be totally gone, that's a lot to

deal with." However, the blonde beauty believes she owes a lot to her fiancé Nick Young, whom she got engaged to last year, because he helped her get through the dark times. Meanwhile, despite the horrific experience she endured a few months ago, Iggy's career and personal life seem to be on the incline as she's set to go on a world tour later this year and has already booked a date for her wedding.



Adele headlining Glastonbury Festival 2016

The 27-year-old singer will top the bill on Saturday at the world famous music extravaganza held in Somerset, South West England, and will join the previously confirmed headliners Muse - who will play on the Pyramid stage - and Coldplay, who will close today. The 'Hello' hitmaker made the announcement on stage at her London O2 Arena concert. She said: "I wanted to do it last year but my record wasn't ready. And to the people who say I am too boring to headline, you're more fucking boring for moaning about me headlining." But the superstar has broken the promise she made to herself when she said she would never play at the festival because of her fear of the huge crowds. She declared: "I think I have made myself

pretty clear on Glastonbury. The crowds are too big - I don't know if I could do it." However, Adele's comments didn't stop festival organizer Emily Eavis from inviting her to perform. Probed on whether Adele could headline Glastonbury, she replied: "She would, wouldn't she? It would be great to get her. We love Adele." Meanwhile, the news might not come as a surprise to everyone, since Emily previously revealed this year's Glastonbury headliners are all British. The 36-year-old booker said: "We've got three brilliant British bands headlining the festival, although I haven't actually told anyone that yet."

Madonna will fly to London to see her son



The 57-year-old star is on her 'Rebel Heart tour' in Australia but is planning to jet to the UK to visit the teenager in the coming days, because he has refused to return to her custody and is living with his father Guy Ritchie, half siblings Rafael, four, Rivka, three and 21-month-old Levi and their mother Jacqui Ainsley. A source revealed: "Madonna is going to do whatever it takes to see Rocco. She wants to meet with Guy as well to sort out the situation once and for all. She is in a very desperate situation. She knows she can't order Rocco to come and see her so she is making plans to go to wherever he is." The singer and 'The Man From U.N.C.L.E.' director, 47 - who were married from 2000 to 2008 - are yet to come to an agreement over who should take care of the 15 year old and the matter is being worked out in court. However, Madonna has told friends she is keen to mend all of their "wounds" and will move to be closer to Rocco if needs be. The source added to The Daily Mirror newspaper: "If it means staying in London for a long period of time then she will. At the end of the day she is devoted to her children, and now that the tour is about to finish she wants to focus on mending the wounds."



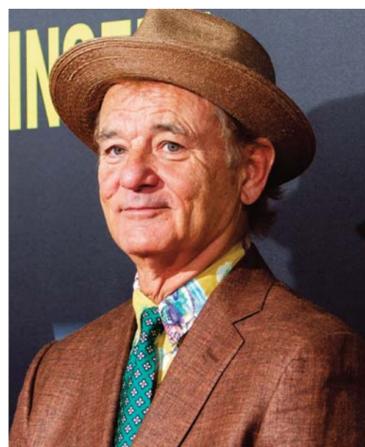
Stone and Hill to star in a new comedy 'Maniac'

The 'Aloha' actress and '22 Jump Street' actor are close to signing deals that would reunite them in the dark comedy series which is based on the original Norwegian show about a man who lives a fantasy life. It's thought that Jonah, 32, will take the lead as Espen, a mental health patient who escapes into his own dreamworld while institutionalized. What's more, it will be a reunion for the pair, who starred together in 2007 hit comedy 'Superbad'. If all goes to plan, they will also act as executive producers on the half-hour episodes helmed by Cary Fukunaga - who wrote the screenplay for 'Beasts of No

Nation' and acted as director on episodes of 'True Detective' - in the project from Paramount TV and Anonymous Content. Emma is a regular on the silver screen and has raked in applause for her performance 'Birdman' and 'The Help', and has had smaller roles in TV comedies 'Malcolm in the Middle' and '30 Rock'. Whilst Jonah has starred in a string of hit movies since his breakout role in the critically acclaimed 'Superbad' - which in 2007.

Morena Baccarin is officially divorced from Austin Chick

The 'Deadpool' star's three year marriage to the film director has finally ended after she was granted a "status only" dissolution of marriage, which means the former couple will settle assets, issues and other items at a later date. Morena, 36, gave birth to a daughter by her new partner and 'Gotham' co-star Ben McKenzie on March 2 and recently revealed they have named the little girl Frances Laiz Setta Schenkkan. Frances is 37-year-old Ben's first child but his partner already has a two-year-old son, Julian, with her now ex-husband and while she has primary custody, Morena has been ordered to pay Austin \$23,000 a month in support. In February the Brazilian-born actress delayed divorce proceedings because she was nearing the end of her pregnancy. She stated in court documents: "I am now almost eight months pregnant, and I continue to have a high risk pregnancy. My physician, who I last saw on Jan. 29, 2016, has advised me to have as much bed rest as possible and limited activities."



Murray to a cameo in new 'Ghostbusters' film

The veteran star "wanted to be a part" of the rebooted movie, which sees Kate McKinnon, Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, and Leslie Jones play the paranormal fighting gang. Director Paul Feig revealed to Yahoo Movies: "Bill worked with Melissa in 'St Vincent'... and Kristen knows him really well. One of the reasons he did it, I think he liked the role we wrote for him. But he also just likes these actors, and just wanted to be a part of it. And he didn't want to give any stamp of disapproval by not coming on board." The 65-year-old actor played Peter Venkman in the original film released in 1984. And he's not the only member of the previous cast who was eager to revisit their old stomping ground. Sigourney Weaver and Dan Aykroyd, who played Dana Barrett and Ray Stantz respectively, are also set to appear in the new movie to be released in July. Meanwhile, Chris Hemsworth has been revealed to be playing a nerdy assistant and has shed his macho image in favor of a pair of square specs and waistcoat, for the female-driven installment. Chris will be taking on the position previously held by Annie Potts' stern secretary Janine Melnitz over 30 years after the original film took the world by storm.

Carey heavily booed on stage

The 45-year-old star, who is known for her diva antics, angered her adoring fans at the city's First Direct Arena after she rocked up on stage at 21:30 - almost an hour after she was scheduled to - for the latest installment of her 'Sweet Sweet Fantasy' show. The blonde beauty's apparent lateness seemingly rubbed fans up the wrong way as just hours earlier she had joked on her Twitter that she hates having to leave her "fabulous bed" for gigs. She wrote: "My darling #Lambs! As much as I hate leaving this fabulous bed at the @CorinthiaLondon, I am on my way to see you all in Leeds in 30 mins!" However, although fans have to wait a while to see their idol, they will be pleased to know they will soon be able to watch her whenever they want as she's planning to release her own show. The songstress' eight-episode documentary 'Mariah's World' will see the starlet focus on her world tour and her upcoming wedding to billionaire businessman James Packer. She said recently about the venture: "I'm excited to bring my fans into my life for the next journey I'm about to embark on. I'm already having so much fun with this documentary and I know you will too. There is nothing like capturing these moments."



Miller says fame made her 'aggressive'

The 34-year-old star was constantly in the media spotlight in the 2000s due to her relationship with Jude Law and the famous friends she partied with. At the time, Sienna was constantly followed by paparazzi which made her angry and determined to outfox them. In an interview with The Times newspaper, she said: "I was 21 and being irresponsible, as I should have been, but I was really freaked out by that attention and the more aggressive that became, the more aggressive I became in my response. I was like, 'screw that! I'm not going to let them get me!'" "It does feel like another lifetime ago now." Sienna broke off her engagement with Jude in 2006 after he admitted he had been having an affair with his children's nanny. The 'Alfie' co-stars did briefly rekindle their relationship in December 2009 before splitting again in 2011. The actress then went on to have a relationship with actor Tom Sturridge - with whom she has a three-year-old daughter, Marlowe - but split from him in the summer of 2015. Sienna has won critical acclaim for her performances in films such as 'American Sniper' and 'Foxcatcher' in recent years and she insists it is wonderful for her to be recognized for her work rather than her love life now. She said: "I do feel like it (that period) was damaging ... I shook when I was watching the 'Amy' film because I remembered what it was like. I was exposed to that level of pursuit. It was that aggressive. "It went from 0 to 60 in zero seconds. No one copes with that unless you are surrounded by a huge PR team. But I was just an English girl going, 'What the hell is going on?'"



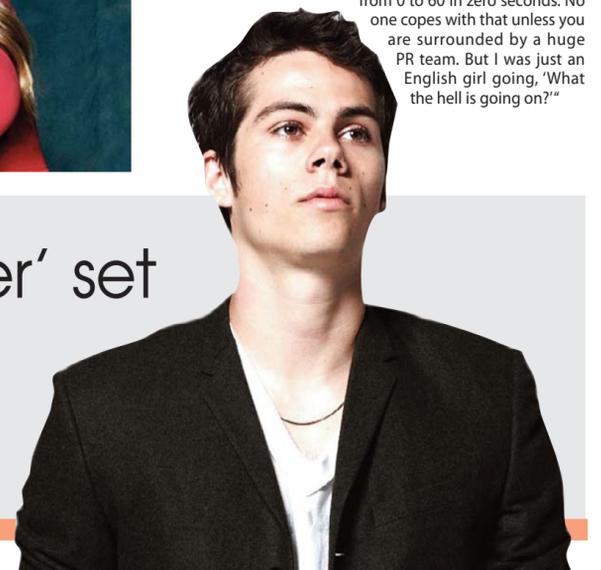
Dylan O'Brien injured on 'Maze Runner' set

The 24-year-old actor has reportedly been run over by a car while shooting scenes in Vancouver, Canada, and was rushed to hospital on Thursday for medical treatment. 20th Century Fox said in a statement: "Dylan O'Brien was injured yesterday while filming Maze Runner: The Death Cure in Vancouver, Canada. He was

immediately transferred to a local hospital for observation and treatment." And according to TMZ, Dylan may have suffered multiple broken bones after being struck down by the vehicle in the stunt sequence gone wrong. The former 'Teen Wolf' star is reprising his lead role as Thomas in the 2014 survival-action-thriller 'The Maze Runner' and 2015

sequel 'Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials'. However filming will now be "shut down" on the latest installment until further notice. The added: "Production on the film will be shut down while he recovers. Our thoughts go out to Dylan for a full and speedy recovery."

— Bangshowbiz



'Daredevil' goes global in Netflix milestone

A cheer exploded as comic action hero Daredevil burst from a "war room" on the Netflix campus and dashed to nearly every country in the world the instant Friday arrived. Elated engineers turned their attention back to computers on long tables to make sure the just-released second season of the blockbuster Netflix original show was streaming to smartphones, tablets, consoles, televisions or any other kind of device used to connect with the on-demand service no matter where on the planet they might be.

"What we are dealing with now is inventing Internet TV," said Ken Florance, Netflix's vice president of content delivery, while providing a behind-the-scenes look at how the company efficiently gets massive digital video files to subscribers. "I really think of it as being a nascent thing. We are just tapping the potential of what people love: being able to watch what they want, when they want."

As Friday arrived in the "Daredevil" themed war room, real-time data displayed in a graph on one wall showed that binging had started. In one corner, Charlie Cox, the actor who plays the hero, was on Twitter, caught up in a storm of tweets from fans. "Internet TV is just going to get better and better," Netflix co-founder and chief Reed Hastings told journalists gathered for the launch. "More choice, competition between many more players and incredible content."

China far off

Netflix early this year significantly expanded its global footprint to 190 countries, making its Internet TV service available in 130 new markets including India-but not China. "We are continuing to learn more and work with partners, and develop relationships, but we have no fixed time line," Hastings said of Netflix efforts to offer its service in China.

Other countries without the service include North Korea and Syria due to US government restrictions on American

companies, Netflix said. Netflix, which began as a mail-order DVD service but is now producing award-winning original content alongside its offering of older shows and movies, launched in 2007. Now, 75 million subscribers pay a monthly fee for unlimited service.

Emmy Award statuettes won by Netflix for original shows were on display in a lobby at the company. Rooms in the California headquarters are named after films, and casual work spots included stuffed chairs in front of a long, natural gas fireplace.

Frustrated but focused

The so-called war room was ringed with television screens monitored by members of the Netflix team who checked sub-titles or dubbing of "Daredevil" episodes. "We want to make sure every country is working the way it's supposed to when we turn it on," location team language manager Katell Jentreau told AFP as she eyed an episode with French subtitles.

"Technically, it can be pretty tricky so we need to make sure everything looks okay." Netflix was aware that people in some countries have been disappointed that everything in the US catalogue of content is not available to them, and that there are languages missing from the translation line-up. Netflix was intent on getting rights to deliver all of its offerings to more countries while also backing original films and shows by local talent around the world.

"We know what everyone wants, which is the same catalogue around the world," Hastings said. "We are frustrated we are not there but we will get there before anybody else." While Netflix spans the globe, content is in English, subscriptions are priced in US dollars, and accounts call for international credit cards, according to the chief executive. "In many senses we are barely launched in many countries of the world," Hastings said. "We have a long way to go to get where we want."

Original shows

The company has been shifting from recycling old shows and movies to producing more original content, with its shows such as the award-winning "House of Cards" and "Orange Is the New Black." "We learned that the consumer around the world wants on-demand television click-and-watch," Hastings said.

In 2016, the company plans to release more than two dozen new and returning original series, two dozen original feature films and documentaries, as well as its own stand-up comedy specials, along with original children's programs. In what he conceded might sound to some like "crazy ambition," Hastings said Netflix wants to produce content in every nation and share it with every country.

The service is ahead of key rivals in streaming such as Amazon and Hulu, which have also begun to produce original content. And it has lofty goals. "Someday, we hope to produce the best Bollywood that has ever been produced; we want to produce the best Japanese anime," Hastings said. — AFP



Hulk Hogan, whose given name is Terry Bollea walks out of the courthouse on Friday, March 18, 2016, in St Petersburg, Florida. — AP

Jury awards \$115m to Hulk Hogan in sex tape case

A US jury on Friday ordered the news and entertainment website Gawker to pay wrestling superstar Hulk Hogan \$115 million for posting online a secretly recorded video of him having sex. The six-member jury reached the decision in favor of Hogan after deliberating for six hours following a two-week civil trial in Florida.

Hogan burst into tears when the verdict was announced. The 62-year-old, whose real name is Terry Bollea, has argued that the video which shows him having sex with the wife of a friend and lasts one minutes and 41 seconds-invaded his privacy and humiliated him.

Hogan's lawyer has said the video was viewed around seven million times. One of America's most famous entertainment wrestlers, now retired Hogan was known for wearing a bandana and a handlebar moustache. During the trial, Hogan-dressed in a dark suit and black bandana testified that a friend of his, radio personality Bubba "the Love Sponge" Clem, had an "open marriage" and wanted his wife to have sex with Hogan.

After several entreaties, Hogan said he finally agreed, not realizing that the encounter was secretly recorded. "Mr Bollea is exceptionally happy," Hogan's lawyer David Houston said outside the court following the ruling. "We're exceptionally happy with the verdict. We think it represents a statement as to the public's disgust with the invasion of privacy disguised as journalism. The verdict says 'no more'."

Appeal in the works

Nick Denton, Gawker Media's founder and chief executive, watched quietly as the jury's decision was read aloud to those in the court. Speaking to reporters outside, he indicated an appeal was in the works.

"Given key evidence and the most important witness were both improperly withheld from this jury, we all knew the appeals court will need to resolve the case," Denton said. "I want to thank our lawyers for their outstanding work and am confident that we would have prevailed at trial if we had been allowed to present the full case to the jury," he added. "That's why we feel very positive about the appeal that we have already begun preparing, as we expect to win this case ultimately."

The jury awarded Hogan \$15 million more than he had originally sought. Of the \$115 million, \$60 million is for personal emotional stress suffered by Hogan. The jury-consisting of four women and two men-ruled in favor of Hogan on all of the claims. The trial was closely watched by legal experts and celebrities as defense attorneys argued the publication of the sex tape was protected by the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

A lawyer for Gawker, Michael Berry, insisted during the proceedings that the recording and posting of celebrity photos and video-even salacious ones — comes with the territory when one is a star. Hogan's defense team, however, convinced the jury that by posting the video Gawker publicly disclosed private information, intended to cause him severe emotional distress, acted recklessly, and that he had a reasonable expectation of privacy in the bedroom where the video was recorded. — AFP

'TWIST' Turkish couture opens its first branch in Kuwait

Under the patronage of His Excellency the Turkish Ambassador in Kuwait Mr Murat Tamer 'Twist' chain of stores celebrated its first branch in Kuwait. "Twist" women's Turkish brand, which has been established since 1997 celebrates the occasion of the opening of its first branch in the State of Kuwait, located in the Avenues Mall, newspapers and media representatives attended the cere-

mony, in addition to a large group of Kuwaiti ladies and Turkish luxury fashion lovers.

'Twist' team welcomed the guests who expressed their admiration of the distinctive clothes after a tour in the store where everyone enjoyed the atmosphere of the Turkish originality. The big demand on 'Twist' Turkish fashion brand because it combines between comfortable and

practical clothes at the same time.

It is for those who prefer comfort in clothing and can afford to buy quality upscale fashion designed in a unique way and paying affordable price. 'Twist' inspires young women to express themselves freely. Twist launches a unique Spring-Summer 2016.

Spring -Summer 2016 which has worked to achieve har-

mony between work life and standards of couture, the result must be more than wonderful. It takes into consideration the development of time and its changes and invented the women's upscale designs and process which takes us between the journey of the day and night smoothly and professionally.



'Batman v Superman' yields unlikely female hero

"Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" sees two iconic superheroes do battle on the big screen but a female character-Wonder Woman-is the real role model for youngsters, star Gal Gadot said Friday. The 30-year-old former Miss Israel said ahead of the March 25 US release of the hotly anticipated blockbuster that she had never planned to be an actress and felt grateful to be telling her character's "amazing story."

"I have a four-year-old daughter and she adores princesses. At the same time she would tell me 'the princess, she's so weak.' She falls asleep, the prince will come and save her and kiss her and he's the hero," Gadot told reporters in Los Angeles.

"So I am so happy I'm going to be the one who's going to tell the Wonder Woman story. It's such an important story... But I also think it's so important for girls-and boys-to have a female, strong superhero to look up to."

Starring Ben Affleck as Gotham's Dark Knight and Henry Cavill as the Caped Crusader, the characters' first big screen pairing sets up the coming "Justice League" and "Wonder Woman" movies. Fearing the actions of a god-like superhero left unchecked, Gotham's formidable vigilante takes on Metropolis's revered savior, while the world wrestles with what sort of hero it really needs. And with Batman and Superman at war with

each other, a new threat quickly arises, putting mankind in greater danger than it has ever known.

Psychological enemy

Warner Bros opened its Los Angeles studios to the world's media Friday, showcasing its stellar cast, which also features Jesse Eisenberg as the eccentric villain Lex Luthor and Amy Adams as Superman's love interest Lois Lane.

It is Cavill's second go as Superman, three years after "Man of Steel" saw him pitted against the planet Krypton's villainous military commander, General Zod. "It's a tough outing for him, because it's against a psychological enemy as opposed to a physical enemy, like Zod was," the 32-year-old said of the new film. "We see him make mistakes, and we see him grow from those mistakes and learn from them."

Affleck, 43, who has already directed critical and commercial hits "The Town" and "Argo," revealed he had felt "emboldened" watching director Zack Snyder work and would consider making a big-budget superhero movie in the future.

"I've wondered about directing movies like this before and it was a really valuable learning experience for me to watch Zack do it and see how he did it," he said. "For me as a director it's about the material and the char-



Actress Gal Gadot from "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" attends the Warner Bros. presentation during Comic-Con International 2015 at the San Diego Convention Center on July 11, 2015. — AFP

acters, so if I found the right material I would definitely throw my hat in the ring to direct something on that scale." Affleck, a fan of graphic novels, recalled buying Frank Miller's 1986 Batman miniseries "The Dark Knight Returns" in his home town of Boston.

Demi-god

"That was the first comic that really took my appreciation of this genre to another level. It was right when people were innovating in that way. 'Watchmen' came out around the

same time," he said. "Newer, more adult, sophisticated, complicated ways of looking at this world started to be developed within the comic genre. "It took the movie business 20 years to catch up, to be really willing to mine these stories and this genre for complicated, interesting and resonant stories-but it has now."

The actors were asked how they deal with the kind of intense fans who tend to come with starring roles in comic book conversions, and their sometimes unrealistic expectation levels. "It's certainly strange and unnerving to be criticized for a part you haven't yet been able to screw up," joked Eisenberg.

Adams recalled the embarrassment of a scene in which Lois was required to hold a conversation with Superman, her naked in a bath tub and he fully clothed, although in reality she was allowed some artfully hidden clothing. "That was actually horrible, just trying to protect my modesty in unflattering garments while the demi-god stood above me. I had low self-esteem for two weeks after that. It's true-I really was like, 'I'm hideous,'" she said. — AFP



Grim US jail 'last frontier' in reality TV

Take a group of seven men and women inmates and follow their lives inside a corruption-ridden jail where violence is commonplace, a network of 300 cameras catching their every move and conversation.

So far, so normal for US television, but there is one important distinction: the "accused" are actually innocent volunteers planted in the jail — and neither the other inmates nor the staff know that. Even by the standards of sometimes mind-boggling reality television in the United States, "60 Days In" is pushing the boundaries just a bit farther, earning rave reviews-and a fair bit of concern too.

The 12-part "docu-series"-which premiered last week on the A&E Network is centered on Clark County Jail in Jeffersonville, Indiana. Its brainchild is county Sheriff Jamey Noel, who is determined to clear up a facility that even by the low standards of a jail is seething with graft and violence, and where drugs seem to be rampant.

"The only way to truly understand what was going on in the jail was to implement innocent participants into the system to provide first-hand unbiased intelligence," said Noel. "The brave volunteers helped us identify critical issues within our system that undercover officers would not have been able to find."

Among the volunteers planted among the 500 inmates in the jail, which heaves with everything from accused drug dealers to murderers, is the eldest of Muhammad Ali's nine children, Maryum. A social worker in gang prevention, she had to change her name to prevent being recognized by the other inmates in the women's block.

Threats, warnings

The participants each have their own reason for putting their lives on hold for two months to experience what is a grim and highly volatile environment, leaving behind partners and small children. Several participants, including a teacher named Robert, believe jail is nothing more than a "country club" and wants inmates in the US to face tougher punishment.

Each is given a story that they are told to remember by heart so that when they are quizzed by the other inmates, they can convincingly rattle off what they supposedly did to land themselves in this hellhole. The camera crew tell the other inmates and jail wardens they are there to film "first-timers" making their tentative initial steps into jail life. Only the seven moles and a handful of officials know the truth.

In a scene before the participants-three of whom are women-go into the jail, they are given alarming advice from a beefy official warning them how to behave inside: stay low-profile, but not too low-profile; tell the other inmates nothing personal; stick to the cover story; no drugs or violence.

The cocksure Robert instantly breaks every rule. On entering the jail block, he asks one man if they have the NFL channel on the communal television and his story of how he ended up behind bars quickly unravels when he keeps changing the details, revealing inconsistencies.

Placed in the most dangerous block in the jail, Robert's behavior makes for excruciating viewing and he raises the suspicions of his fellow jailbirds with everything from his attitude and haircut to the way he walks (the gait of a man used to carrying a

gun on his waist, one inmate says, and word soon spreads that Robert is an undercover policeman). Inmates huddle in darkened cells to speculate about their curious new jailmate, cameras catching them threatening to rape and beat him.

'Queasy feeling'

Respected television pundits have widely lauded the program, while also voicing misgivings. "For reality TV's survival sub-genre, the inside of a jail is one of the last frontiers, the claustrophobic flip side of stranding people on a remote island or in the Alaskan wilderness," wrote Brian Lowry, chief TV critic at industry magazine Variety, calling it "compelling."

However, Lowry questioned the judgment of Noel and the participants, and said that turning a jail into the backdrop for reality TV left a "queasy feeling." He added: "Because while authorities might have benefited from this exercise, there's a nagging sense that in terms of specific time frames, like most reality TV, '60 Days In' had more to do with 15 minutes of fame."

Kelly Khuri, a Clark County councilwoman, said that she only found out about the show from news reports and was quoted saying she did not think the jail's "deficiencies" should be aired on national television. "I was very surprised. I'm very agitated and concerned because who ultimately is going to be responsible if there are any liabilities because of this high-risk venture?" she asked, according to Newsandtribune.com. — AFP



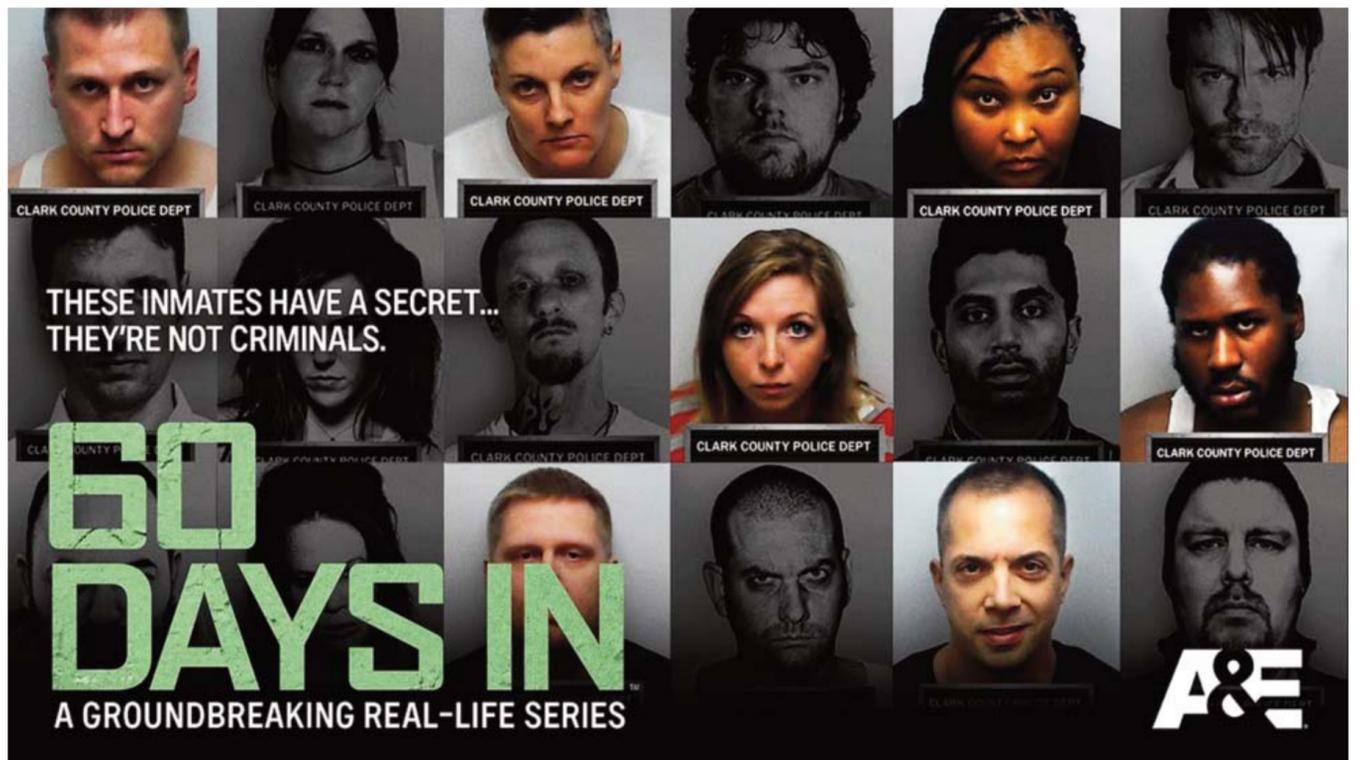
Pure Gold Jewelers celebrates Mother's Day with diamond pendant collection

Pure Gold Jewelers has unveiled special edition Mother's Day diamond pendants that pay tribute to the unconditional love of mothers everywhere. The exquisite collection from the award winning jewelry retailer and the only World Diamond Mark certified retailer in the GCC, is personal and meaningful with the inscription 'Mum' in English and 'Ummi' in Arabic calligraphy. All shoppers will also receive a free gift voucher worth KD40 on purchase of gold and diamond jewelry till the 31st of March.

The stunning diamond pendant inscribed 'Ummi' meaning 'my mother' in Arabic, is priced at KD 119. An array of intertwined 18 karat gold petals connecting to a bed of diamonds, the inscribed word 'Ummi' with a heart at the tip of 'Alif' the first word in Arabic signifies that she is the first source of love.

Adorned with a gold rope that denotes a mother's deep devotion and strength of love, the 'Mum' pendant is elegant and enchanting. Set in sparkling diamonds, it is available for a price of KD 99.

Speaking on the special edition Mother's Day collections, Karim Merchant, CEO & MD of Pure Gold Jewelers, says: "The inscription on the pendants is a dedication to all mothers who devote their lives to the upbringing of their children. Conveying emotions of affection and compassion, our designs are centered on this simple yet deeply eloquent word 'Mum'. These exclusive diamond pendants are available in 18 karat yellow and white gold, and is a perfect way to delight one's mother on this cherished day and make her feel special and appreciated." In accordance with Pure Gold Jewelers' Genuine Price Promise (GPP) on diamond jewelry, all purchases are entitled to a unique lifetime repair and exchange warranty and assured 70% cash back.



Over 70% of women in the Middle East prioritize caring for loved ones

Women have always been seen as nurturers and Centrepoint's recent consumer survey shows that an overwhelming 74% of women in the region spend over 12 hours a day in activities that care for the family. With over 128 stores across the region, and over 70% female shoppers as its customers, Centrepoint has been insight on women in this market, and the trusted retailer shared results garnered from its core consumer group.

Centrepoint's Head of Marketing, Shyam Sunder, spoke of the brand's current initiative based on the survey results. "Women play an integral role in the life of the family and the survey highlighted just how much effort, care and time they put in to making our lives better. We at Centrepoint want to do our part in appreciating women all this month for being who they are and doing all that they do throughout the year. We will be engaging our audience through a campaign, #BetterWithYou, primarily driven by our digital platforms to highlight the achievements of our female consumers and reward them for the same in-store."

The survey explored the aspect of time use on key tasks amongst respondent and results from the women surveyed showed a distinct focus toward fami-

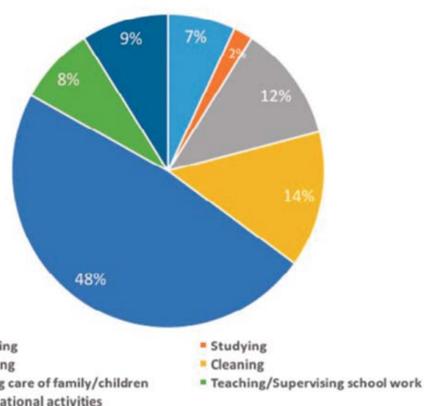
ly and the home. 74% of female respondents stated that they spend the majority of their time taking care for family and in household chores such as cooking and cleaning. Survey respondents came from across the nine Centrepoint territories in the region, predominantly in the age group of 20 to 35 years. 88% of women that responded to the survey stated that they were married and 82% stated that they had children.

Centrepoint's latest campaign #BetterWithYou highlights the brand's acknowledgment of the many big and small roles that women play and the numerous responsibilities that they take on and deliver in a seemingly effortless manner. The campaign visuals motivate men to appreciate the many talents of the women in their lives and the brand's social media campaign encourages its digital audience to share images and stories of the women they know that have inspired, encouraged or made a difference for a chance to win with Centrepoint.

Centrepoint has also collaborated with prominent regional designer and Arab influencer, Deanna Khalil, to co-create content that highlights her female inspiration and her path to success. The popular influencer spoke about the campaign and her association with

the brand, stating, "Women are the driving forces that keep the world well-oiled and running smoothly. From nannies, to nurses and doctors, teachers, lawyers and accountants, to businesswomen and successful female bosses, and from mothers to daughters— every woman plays a vital role in making this society better. I am proud to recognize these important women alongside CentrepointME, the one store in the Gulf which provides so many high quality and affordable solutions for women and families of all walks of life!" Mr Sunder commented further on the #BetterWithYou campaign; stating, "Centrepoint is proud to support women in the region and highlight their successes. The brand cherishes the opportunity to show its appreciation to its female consumers and is eager to give back to the most integral member of the family." Centrepoint stores in Kuwait are located in Al Rai, Avenues, Hawally, Salmiya, Fintas, Jahra, Fahaheel, Sulaibikhat, and Kuwait City.

FEMALE RESPONDENTS - USE OF TIME



Lifestyle

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Runner aims to cover 1,000 miles in 7 deserts in 7 weeks



In this Feb 13, 2016, photo provided by Kelvin Trautman, Australian long-distance runner Mina Guli, the founder and CEO of Thirst, runs in the 7 Deserts Run4Water expedition in Arabian desert in Jordan, while attempting to get through seven deserts on seven continents in seven weeks to raise awareness of worldwide water shortages, and she is almost done with the more-than-thousand-mile run. — AP photos



Atacama, Chile



Mina Guli surveys the horizon in Atacama, Chile.

Long-distance runners are water-obsessed by necessity, but Mina Guli is on another level. She's trying to run more than 1,000 miles through seven deserts on seven continents in seven weeks to raise awareness of worldwide water shortages. She has completed six of the runs, having jogged an average of 150 miles each through harsh conditions in Spain, Jordan, Antarctica, Australia, South Africa and Chile.

Now, the Australian is in drought-stricken California to run her final leg through Death Valley and into Nevada. She hopes to finish Tuesday, which the United Nations has designated World Water Day. If she does, she will have run the equivalent of 40 marathons. Guli said she was feeling tired but inspired as she spoke to The Associated Press by phone in Santiago, Chile, where she was boarding a flight to Los Angeles on Thursday.

"I'm excited about the momentum we've created," the 45-year-old said. "Rest has been few and far between. I

really want to do this in seven weeks, so it's been a rush. A lot of time is spent flying, driving into deserts. They're not always on the doorsteps of big cities."

In Jordan, on the second leg of the trek, Guli said she almost made her point about water shortages too well. She planned to use local water supplies along the way but faced a taxing set of days when there was little of the precious liquid to be had.

Major water problems

"The wells are dry," she said. "Jordan is having major water problems. Places where you expect to get water, you don't get water anymore. Even places where people assured me there would be water to find, there was none." From there Guli made the otherworldly transition to snow-white Antarctica, whose meager precipitation makes it the world's largest desert. "It is white from the sky to the ground," she said. "The only sound you can

hear is your own heartbeat."

Guli, who now lives in Beijing and runs Thirst, a nonprofit dedicated to water issues, said it was almost frustrating to be atop all that ice. "You're standing and running on all this fresh water that is inaccessible to the rest of the planet," she said.

From there came another drastic change, in temperature and scenery, to the red sands of central Australia's Simpson Desert. Guli's desire to run during the day and stay on local time so she can meet and talk to people about water has made things especially complicated. "Jet lag has been a major issue each time we've had a big time-zone change: between Australia and South Africa, I found that extremely challenging," she said. "I felt like I was running with lead weights around my ankles." — AP



The Simpson desert, Australia



The Arabian desert in Jordan



Antarctica