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OIL WORKERS PROTEST CUTS

By Nawara Fatahova

KUWAIT: Over 3000 workers from different oil companies gathered at the Oil and Petrochemical Industries Workers proposal yesterday to protest against the proposed decisions to remove some of their benefits. The President of the Oil and Petrochemical Industries Workers Confederation Seif Al-Qahtani said that all the unions and workers are united - as they reject any form of cuts. "We're not creating problems; we are just defending our rights," he said.

"Oil labor unions have the same demands. We are against the Strategic Alternative which is - death to the oil sector. Also we are also against privatizing the oil sector which will put us under the power of private sector and the businessmen," he added. Salah Al-Marzouq, Chairman of the KOC Labor Union said that the oil crisis is caused by wrong policies and bad management. "The salaries of the oil sector employees is already included in the cost of oil barrel - and is not included in the fifth section of the national budget (salaries) - so it's not part of the budget" he stressed.

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BRUSSELS: A picture released by the Belgian federal police shows a screen grab of the airport CCTV camera showing three suspects of yesterday's attacks at Brussels Airport. — AFP

BRUSSELS: Thirty-four people were killed in attacks on Brussels airport and a rush-hour metro train in the Belgian capital yesterday, according to public broadcaster VRT, triggering security alerts across Europe and bringing some cross-border traffic to a halt. A witness said he heard shouts in Arabic and shots shortly before two blasts struck a packed airport departure lounge at Brussels airport. The federal prosecutor said one of the explosions was probably triggered by a suicide bomber.

The blasts occurred four days after the arrest in Brussels of a suspected participant in November militant attacks in Paris that killed 130 people. Belgian police and combat troops on the streets had been on alert for reprisal but the attacks took place in crowded areas

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where people and bags are not searched. All public transport in Brussels was shut down, as it was in London during 2005 Islamist militant attacks there that killed 52.

Authorities appealed to citizens not to use overloaded telephone networks, extra troops were sent into the city and the Belgian Crisis Centre, clearly wary of a further incident, appealed to the population: "Stay where you are". British Sky News television's Alex Rossi, at the airport, said he heard two "very, very loud explosions". "I could feel the building move. There was also dust and smoke as well...I went towards where the explosion came from and there were people coming out looking very dazed and shocked."

Continued on Page 15

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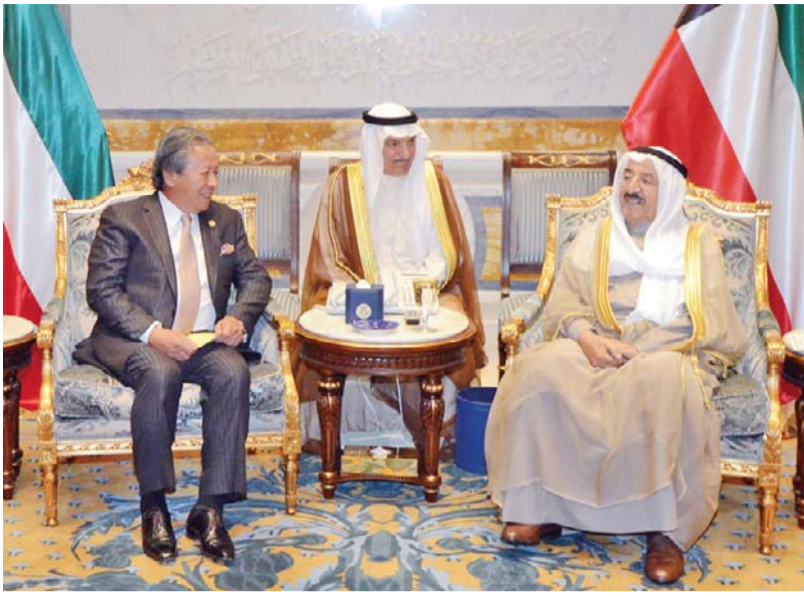


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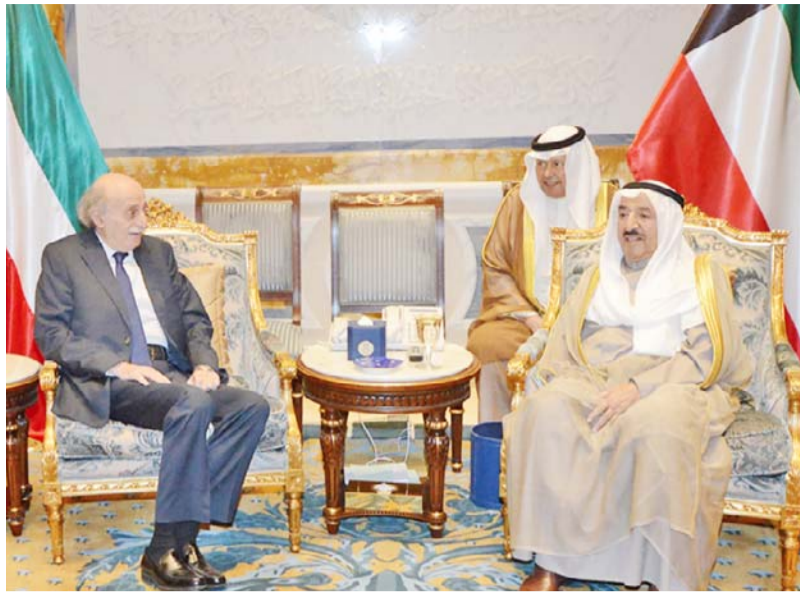
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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Malaysian Foreign Minister Dato Sri Anifah Haji Aman. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Head of the Lebanese Socialist Progressive Party MP Walid Jumblatt.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his Malaysian counterpart Dato Sri Anifah Haji Aman sign a trade agreement between the two countries.

KUWAIT, MALAYSIA SIGN TRADE AGREEMENT

AMIR MEETS MALAYSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

KUWAIT: Kuwait and Malaysia signed a trade agreement as a step to boost bilateral ties at all levels, especially on the trade front. The agreement was signed yesterday at the Foreign Ministry's headquarters by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his Malaysian counterpart Dato Sri Anifah Haji Aman.

The signing ceremony was attended by acting Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for protocols Ambassador Dhari Al-Ajran, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Malaysia Saad Al-Asousi, Malaysia's Ambassador to Kuwait Ahmad Dato Ahmad Rozian Abd Ghani, and senior officials at the Ministry. The two ministers held talks earlier which

focused on boosting bilateral ties at all levels, and touched on the recent regional and international developments.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Sheikh Sabah Khaled, accompanied by Malaysian Foreign Minister Aman and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of his visit to the country. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem also received the visiting Malaysian minister.

Lebanese officials

In other news, His Highness the Amir received Head of the Lebanese Socialist Progressive Party MP Walid

Jumblatt, and Lebanese Health Minister Wael Abu Faour on the occasion of their visit to the country. His Highness the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled separately met with the Lebanese officials as well.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received newly-appointed officials at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr Yousif Al-Ali introduced the new Assistant Undersecretary of Legal Affairs Dr Mohammad Meshabib Al-Jalal Al-Siheli and Assistant Undersecretary of Trade Monitoring and Consumer Protection Affairs Eid Khlaif Al-Rashidi. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister also received the newly-appointed officials. — KUNA



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with Malaysian Foreign Minister Dato Sri Anifah Haji Aman.



INSTITUTE OF HYDRAULIC RESOURCES PRESIDENT ARRIVES IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Ines Maria Chapman Waugh, President of the National Institute of Hydraulic Resources (INRH) arrived to Kuwait to complete a working visit at the invitation of Abdulwahab Al-Bader, Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development.

The delegation was received at Kuwait International Airport by Cuban Ambassador Andres Gonzalez Garrido and Abdullah Al-Mesaibih, Director of Latin America of the Kuwaiti Fund.

The Cuban delegation includes Antonio Rodriguez Rodriguez, Vice-president of INRH, Javier Toledo Tapanes, INRH delegate in Havana, Lazaro Pena Amat, Director of

Operations of Banco Exterior de Cuba and Rosell Guerra Campana, Director of Renewable Energy of the Ministry of Energy and Mines.

The visit will last until March 26. During her stay, President of INRH will be received by Ahmad Al-Jassar, Minister of Electricity and Water of Kuwait, will hold talks with Abdulwahab Al-Bader, Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development as well as several technical meetings. The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, maintains an important cooperation with Cuba in rehabilitation of networks in the capital, Santiago de Cuba and Holguin.

MALAYSIAN FM PRAISES MALAYSIA-KUWAIT TIES

KUWAIT: Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia Dato Sri Anifah Aman yesterday praised the level of bilateral cooperation between his country and Kuwait, expressing hope for further enhancement of such ties.

In an exclusive interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), Aman said he was delighted to be making his first official visit to Kuwait on 21-23 March at the invitation of First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. "Kuwait has always held a special affinity to me and I am glad to be back. This visit is my third here in as many years. I made working visits to Kuwait on 27-29 May 2015 and 24-25 August 2014."

He added that "the arrangements and hospitality accorded to me and my delegation during this visit, and previous visits, have all been wonderful and I hope Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled will allow me to return the favor when he makes his long overdue official visit to Malaysia in the near future."

He added that his visit aimed at further strengthening the close bonds of friendship and cooperation between Malaysia and Kuwait in all fields, particularly that this visit is very important for bilateral trade relations "because Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and I signed a trade agreement between Malaysia and Kuwait earlier yesterday."

"The Trade Agreement will be of immense benefit to the further enhancement of trade exchanges and cooperation between both countries," he noted.

He pointed out that he had the honor to have an audience with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace and paid courtesy calls on His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem at the National Assembly.

"I had fruitful discussions with First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Malaysia-Kuwait bilateral relations during our bilateral meeting."

Aman went on to say that during his exchanges with the Kuwaiti leaders, they took stock of the excellent state of relations between Malaysia and Kuwait as they also discussed ways and means to further strengthen the scope and substance of cooperation in various bilateral, regional and multilateral fields such as trade, investment, oil, energy, education, tourism and capacity building. "I am confident that these talks will be translated into concrete outcomes for the mutual benefit of our two brotherly countries in the near future," he added.

Close relations

The Malaysian official pointed out that Malaysia enjoys close relations with Kuwait in various fields including trade, investment, Islamic finance, education, tourism, technical assistance and capacity building.

Nevertheless, much more can be done by both sides to capitalize on the vast potential for further cooperation in various fields for mutual benefit, he said. He added that Malaysia was the first Southeast Asian country to establish its Embassy in Kuwait in 1974. Kuwait subsequently opened its Embassy in Kuala Lumpur in 1980.

At the regional and international level, Malaysia and Kuwait continue to cooperate closely and share common positions at various multilateral forums including the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), he clarified.

Aman went on to say that Malaysia and Kuwait have signed several agreements in various fields such as Air Transportation; Avoidance of Double Taxation; and Economic and Technical Cooperation. "As mentioned earlier, we have now added the important Trade

Agreement to this list earlier yesterday."

He added that the agreements and memoranda of understanding help to provide the frameworks to enhance cooperation between Malaysia and Kuwait. On the horizon, there are a number of pending agreements that both sides are looking to finalize and sign in the near future including in higher education, youth and sports cooperation.

"Despite the close relations between Malaysia and Kuwait, exchanges of high level visits could be more frequent. I am hopeful that His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah will soon embark on his first official visit to Malaysia in the near future. There were plans for him to visit Malaysia over the past few years, but because of various developments, it unfortunately did not materialize," he said.

Trade partner

Asked about the level of trade cooperation between the two sides, Aman said Kuwait is an important trade partner for Malaysia in the GCC region as the total bilateral trade in 2015 amounted to \$1.02 billion, which is a decrease of 42.9 percent from \$1.78 billion in 2014.

Palm oil, wood products, machinery appliances, LNG and processed food are the main exports of Malaysia to Kuwait, while major imports from Kuwait to Malaysia are petroleum products, crude petroleum and chemical products, he noted. "The Malaysia-Kuwait Trade Agreement, signed earlier yesterday, will act as a catalyst for the further enhancement of bilateral trade relations," he stressed.

In a positive development for bilateral commercial ties, the Malaysia-Kuwait Business Council (Malaysian Chapter) was established on 17 February 2015. The MKBC made its inaugural visit to Kuwait on 31 October-3 November 2015, Aman added. The visit has set the MKBC in good stead for its business prospects in Kuwait.

On investment, there remains substantial room and opportunities for Malaysian investments in Kuwait, and vice versa. Malaysian companies do not have substantial investments in Kuwait, he said. "However, I am pleased to share with you that two major Malaysian power companies are involved in the Kuwaiti power and water sectors."

TNB REMACO (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Malaysian utilities company Tenaga Nasional Berhad), jointly with Kharafi National are operating and maintaining the Shuaiba North Co-Generation (Power Distillation) Plant. TNB REMACO, also jointly with Kharafi National are operating and maintaining the Sabiya Power Generation (Open Cycle Gas Turbine) and Water Distillation Plant, he noted.

Aman noted that another Malaysian company, Teknik Janakuasa Sdn. Bhd. (TJSB), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Malakoff is contracted by Alghanim International to operate and manage the Az Zour Gas Turbine Emergency Power Plant. Kuwait investments in Malaysia include those by Kuwait Finance House (Malaysia) Bhd, Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC), Kuwait Reinsurance

Company, Kuwait Real Estate Investment Consortium KS, Alafco Aviation Lease and Finance Co. and Agility Logistics. "Our doors are always open for Kuwaiti companies to expand their investments in Malaysia," he said.

He pointed out that "education is an area in which we see vast potential for both countries. We have Malaysian students studying at the Islamic Institute and Kuwait University. Likewise, there are Kuwaiti students in Malaysia's universities, especially at the post-graduate level. However, the number is very small, which I believe can be increased."

Fight against terrorism

Asked about his assessment of the Saudi-led coalition against Terrorism Aman said that contemporary developments have given rise to extremism in various regions around the world. The challenges posed by the Islamic State (IS) and other terrorist groups pose serious security challenges.

"Malaysia strongly condemns any act of terrorism and violence including by the so-called Islamic State or IS which have caused grave injuries and losses to many innocent lives. Malaysia considers their acts as unacceptable and has tarnished the true image of Islam."

He said that Malaysia participated in the joint military exercise named "North Thunder" organized by Saudi Arabia from 18 February to 10 March at King Khaled Military City in Hafar Al-Baten, North-east Saudi Arabia. "Malaysia believes that the joint exercise will serve the core values of Malaysian Armed Forces in ensuring the combat readiness of garrisoned or deployable forces in multi-terrain as well as to understand the High Availability Disaster Recovery (HADR) procedures and methods of evacuation from conflict zones."

"I wish to highlight that my Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Sri Najib Razak has introduced the Global Movement of the Moderates (GMM) which calls for countries to reject extremism and support moderation."

Hezbollah

Asked how his country perceives the GCC's recent decision to declare Hezbollah a terrorist organization, Aman said that Malaysia respects the decision made by GCC collectively among its member countries.

It has always been Malaysia's position to condemn all act of terrorism and fully committed and shares the concern of the international community. There is an urgent need to accelerate global efforts to combat terrorism, especially IS. Malaysia acknowledged Kuwait's efforts to fight terrorism as Kuwait is also a key partner of Saudi Arabia-led military coalition aimed at countering IS, he said.

"We can draw some similarities between measures taken by the Kuwaiti Government and Malaysian Government. Enacting new legislations to counter the threats of terrorism is a good example and we have sufficient legislations in counter terrorism. Our National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs had issued "fatwa" banning Malaysian Muslim from being involved with IS", he concluded. — KUNA



Yemeni Foreign Minister Abdel-Malek Al-Mekhlafi

CROWN PRINCE'S WIFE SPONSORS LECTURE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health (MoH) held a lecture yesterday dealing with women's health, which was sponsored and attended by His Highness the Crown Prince's wife Sheikha Sherifa Al-Jassem. Head of the Endocrine Department at Al-Amiri hospital Dr Nadia Al-Ali said that she is grateful to His Highness the Crown Prince's wife for taking part in the lecture, which was put together by the Endocrine Department.

Moreover, Ali pointed out that the lecture coin-

cided with the Mother's Day, a testament to MoH's prioritization of women's health. The lecture, which was delivered by Ali, tackled common Endocrine disorders experienced by women and ways to remedy those disorders. A set of medical tools was unveiled at the end of the lecture, where attendees were subject to impromptu medical tests. MoH routinely organizes health lectures as means of generating awareness on how to treat some of the most pervasive diseases. — KUNA



COULD LOWER OIL PRICES SERVE GCC ECONOMIES?

WASHINGTON: Kuwait is tackling dwindling oil prices in a "thoughtful and strategic way," several US officials, diplomats and experts believe, as they hailed the Gulf country's attempts to attract foreign direct investment in return.

"I had the privilege to attend the Investment Forum in Kuwait (on March 9), and it is clear to me that the State of Kuwait is tackling the economic downturn in a thoughtful and strategic way," David Hamod, head of the National US-Arab Chamber of Commerce said in a State Department-hosted panel discussion.

"At a time of low energy prices, Arab countries are looking for ways to reduce their overhead spending - cutting subsidies, eliminating projects that don't make sense, and overhauling regulations that should have been challenged several years ago," he said.

Hamod said that as Kuwait tightens its spending, more importantly in the long-term, it is also expanding its outreach efforts to attract foreign direct investment. "American companies are definitely monitoring this emerging opportunity," he suggested.

Following recent extremely low figures, OPEC crude prices crept up to just above the USD 35-mark, according to the global oil-producing bloc which includes Kuwait, after they had reached around USD 100 a barrel in 2014.

Weathering the storm

Similarly, US Ambassador to Kuwait Douglas Silliman agreed that Kuwait is "well-placed to weather the storm." He said that lower oil prices have encouraged Kuwait to reduce subsidies on basic services, reiterating that "even without doing this, Kuwait is well-placed to weather the price downturn."

Pointing out the recent "liberalization" in foreign investment laws, including the possibility of 100 percent foreign corporate ownership, he said the move has "opened new opportunities for American companies to work and invest in Kuwait." The two speakers were referring to the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), which has already accepted the free-flow entry of international firms like telecommunications giants, Huawei, and Tech Company, IBM into the Kuwaiti market.

The recently-launched body is mandated with the tasks of attracting value-added direct investment and promoting Kuwait as a lucrative investment destination, according to its Director General Sheikh Meshal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

The state-established body aims to be instrumental in the goals of supporting economic diversification and the role of the private sector; he is quoted as saying on the body's official

website. In an interview with a local Kuwaiti newspaper back in July 2015, the KDIPA chief said that the Kuwaiti government is "offering foreign joint stock limited liability companies or individuals or branches of foreign companies' 100 percent ownership."

Other incentives the state body is tasked with are offering "tax exemptions for up to 10 years, complete and partial customs exemptions and assistance on locating land and labor," he added.

The way forward

US Undersecretary of State for Economic Growth Catherine Novelli believes that this is the way forward for governments in the region. "Bringing together the right stakeholders is critical. Governments alone cannot and should not solve every problem. But governments have significant convening power," she said.

Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Anne Patterson takes the view that the oil prices decline in spite of it resulting in "an unprecedented level of uncertainty" and putting the budgets of Gulf nations "under stress." However, she opined that this situation will "ultimately benefit all countries with an improved business climate that will attract new investments." — KUNA

KUWAIT PURSUES MAJOR REFORM FOLLOWING RECORD BUDGET DEFICIT

KUWAIT: Economic reform is underway in Kuwait, after the Ministry of Finance unveiled a new six-point strategy last month aimed at restructuring the economy amid the slump in global oil prices.

Changes ranging from fuel subsidy cuts to the imposition of value-added tax (VAT) and road tolls have been floated in recent months as the country's budget deficit expands.



Although implementation may be delayed until Kuwaiti authorities determine which model will best serve the economy, the proposed measures offer the potential for significant long-term benefits.

Policy reforms

In late February, Anas Al-Saleh, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Oil, revealed a new strategy emphasizing six critical priorities for economic reform. The announcement came after the government and the National Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee failed to come to an agreement on how best to roll out planned increases in fuel and electricity prices.

According to Saleh, Kuwait's new strategy will focus on implementing financial reforms, redrawing the state's role in the national economy, strengthening private sector participation, boosting project ownership by citizens, and various other labor market and public sector reforms.

The week before the plan was announced, the financial and economic affairs committee had recommended a round of subsidy cuts that would raise the cost of low-grade petrol by 42 percent from KD0.60 (\$1.99) to KD0.85 (\$2.82) per liter.

Prices of both high-grade and ultra-grade petrol would also be increased, from KD0.65 (\$2.16) to KD1.05 (\$3.45) per liter for high-grade; and KD0.90 (\$2.99) to KD1.65 (\$5.48) per liter for ultra-grade - an 83 percent increase.

The move mirrors steps taken by four other GCC members-Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman-who have each raised their respective retail fuel prices by as much as 67 percent over the past two months.

Fiscal reforms a top priority

Fiscal reforms rank high on the state's agenda, particularly after the



government revealed record deficit levels in its draft budget for FY 2016/17, announced in late January.

While proposed spending was down 1.6 percent at KD18.9bn (\$62.8bn), given expected revenues of KD7.4bn (\$24.6bn) the government forecast a KD12.2bn (\$40.5bn) deficit-nearly 50 percent higher than the previous year.

The gap is almost entirely attributable to falling oil prices, which have traditionally contributed more than 94 percent to government revenues; this share is expected to fall to 78 percent in FY 2016/17, according to the budget. The draft budget assumes a crude oil price of \$25 per barrel, roughly half the \$45 estimate used in FY 2015/16. Although Kuwaiti crude was trading above \$30 per barrel in mid-March, the IMF previously estimated that the country's breakeven oil price stood closer to \$49 per barrel.

Subsidies versus taxes

Earlier this year Saleh called for a host of potential reforms to maintain fiscal stability, including the introduction of corporate, income and sales taxes. He told media the government should also consider raising the cost of public services, in addition to the spending cuts outlined in the draft

budget. While fuel subsidy reforms are a step in the right direction, the introduction of new taxes may offer better long-term benefits.

In February ratings agency Moody's announced that although fuel subsidy cuts could help ease some of the fiscal pressure on oil-dependent GCC nations, the overall economic benefits are relatively limited, averaging around 0.5 percent of GDP in savings in 2016, compared to an average regional deficit of 12.4 percent of GDP.

Indeed, based on the draft budget, Kuwait's deficit in FY 2016/17 will amount to 30 percent of GDP, the Ministry of Finance reported, making non-oil diversification and enhanced private sector participation vital long-term priorities.

Tax measures like a VAT may prove more beneficial in the long term. In late February Christine Lagarde, managing director of the IMF, reported that the introduction of such a tax could help GCC members raise revenues by as much as 2 percent of GDP.

Speaking alongside Lagard, Obaid Humaid Al Tayer, the UAE's minister of state for financial affairs, announced the broader GCC's plans to implement a 5 percent VAT from January 1, 2018.

— Oxford Business Group

KUWAIT EXPECTS 'BUDGET DEFICIT'

'SHORTFALL PROJECTED AT KD 22 BILLION'

KUWAIT: Kuwait's state budget is expected to have a deficit of around KD 22 billion for the next three years as a result of plummeting oil prices, Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh said yesterday. That would average to a KD 7.3 billion annual deficit. Kuwait's fiscal position has deteriorated as a result of lower energy prices. After compulsory transfers to its sovereign Future Generations Fund, and excluding investment income, IMF projections indicate the country's overall fiscal balance narrowed from a 34.7 percent surplus in 2013/14 to 17.3 percent in 2014/15, reported Oxford Business Group in a 2015 special report on Kuwait's economy.

In a speech during a national conference on priorities, Saleh, who is also Acting Oil Minister, said that the government is hard at work to implement a long-term economic vision that aims to diversify the country's sources of revenue. Public expenditure has risen to unprecedented levels, reaching KD 21.4 billion for the 2014-2015 fiscal year, Saleh said, adding that the expenditure had never previously exceeded KD 4 billion. Moreover, the Finance Minister said that the government aims to introduce financial and economic reforms that would help diversify the country's sources of income, which would, in turn, ensure economic stability.

All signs indicate that oil prices are on their way downwards, Saleh noted, saying that "we should all learn to cope with dwindling oil prices for the immediate future."

Meanwhile, the Acting Oil Minister predicted that Kuwait's state budget for the fiscal year 2016-2017 is expected to sustain a deficit of KD 12.2 billion. "An increase in deficit puts us at risk, particularly, it creates mounting debt," Saleh noted.

Elaborating on planned economic reforms, Saleh said that a package of 41 programs consisting of development projects is in the works, adding that the government is working with various partners to help bring those projects to fruition.

In his speech, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs



KUWAIT: Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh speaks during a national conference on priorities yesterday. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said that "the Ministry of Information, bearing the nation's best interest in mind, has implemented a series of new initiatives." He also underscored the importance of media, saying that it has now become an indispensa-

ble tool for society. New measures have been taken to focus on development projects and availability of fundamental necessities such as education and healthcare, Sheikh Salman noted. "It is imperative to protect society from all ills," he added. — KUNA and agencies

ANITI-TRUST MEASURES ENSURE FAIR MARKETPLACE PRACTICES: MINISTERS

KUWAIT: The anti-trust apparatus seeks to ensure fair competition in the business community and in the marketplace with the ultimate goal of serving the public's needs in a manner that transcends self-interest or bias, a minister said yesterday.

Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr Yusef Al-Ali made that statement at a forum organized earlier yesterday by the anti-trust apparatus to discuss the latter's study on using anti-trust measures in the field of telecommunications and IT in Kuwait. He also pointed out that businesses that work in a healthy anti-trust environment become incentivized to excel in their produc-

tivity, in lowering cost, and in inventiveness and creativity.

Though the country has taken tepid steps on the road to applying anti-trust laws full-bore, it is encouraging that such steps have been applied to the vital sector of telecommunications as a springboard for further applications in the nation's other economic sectors, he said.

He praised yesterday's forum as an apt platform to discuss and analyze the proper approach to dealing with all aspects of anti-trust laws, without which the marketplace would not act responsibly and the public interest would not be preserved.

Remarks by the Ambassador on Pakistan Day (23rd March 2016)



Mr. Ghulam Dastgir
"Ambassador of Pakistan"

It gives me great pleasure to extend on this auspicious occasion, warmest felicitations to all Pakistanis living in Kuwait.

Seventy-six years ago, on 23rd March 1940, the Muslims of the Sub-continent, through adopting the famous Lahore Resolution, pledged to have a homeland of their own. This day is remembered as a golden chapter in Pakistan's glorious history. It ended the long period of uncertainty and struggle of the Muslims of the Sub-Continent for achieving their inalienable rights and right to define their future in their own homeland.

The Pakistan movement is historic and remarkable. This peaceful socio-political movement resulted in creation of Pakistan on the world map as an independent state in a short span of seven years on 14 August 1947.

This movement is also historic because the struggle was waged through entirely peaceful democratic, legal, and constitutional political means of public mobilization, negotiations and consensus, without any resort to any form of armed struggle or use of violence in any form.

By the Grace of Almighty Allah, Pakistan has made remarkable strides, despite the many daunting challenges the country faced right after its independence. Today, Pakistan is a vibrant

democracy with an independent judiciary, a free media and a vocal and participatory civil society.

The government of Pakistan, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is engaged in efforts to rid Pakistan of militancy and terrorism and realize the dream of the founding fathers of building a stable and prosperous Pakistan. The government is also committed to the Prime Minister's vision of a "peaceful neighbourhood". Peace and stability is returning to Pakistan thanks to the heroic sacrifices made by our brave armed forces and the people of Pakistan under the banner of "Operation Zarb-e-Azb".

Our economy too is moving towards a high growth trajectory after remaining under pressure for several years. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project is attracting world attention and investors. This project once completed will InshAllah lead to rapid socio-economic development not only for Pakistan but for the entire region.

Pakistan attaches great importance to our ties with the brotherly country of Kuwait. The roots of the fraternal ties between the brotherly peoples of Pakistan and Kuwait go deep in history.

The leadership and people of Pakistan hold the leadership of Kuwait and His Highness the Amir of Kuwait in highest respect. We appreciate his wisdom, sagacity and his meritorious services to humanity, which have also been recognized by the United Nations.

The leadership of the two brotherly countries are determined to convert the huge reservoir of mutual good will into a strong partnership through expanding cooperation in diverse fields, notably trade, energy and investment.

Overseas Pakistanis, including the patriotic Pakistani community in Kuwait, also have to play an important role in this endeavour. Every one of them has to do their best to promote Pakistan's interests in every way possible, from projecting a good image of Pakistan to mobilizing trade and investment.

Let us renew our pledge today that we would dedicate our energies to serving Pakistan and lead it to a high level of development and prosperity as envisioned by our founding fathers.

Pakistan Zindabad!

CHINA, KUWAIT CELEBRATE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF DIPLOMATIC TIES

KUWAIT INVESTED \$10 BILLION IN CHINA SO FAR

KUWAIT: China celebrated yesterday the 45th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations with Kuwait. Kuwait is considered the first Arab country in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) exchanging and establishing full diplomatic relations with China on March 22, 1971.

The diplomatic relations actually took place between the two nations before establishing the official relations, when His Highness late Sheikh Jaber Al-Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, back then Minister of Finance, and Minister of Trade and Industry, visited China on February 13, 1965 and met a number of senior officials, at the top of them President Leo Chao Chi, said Kuwait's Ambassador to China Mohammad Al-Thuwaiikh in a statement on the occasion.

Political relations between Kuwait and China during the last 45 years witnessed a great boost in the political, economic and cultural fields, the statement noted. Cooperation expanded remarkably based on values of mutual respect according to standards of international diplomatic relations of peaceful coexistence and equality, with no interferences in the internal affairs, it added. The political relations were enhanced between the two countries following the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in 2009 to China.

This visit was followed by a successful visit of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in 2014 as the two sides signed a number of mutual cooperation agreements and memoranda of understanding, which played a great role in boosting bilateral ties.

Key partner
China's Ambassador to Kuwait Wang Di stressed that the State of Kuwait has become a main trade partner of his country in the region. The Kuwaiti-Chinese diplomatic relations were established on March 22, 1971, they were the first ties with a Gulf and an Arab country, he said in an interview on the occasion of 45th anniversary of the diplomatic relations.

The relations between the two countries have been developing over 45 years in all fields, he said, adding



that Kuwait was the first Arab country that established diplomatic relations with China. Many achievements have been chalked up between the two sides, thanks to the support of the two countries' leaders and bilateral efforts of the two nations, he noted.

The ambassador expressed his full satisfaction over what has been achieved so far in terms of cooperation relations between the two countries, indicating that China looks forward to enhancing these relations with Kuwait in the future.

He expressed his country's gratitude to Kuwait for offering about \$1 billion since 1982 as soft loans for car-

rying out development projects, stating that the State of Kuwait has invested so far about \$10 billion in China.

Wang recalled his country's stance rejecting the Iraqi invasion, indicating that China supported international efforts aimed to liberate the State of Kuwait at that time. The envoy noted that there is a great consensus between the two sides over the regional and international events, voicing China's appreciation to Kuwait's foreign policy in dealing with these events.

Economic cooperation

As for economic cooperation, Wang said Kuwait is an important partner of China in all fields, mainly the sectors of oil, telecommunications and infrastructure. The volume of trade exchange between Kuwait and China reached about \$11.2 billion in 2015 compared with \$13.4 billion in 2014, he said, attributing this decrease to falling oil prices.

He indicated that oil exports to China hit 14 million tons, recording 35 percent of total exports, a highest percentage in history between the two sides. He said Kuwait exports petrochemicals to China and imports mechanical equipment.

Concerning new investment projects, the ambassador reiterated that China eyes further investments with Kuwait, despite difficult economic conditions facing the world. He went to say that Chinese President launched two years ago an initiative to build the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road, with the aim of supporting communications with nations and countries in the region. —KUNA



ITL WORLD LAUNCHES IN KUWAIT WITH GALA NIGHT

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: ITL, a leading travel management company, has opened an office in Kuwait. ITL World caters to a wide portfolio of clientele across Asia and the Middle East. Dr Siddeek Ahmed, the Chairman and the Managing Director of the Eram Group which is the parent company for ITL World, attended the opening gala event.

Sunil Jain, Indian Ambassador to Kuwait congratulated ITL for setting up new branch and wish fruitful business endeavor here. "I really wish success to this new travel agency. This will lead to more Kuwaiti travelers to India and we are happy about that. I want many Kuwaitis to see the greatness of our country, shop and build bonds of friendships with us," the ambassador said.

Jain pointed out that with the new visa regulations he would like to welcome more Kuwaitis to various parts of India. "India recently opened our visa to about 45 countries including Kuwait. We give five years, multiple visa entry to all Kuwaitis."

That is one step forward, and we also want Kuwaitis to take advantage of our medical tourism. Now, more and more people are visiting Kerala for ayurvedic treatment. We are moving fast in that direction. So I want to seek the support of ITL to make this dream come true for India to



KUWAIT: Sunil Jain, Indian Ambassador to Kuwait speaks at a ceremony to announce the opening of ITL's office in Kuwait. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

encourage more visitors to India," he said. ITL World has been a preferred partner of several global travel brands and tourism boards in the region, including most recently by globally renowned corporate travel giant - CTM (Corporate Travel Management), which chose ITL World as their partner across the Middle East.



Mijbil Alayoub



Dr Salma Kayani

OOREDOO CONCLUDES SPONSORSHIP FOR 'BREAK THE SILENCE' EVENT

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of international Ooredoo Group, has recently announced the conclusion of its sponsorship for "Break the Silence" event, which aimed at raising awareness against Endometriosis disease. Event was organized by The American Women's League in Kuwait at and was held at Radisson Blu Hotel last Saturday.

"Break the Silence" is considered the first of its kind in Kuwait and the middle east, where Dr Salma Kayani, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynecologist, a Master's degree holder in this domain, and a member of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists association in the

UK, was the lecturer. Dr Salma raised an important and scary fact, that the percentage of women diagnosed with Endometriosis in Kuwait has exceeded the global accepted ratio, where one out of five women get affected in Kuwait while globally it is one out of ten.

She assured the attendees that the disease could be treated easily, if diagnosed early taking into consideration the progress and development that happened in the surgical and medicine nowadays.

Commenting on the sponsorship, Mijbil Alayoub, Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "Thanks to every person took

the initiative to attend and participate in such an important event to raise awareness against Endometriosis disease and how it could be treated. We hope that all women could benefit from such seminars which give them the knowledge they need about frequent testing in order to avoid this disease or diagnose it on its early stages."

He added: "Women form half of our society and an important pillar of it, that is why our social responsibility strategy heavily focuses on women and we consider all events and initiatives that leads to women empowerment."



MINISTER LAUDS KUWAITI-TUNISIAN TIES

KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Dr Ali Al-Omar lauded the close bilateral ties between Kuwait and Tunisia. Omar made his remarks to reporters Monday while attending a reception held by the Tunisian Embassy to mark the 60th anniversary of Tunisia's Independence Day. Kuwait shares every joy and happiness in the Arab World, including Tunisia's, he said, expressing confidence in Tunis' ability to overcome current challenges and get rid of terrorism from all its territories. Omar hoped security and stability prevail in Tunisia. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Dr Ali Al-Omar participates in the Tunisian Embassy's Independence Day ceremony. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



KFAED LENDS LIBERIA KD 5 MILLION TO FINANCE HIGHWAY

MONROVIA: The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed yesterday a loan agreement with Liberia at a value of KD 5 million (about \$17 million) to finance a major highway project. The project will facilitate the transportation of agricultural produce and the movement of people along this highway which will energize trade and economic growth in the northern part of the country. It will furthermore boost land-based trade with neighboring countries as well, said a press statement by (KFAED).

The loan agreement was signed on behalf of the government of Liberia by its minister of finance Amara M Konneh, and on behalf of KFAED by its deputy director Ghanem Al-Ghunaiman. This is the third such loan given by (KFAED) to Liberia. Two loans worth jointly over six million Kuwaiti dinars were given to Liberia recently to finance road and energy projects. Moreover,



MONROVIA: KFAED's Deputy Director Ghanem Al-Ghunaiman and Liberian minister of finance Amara M Konneh sign the agreement. —KUNA

KFAED had a part in managing a KD 850,000 grant from the Kuwaiti government to that of Liberia. —KUNA



ZAIN CELEBRATES MOTHER'S DAY AT AVENUES

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, organized a special celebration of Mother's Day at the Avenues, where it invited its customers and their families to have a memorable experience on this heartwarming occasion under the theme "My Mother... My Wonderful World."

Every year, Zain celebrates this heartwarming occasion in its own way, as this celebration comes from the company's core belief in appreciating the great role of motherhood. Zain is committed to the community as a whole, and its contribution with this event resembles its utmost will to share people's joys on important occasions, especially such occasions that reflect one of the company's core values; Heart.

Through its dedicated booth at Grand Avenue, Zain offered mall visitors from children and families the opportunity to express love to their mothers by writing messages and coloring on a large drawing canvas, allowing them to express their love and feelings to their mothers in their own unique ways.

Zain also took the opportunity to celebrate this occasion with its own human resources, where it distributed special-themed gifts to its employees for them to give their mothers and share the heartwarming feelings of this occasion with them.

As a leading telecommunications company, Zain is socially dedicated to celebrate and take part in important celebrations as part of the company's corporate social responsibility strategy. This way, Zain continues to highlight its commitment to sharing special occasions with the people of Kuwait.

BURGAN BANK LAUNCHES 'ENGAGE' COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: In pursuit of its utmost commitment to the community and the nation it operates in, Burgan Bank formally announced yesterday the launch of its full-fledged community campaign entitled 'ENGAGE' -



Fahad Al-Reshaid

Together to be the change. The campaign is designed to reach out to the wider communities by partnering with governmental entities and organizations, in an effort to ultimately focus on all segments of the society that would require the private sector's diversified support.

After an in-depth research, the bank successfully refurbished its Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy

which now intends to advance not only to a few, but to all segments in Kuwait that require specific aid and support from the bank.

The recent announcement reaffirms Burgan Bank's ongoing dedication to serve and uplift the welfare of the entire society, through sponsorships, facilitation of necessities, and nationwide programs that create awareness of a specific topic. The renewed campaign will also shed light on important aspects surrounding the youth, people with special needs, cultural, social, the less advantaged, those with life threatening illnesses, and many more through substantial contributions for improved living and ground level engagement.

Commenting on the launch of the 'ENGAGE' Corporate Social Responsibility campaign, Fahad Al-Reshaid Marketing Communication Unit Head at Burgan Bank - said: "Empowering the community at large has always been Burgan Bank's core social responsibility focus. ENGAGE's key principle reflects the bank's commitment to the development of the Kuwaiti society and its various needs, through corporate volunteering and ensuring viability through sustainability. At Burgan Bank, we believe in the act of giving and positive contributions to ensure the overall wellbeing of the society."

Reshaid added: "The ENGAGE campaign is expected to initiate several programs in collaboration with different segments while creating a successful interdependence with relevant organizations this year. We look forward to integrating our newly developed campaign in the hopes that will it change people's lives and help raise awareness to build a stronger social fabric in Kuwait."

Burgan Bank's approach to Corporate Social Responsibility begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the

KUWAITI GETS 17 YEARS FOR SLANDERING AMIR

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The criminal court yesterday sentenced a citizen to 17 years prison over state security charges of slandering His Highness the Amir and two others to 10 years each for facilitating his escape to Qatar. Notably, Qatar security authorities handed over the suspect upon a Kuwaiti request and extradited him back to Kuwait. The man reportedly made his offensive remarks in video footage that spread on social media.

FTZ verdict annulled

The court of cassation yesterday annulled a previous verdict made by the court of appeal in relation to the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) and, thus, approved cancelling the FTZ contract with the National Real Estate Company (NREC). Notably, the cassation court had previously suspended the appeal court's verdict cancelling the former minister of commerce, Falah Al-Hajri's decision to terminate FTZ's contract with the company.

Built in 1999 on 1.5 million square meters of land in the western part of the Shuwaikh Port, the FTZ has been embroiled for years in a legal dispute between the government and NREC, which had been granted a license to develop and manage it. In December 2010, inspection teams from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry implemented an order to shut down restaurants and

other commercial establishments in the area, which also houses warehouses with storage facilities, exhibition grounds, banks, courier companies, and insurance companies.

Weather: Windy and warm

Metrology expert Essa Ramadan yesterday said that the weather would be stable with north westerly wind of moderate speed until Friday. He also noted that expected temperatures would vary between 24 and 30 degrees centigrade. Further, Ramadan explained that this pre-Sarrrayyat (the name of a local type of wind) period is usually full of active dusty wind and unstable weather until mid-April.

Spring camping extension appeal

Municipal Council member and head of Farwaniya committee, Nayef Al-Sour yesterday appealed to the Minister of Communications and Minister of State for Municipality Affairs, Essa Al-Kandari to allow extending the spring camping season for a month to annually end on May 1st instead of April 1st. Al-Sour justified his appeal by the fact that temperatures were not expected to considerably rise in that period and said that citizens would still want to go camping even after the season ends by municipality orders. "Camping has become a habit for citizens as well as a breather where they meet and chat in outdoor diwanias," he said.

Traffic lights and congestion

Municipal Council member and the head of Hawalli committee, Yousif Al-Ghareeb suggested removing the traffic light between Andalus, Ardhiya and Firdous along Sheikh Zayed Highway with a bridge to lessen traffic congestions there. Ghareeb added that motorists driving in and out of the three surrounding and densely populated residential areas had been caught up in traffic congestions at that point on daily basis. "In addition, there is a wedding hall near that point and this make traffic even worse whenever a ceremony was held there", he added noting that so many accidents also happen in that point during rush hours.

Mutla violations

General coordinator of the south Mutla City Khaled Al-Enezi yesterday urged EPA and the municipality to act immediately to remove violations in the form of ranches, barns and camps pitched in the area allocated to be used by the housing authority to build the city. Al-Enezi added that building the city infrastructure was scheduled to commence within two months after opening the first tender's bidding offers on April 3rd. "The municipality has not yet warned the violators and such leniency in law-enforcement means repeating what happened in West Abdullah Al-Mubarak where the construction company still suffers from the remnants of those ranches and barns till today," he explained.



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A Wonderful World

القباس

Al-Qabas

BUYING LOYALTIES IN THE OPEN

By Talal Al-Arab

Parliament member proudly announced that he helped send 1,100 patients or malingers, no difference, for treatment abroad, and of course not on his expense, but at the expense of Kuwait's budget. He said the government gave jobs to more than 93 employees and promoted several persons close to him to higher posts, overstepping the rights of other employees who are waiting for their turn.

This is a statement by one person who became excited in front of the camera and microphone and exposed himself and the government, if his statement was true. He exposed himself, because if it was not for the government's support, he would not succeed in the elections. He exposed the government because it bought his loyalty, and of course everyone knows that buying loyalties has several forms; it happens by giving government lands as gifts in the form of farms and chalets, or maybe deals and projects, each up to his status and importance. All that is given from the country's funds and lands, and at the expense of the ordinary citizen's rights.

If one member of parliament received this huge number of government gifts, then what about those who still keep their special ties with the esteemed Kuwait government in secret?

The statement came at this time, that is at the time when the government says it wants to rationalize spending, and rescue whatever can be rescued from the country's budget, from which billions of dinars were squandered over nothing. They were distributed between buying loyalties, profiteering and embezzlements.

Citizens see what's going on and hear what is being said around him, leaving him confused as who he should believe? Does he believe the meetings and contradicting statements between ministers on daily basis? One minister speaks optimistically while another speaks with a pessimistic tune. One speaks about rationalization that includes the government, the assembly and the citizen while another denies and says the country is in good shape and there will not be any rationalization or anything else!

In a special session, and not to reveal much of what is under the lid, some lawmakers became angry at the government for what its MP had revealed to them. Their anger was not out of condemnation to the government, but rather because it gave him more than it gave them, and this embarrassed them in front of their voters. Some MPs threatened to reveal the secrets, and that means that there are many files that can be opened if the government does not treat them equally with that MP. That means sending 1,100 for treatment abroad and hiring 93 people for each MP. As for the rest of the citizens who really need treatment abroad, and the youth who are waiting in line for employment and housing; you have nothing, and who does not like it can migrate!

— Translated by Kuwait Times



النبا

Al-Anbaa

WE WISH....

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

Wishes change each time according to changing conditions, be it political, economic, social and psychological. Today, our wishes include many of the aspects we mentioned above, as one day we find our wish goes towards politics, or towards the society on another. And from here and there, we write our wishes, perhaps our officials would look into and fulfill them for the sake of citizens in the future:

* We recently heard about many people who are arrested and deported for violating Kuwait's laws. We hope, that in the future, all those who violated Kuwait's security, are not allowed to return to it again, in order to set an example for those who compromise Kuwait's security.

* We breathed a sigh of relief following the decision of the state's Attorney General to have part of each governorate in Kuwait to look into, consider and rule in family cases according to certain laws. Furthermore, we hope that a family court that rules by all personal status laws is established.

* His Highness the Prime Minister said recently that the future will be bright for the Kuwaiti people, and

punishment will be implemented on every corrupt person. Here I would like to tell His Highness that the Kuwaiti society's wish for him is to look seriously into what the State Audit Bureau finds out in the form of grave violations as well as financial, scientific and practical crimes committed by some officials. But regrettably, no one has ever been punished. So, we hope that His Highness the Prime Minister starts where the State Audit Bureau has left off, so the dream can become true.

* We hope to have a comprehensive medical hospital for all diseases in every governorate. We hope the dream becomes a reality when we have a university in every governorate. Our dreams stop and remain shackled when we see our children receiving their education in run-down buildings. Our wishes are losing much of culture because those who dream do not know the meaning of reading.

* When will the sun of wishes shine and we see a theater in each governorate? We wish to live in reality. In conclusion: It is time we see our wishes become true. — Translated by Kuwait Times

URGENT MEASURES TO FIGHT MONEY LAUNDERING IN REAL ESTATE

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry's anti-money laundering and terrorism funding department urged real estate bodies, including the real estate union, real estate brokers' union and real estate assessors, to contact it as soon as possible to make their suggestions prior to issuing a ministerial decision soon on fighting suspicious real estate transactions.

The letter that the ministry sent read as follows: "With reference to law number 106/2013 pertaining with fighting money laundering and terrorism funding, and with reference to ministerial decision number 37/2013 on issuing the executive chart of the money laundering and terrorism funding law, we would like to inform you that the ministry was in the process of preparing a ministerial decision in this regard."

The sources added that the anticipated decision would re-organize and regulate the professions of real estate brokers, offices, agencies and companies according to the aforementioned law. The sources also noted that the decision would also set new strict measures to track down any of the incriminated suspicious transactions as well as regulate local real estate markets by monitoring local transactions and real estate exhibitions held in Kuwait. Further, the sources noted that ministry urged the addressed bodies to respond within a week and to set an appointment for an urgent meeting to be held as soon as possible.

Inspection

Meanwhile, banking and financial sources said that auditing bodies were currently conducting wide scale auditing and inspection on financial and brokerage companies, funds, portfolios and banks, to verify their commitment to anti-money laundering policies at all their units and branches. The sources added that according to instructions of the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), anti-money laundering measures also apply for the branches of those companies or banks abroad. Further, the sources pointed that inspections might also include the policies of the fees collected for those companies' services by limiting the maximum non-refundable cash fees to be collected to KD 100, to be paid directly by the client or by his/her legal representative.

The source added that the ban would include brokerage companies that sued to accept settlement differences of over KD 1,000 in cash. "This measure will be replaced by deduction from the client's account," explained the sources, noting that Kuwaiti companies subject to those new measures would have to be very cautious on dealing with companies registered outside Kuwait and verify clients' identity to prevent manipulators infiltration. Moreover, the sources said that CMA goes beyond those measures by mandating licensed companies to check and verify the true identity of a foreign body or company before carrying on with acquisition plans. — Al-Rai, Al-Jarida

Crime

Report

Man questioned over money laundry suspicions

KUWAIT: Investigations are ongoing in a suspected money laundry case in which a diplomat could be involved. A citizen had reported to police that he received phone calls from people who asked if they could transfer funds to his bank account, and claimed that they were money launderers. One of the callers told the citizen that they received backing from a diplomat working in Kuwait, according to his statements. Based on the investigations, police summoned a French national of African origins on suspicions that he was one of the persons who contacted the complainants.

Child negligence

A citizen filed a negligence complaint against his ex-wife for ignoring her duties of taking care of his son who is in her custody, according to his statements. He complained that the child got hurt while riding a bike. The complaint was filed at Ali Sabah Al-Salem (Um Al-Haiman) police station.

Swindler caught

Abu Halaifa detectives arrested a man who swindled a large number of expats, mostly Egyptians. Not only did the man steal his victims' belongings, but he also made sure to get his commission in advance. A security source said nearly 20 Egyptian nationals filed complaints against an expatriate man who offered his services to deliver goods to their homes in Egypt. The complainants realized they were scammed when the man disappeared after receiving the goods. Detectives were able to identify and arrest the suspect, who was sent to the proper authorities for further action.

Complaint against SMS harasser

A citizen in her forties filed a complaint in Qairawan area police station against a man sending her harassment over text messages.

Drug smuggler caught at border

Nuwiseeb border outlet customs officers foiled an attempt to smuggle 200 illicit tablets from a Gulf country. A customs source said the man had hidden the tablets in his clothes. He was sent to concerned authorities. — Al-Rai, Al-Anbaa

SCHOOL CERTIFICATES FORGERY INVESTIGATION UNDERWAY

KUWAIT: The Public Prosecution is investigating three cases related to forging high school certificates, in which 120 persons including officer cadets, lawyers and a doctor who works for ministry of health, are involved, reported Al-Qabas Arabic newspaper.

Quoting unnamed sources, the newspaper reported that the accused graduated a long time ago with certificates the prosecution believes have been forged. They think the accused studied abroad and then returned to Kuwait, then took up jobs in government ministries and the private sector using the forged certificates.

The source said the reason for the delay in sending their cases to court is due to a delay in correspondence between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, where the certificates are being queried against authentication sources.

The source said that if the suspects are convicted of utilizing forged certificates, they will be required to repay all their salaries they received from the state, and much more in fines as punishment according to the law, in addition to a jail sentence to be determined by the judge. — Al-Qabas

HEZBOLLAH SYMPATHIZERS TO BE PROSECUTED

KUWAIT: Authorities are monitoring people in Kuwait suspected to be supporting or are sympathizers with Hezbollah, particularly Lebanese, Syrian, Iraqi and Kuwaiti nationals also. According to security sources, suspected citizens are categorized into two categories: the first includes known supporters who have not yet shown support to the group. Those people will remain under surveillance, the sources said. The second category includes people who express support publicly through social media or gatherings either inside or outside Kuwait. "The electronic surveillance unit at State Security Service continues monitoring potential suspects" since the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) branded Hezbollah as a terrorist group, the sources said. — Al-Rai



KFH PARTICIPATES IN BEACH CLEANING CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has participated, in cooperation with Kuwait Diving Team, in a beach cleaning campaign with the participation of Ministry of Education schools. This participation comes as part of KFH efforts to spread environmental awareness, encourage voluntary work and preserve natural components of environment. Also it aims to reiterate the distinguished social role which KFH plays in several fields and at various levels to achieve prosperity, growth and progress for society.

Kuwait Diving Team has praised, in the campaign closing ceremony, the strategic partnership established with KFH, thus reiterating that KFH efforts were clear and tangible

and have social and cultural dimensions. The campaign success reinforces and confirms the success of this highly reputed Islamic financial institution in adopting a highly sophisticated method in performing its social responsibilities through participating in soci-

ety's vital issues, namely environment protection and keeping beaches clean without any pollutants or waste. These efforts come to preserve marine life and protect and qualify beaches which are considered as a symbol of civilized society.

NURSERY LICENSES SUSPENDED

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) suspended the issuance of licenses to establish nurseries until this task is shifted to the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the near future, said sources at MSAL's women and children department. Kuwait

already has 340 licensed nurseries, the sources said, in addition to 50 more applications on the licenses' waiting lists. "The sector will be officially subjected to MOE within 90 days when it has finished the needed formalities," explained the sources. — Al-Jarida

ABK SPONSORS IDEAL MOTHER AWARD FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

KUWAIT: In line with its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced that it will be sponsoring the 4th Annual Ideal Mother Award for Special Needs, organized by Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center. The awards ceremony is scheduled to take place on 11th April, 2016 at The Regency Hotel. A total of 15 mothers from across the GCC will be honored this year.

The 4th Annual Ideal Mother Award for Special Needs is held to recognize mothers of children with special needs and honor their hard work and perseverance to make a true difference in the lives of their children.

A press conference was held at the Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center in West Mishref on 14th March, to officially announce the 4th round of awards and to thank the organizers and sponsors for their support. Representing the Bank at the press conference was Ali Al-Baghli, Manager - Corporate Communications at ABK.

ABK has made 'Special Needs' its primary CSR focus for 2016. It concentrates its efforts on raising further awareness of this segment among the general public by supporting different related initiatives that allow individuals with disabilities to engage and socialize within the community.



BLOOD AND PANIC; BRUSSELS ATTACKED

BRUSSELS COMES UNDER ATTACK

BRUSSELS: Victims lay in pools of blood, their limbs blown off, as the smoke cleared to reveal a scene of horror after twin explosions ripped through the main terminal at Brussels airport, witnesses said. The normally bustling departure hall at Zaventem was wrecked by the morning rush-hour blasts, with part of the ceiling collapsing near the check-in desks and many of the huge plate glass windows blown out by the attack. "A man shouted a few words in Arabic and then I heard a huge blast," airport baggage security officer Alphonse Lyoura, who still had blood on his hands following the explosion said.

He said there was another explosion about two minutes later. "I helped at least six or seven wounded people. We took out some bodies that were not moving. It was total panic everywhere," Lyoura said. "I saw people lying on the ground covered in blood who were not moving. 'At least six or seven people's legs were totally crushed.

A lot of people lost limbs. One man had lost both legs and there was a policeman with a totally mangled leg." Emergency services said at least 11 people were killed in the blast and many others wounded. The city was already on high alert after the arrest of Salah Abdeslam, a key suspect in the Paris terror attacks in November that were claimed by the Islamic State group.

'A terrible mess'
Jean-Pierre Lebeau, a French passenger who had just arrived from Geneva said: "We heard the explosion and felt the blast." He said he had seen many wounded and "blood in the elevator." "First we were kept together by the police, then they gave us the order to evacuate," he said, recounting the shock on people's faces and a smell seemingly of gunpowder at the scene. Michel Mpoy, 65, who was at the airport to pick up a friend coming from Kinshasa, said it was "a total mess-it was terrible."

An employee for the Swissport airport management company described how she looked after a child following the blasts. "I heard the first explosion and I took a child in my arms and hid him under the counter. Then I gave him to a policeman," the employee said without giving her name. "There were injured people lying everywhere and some weren't moving." At the airport, on the northwest outskirts of the city and not far from NATO headquarters, Jean-Pierre Herman said he was relieved to have got out safely. Herman embraced his wife Tankrat Pauli Tran, who he had just gone to collect from the airport after her flight from Thailand. "My wife just arrived," Herman said. "I said 'hello,' we took the elevator and in the elevator we heard the first bomb. "The second exploded just when we got off. We ran away to an emergency exit. I think we are very lucky."

Charlotte McDonald-Gibson, a British journalist living in Brussels said there had

been "total confusion" at the airport, where she was having breakfast before a flight. "Suddenly staff rushed in and said we have to leave," she said. "They rushed out and into the main terminal A departures building. Nobody knew what was going on." "It was total confusion, people were just standing around wondering what was happening." Another blast about half an hour after those at the airport hit the Brussels metro between the Maalbeek and Schuman stations in the European Union quarter of Brussels, which is also home to major international organizations and companies. Around 10 people were killed, emergency services said.

Sirens wailing
AFP journalist Lachlan Carmichael was on the metro and described how his train was halted in the tunnel and then evacuated as it began to fill up with smoke. A police officer told him: "There are wound-

ed, there are dead, I do not know how many." The officer was escorting a woman through a police cordon being put up around the Maalbeek station, with all public transport being closed down.

Another AFP journalist, Cedric Simon, said the situation around the Maalbeek metro station was totally confused, with a cloud of smoke and dust settling over the road outside. Simon said there were about 15 people lying on the roadside, many with bloodied faces and being treated by medical staff as all Brussels hospitals were put on standby to deal with casualties. The streets were filled with police cars and emergency vehicles, sirens wailing and blue lights flashing. Brussels has been on high alert since the attacks in Paris in January, with heavily armed police and then troops put on the streets. Troops were clearly very watchful as they patrolled outside EU and other institutions in the Maalbeek-Schuman area. — AFP



BRUSSELS: A police officer (right) stands guard as people are evacuated near Brussels airport, after explosions rocked the facility in Brussels yesterday. — AP

TRAVEL CHAOS AS EUROPE FREEZES AIR AND RAIL LINKS WITH BRUSSELS

BRUSSELS: Europe froze air and rail links to Brussels as the authorities tightened security in alarm over a series of deadly bomb blasts that ripped through the Belgian capital's airport and a city-centre metro station. Belgium locked down the capital, home to the headquarters of the European Union and NATO, and imposed its highest level of security alert, as the toll rose to at least 21 people. As passengers fled the smoking airport and the bomb-hit Maalbeek metro station, the public authorities shut down the airport, metro system, buses, trams and major railway stations in the capital. "Our whole network is closed at the moment," the Brussels public transport operator STIB warned people on Twitter, confirming the shut-down of metro, bus and tram systems.

The Brussels-Zaventem international airport is closed until 6am (0500 GMT) yesterday, the airport said. The shutdown hit hundreds of flights scheduled to arrive and depart from the airport, halting more than 400 arrivals from across Europe and other international airports including New York and Dakar. "All flights cancelled at #brusselsairport for the rest of the day. Avoid the surroundings of the airport," the airport said on Twitter. "All our thoughts go to the victims of the horrible events that happened here at #brusselsairport this morning, their family and friends."

Belgium's crisis centre urged people not to move. "No public transport. Stay where you are, also in schools, companies," it said on Twitter. Security forces tightened security at nuclear plants across the country, the Belga news agency said. "Surveillance is stepped up with added security measures at nuclear plants," the agency reported. "Vehicles are being checked with police and army on site," the agency added. The effects of the Brussels airport and train station closures rippled across Europe. Major stations in Paris remained open but AFP correspondents saw many police patrolling in the city's Gare du Nord, from where Eurostar operates trains to London and Brussels.

Eurostar said all trains to and from Brussels had been halted. "Following the incident in Brussels today we can confirm



BRUSSELS: A private security guard helps a wounded woman outside the Maalbeek metro station in Brussels yesterday after a blast at this station located near the EU institutions. — AFP



A wounded man lies inside Brussels Airport after the explosions yesterday. — AP



An injured woman leaves the scene at Brussels airport, after explosions rocked the facility in Brussels yesterday. — AP

that Eurostar services are currently suspended on the Brussels route. Public transport in and around Brussels is also severely disrupted," Eurostar said in a statement. "Our thoughts rest with anyone affected by the unfolding events in Brussels," it said. European high speed train service Thalys said all its traffic, too, had been stopped.

Dutch anti-terrorism services NCTV said they were raising airport security and tightening southern border controls. "We are taking extra security measures as a precaution," the Dutch service said in an online statement, notably stepping up police patrols at Amsterdam's Schiphol international airport, Rotterdam and Eindhoven. London Gatwick, Frankfurt and Moscow airports raised security, too. Among major airlines, British Airways and Lufthansa confirmed all flights departing from and arriving at Brussels had been cancelled for the day. France's civil aviation authority said five international flights headed for Brussels had been diverted to French airports. — AFP



The blown out facade of the terminal is seen at Zaventem airport, one of the sites of two deadly attacks in Brussels yesterday. — AP

Explosions rock Brussels

Explosions, at least one likely caused by a suicide bomber, rocked the Brussels airport and subway system Tuesday, prompting a lockdown of the Belgian capital. At least 26 people were reported dead and dozens of others injured.



TRUMP BACKS TOUGHER BORDER SECURITY, WATER BOARDING AFTER BRUSSELS ATTACKS

WASHINGTON: Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump renewed a call for tougher US border security following Tuesday's deadly attacks in Brussels, and suggested torture could be an effective technique to gain information to thwart future attacks.

Trump's comments, in an interview on NBC's "Today" program, came a day after he expressed skepticism about the US role in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and said the United States should significantly cut spending on the defense alliance.

"As president ... I would be very, very tough on the borders, and I would be not allowing certain people to come into this country without absolute perfect documentation," Trump said.

The billionaire businessman said water boarding would be a "fine" way to gather information in an effort to prevent such attacks if it was legalized.

"If they could expand the laws, I would do a lot more than water boarding. You have to get the information from these people," he told NBC.

Water boarding is the practice of pouring water over someone's face to simulate drowning as an interrogation tactic. Critics say it is torture, and President Barack Obama banned use of the method days after taking office in 2009.

Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton acknowledged Americans have a right to be frightened after a spate of recent attacks but said military leaders have found techniques like water boarding are not effective.

"We've got to work this through consistent with our values," she said on NBC, adding officials "do not need to resort to torture, but they are going to need more help."

Thirty-four people were killed in attacks on Brussels airport and a rush-hour metro train in the Belgian capital, according to public broadcaster VRT, triggering security alerts across Europe and bringing some cross-border traffic to a halt.

Adam Schiff, the top Democrat on the US House of Representatives Intelligence



Committee, said the attacks "bear all the hallmarks of an ISIS-inspired, or ISIS-coordinated attack," using an acronym for Islamic State. The attacks will likely revive national security as a key issue in the 2016 race for the White House, at least for now.

Trump's Republican rival John Kasich, the governor of Ohio, struck a more diplomatic tone, pledging to "redouble our efforts with our allies" and saying the United States "must strengthen our alliances" in the face of acts of terror.

US Senator Ted Cruz, a conservative who is running second to Trump in the Republican delegate count, called the blasts in Belgium "the latest in a string of coordinated attacks by radical Islamic terrorists." "Radical Islam is at war with us," he said in a statement posted online.

Trump looks to take another step toward

winning the Republican presidential nomination in contests in Arizona and Utah on Tuesday, aiming to deal another setback to the party establishment's flagging stop-Trump movement.

The billionaire businessman has rolled up a big lead in convention delegates who will pick the Republican nominee, defying weeks of attacks from members of the party establishment worried he will lead the Republicans to defeat in the Nov. 8 presidential election.

In Arizona, one of the US states that borders Mexico, Trump's hardliner immigration message is popular and he leads in polls, while in Utah Trump lags in polls behind Cruz.

Trump has called for the building of a wall on the US-Mexican border to halt illegal immigration and a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States. — Reuters

NEW YORK POISED TO END BAN ON PROFESSIONAL MMA

ALBANY: New York is poised to end its ban on professional mixed martial arts, the last state to prohibit the combat sport. Conducted inside a cage or other enclosure with a referee present, MMA bouts end when one fighter quits or gets knocked out or when judges decide after 15 or 25 minutes of fighting who the winner is.

The New York Assembly plans to vote this week after years of leaving the ban intact over fears that the sport was too violent. A Democrat-controlled chamber approved MMA in 2007, then subsequently balked. The Republican-controlled Senate, initially reluctant, has voted to legalize it for seven straight years.

Two Assembly committees voted early yesterday to advance it, with a floor vote expected later in the day. Assemblywoman Margaret Market, a Queens Democrat who chairs the tourism committee, said she initially opposed MMA after running into a group of destitute ex-boxers. Added protections for fighters have made it "palatable, at least to me at this point in time," she said. The committee voted 15-5 for it.

"This bill not only will bring professional mixed martial arts to New York, but just as importantly what it will do is it'll allow for rules and regulations that will offer protections for the amateur fighters as well," said Assemblyman Dean Murray, a Long Island Republican.

Assemblywoman Pat Fahy, an Albany Democrat, noted those changes but voted against it, citing its violence and growing evidence of serious brain injuries and concussions in football and boxing. "In football, con-

ussions can be incidental to the game. Here, it is more part of the sport," she said.

One early opponent was UNITE HERE, the hotel and restaurant workers' union, publicly citing American Medical Association opposition and the potential social costs of teens imitating fighters. One consistent advocate is Ultimate Fighting Championship, the sport's largest US promoter, whose backers are major owners of nonunion Station Casinos in Las Vegas.

UFC has its eyes on hosting a major fight card late this year at Madison Square Garden and predicts there will be other professional shows next year in Brooklyn, Buffalo and smaller cities. Fighters wear small, fingerless gloves and little else. They punch, kick, elbow, grapple, knee, trip, tackle, slam and choke each other inside a cage.

Advocates say it has evolved from rougher early days with more rules to protect fighters. Meanwhile, it's on television, and fighters train and amateurs compete in New York. Rules prohibit biting, eye gouging, head butts, finger bending and many other fouls.

The legislation would put MMA under the control of the State Athletic Commission, which regulates professional boxing with drug testing, officials and ringside doctors. It would have to prepare to do the same for MMA. Recently added legislative provisions would increase required insurance for fighters to \$50,000 for injuries and \$1 million for life-threatening brain injuries. It authorizes the state to study potential funding mechanisms for long-term care of fighters who develop degenerative brain conditions. — AP

TRUMP'S 'LOVE' FOR ISRAEL STILL NOT QUITE REQUITED 'HE IS A CHAUVINIST'

JERUSALEM: "I love the people in this room. I love Israel. I love Israel," Donald Trump told a convention of pro-Israel lobbyists in Washington this week. But the feeling still isn't quite mutual. At least not yet.

In Israel, where distrust of Democratic President Barack Obama runs deep and conservative Benjamin Netanyahu is in his fourth term as prime minister, many voters might have been expected to prefer a Republican to take the White House.

But the prospect that the candidate could be Trump—the real estate billionaire whose rhetoric toward ethnic minorities is widely viewed as

inflammatory and whose proposal to ban Muslims from entering the United States would affect nearly a fifth of Israelis—has alarmed politicians and voters alike.

An opinion poll published last week on Israel's Walla news site showed that 23 percent of Israelis want to see Trump in the Oval Office, compared to 38 percent who prefer the Democrats' frontrunner, ex-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

In December Trump called off a visit to Israel, saying he did not want to cause difficulty for Netanyahu, after Trump's proposal to ban Muslims from the United States drew an outcry. Netanyahu said at the time he was willing to meet any serious

US candidate, but strongly rejected Trump's views on Muslims, saying Israel "respects all religions and diligently guards the rights of its citizens".

Dozens of Israeli opposition lawmakers had signed a letter demanding Netanyahu call off the planned meeting. The letter's author said Trump's "racist" remarks meant plans for the prime minister to meet him were "disgracing Israel's democratic character and hurting its Muslim citizens". One signatory, an Israeli Arab lawmaker, called Trump a "neo-Nazi".

MAINSTREAM SPEECH

Three months later, with Trump now on course for his party's nomination, his speech on Monday to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee seemed designed to shift perceptions of him squarely back towards the Republican mainstream.

"Trump delivered a speech that could easily have been written in the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem," wrote Chemi Shalev, correspondent for Israeli newspaper Haaretz. "He went into the arena as a racist demagogue but soon came out as an ostensibly serious contender."

Trump, who normally disdains prepared remarks, read his speech out from a teleprompter. His criticism of Obama won applause from the room, and he noted that his daughter Ivanka, who converted to Judaism and married a Jewish man, will soon give birth to a "beautiful Jewish baby".

Unlike Clinton, who spoke at the gathering in a morning session on Monday, Trump made no mention of a main sticking point in a now-dormant peace process—Jewish settlement on occupied land that Palestinians seek for a state. Instead, he pushed all the traditional applause buttons at a high-energy event replete with swelling music, accounts of Israeli high-tech achievements and shots of waving, and sometimes kissing, audience members displayed on a big screen.

Among Trump's promises: dismantling a nuclear deal with Iran, vetoing any attempt by the United Nations to impose a peace settlement and moving the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which Israel considers its capital but almost all other countries, including the United States, do not. Still, Trump will have a way to go to win over many in a country suspicious of populist rhetoric. "He is a chauvinist, a violent person who hates the blacks, the Arabs - anyone who is not his color," said Orly Marx, a 55-year-old housewife from Herzliya, near Tel Aviv. — Reuters



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BLOCKED FROM PRESIDENCY, SUU KYI SET FOR MYANMAR CABINET

NAYPYIDAW: Aung San Suu Kyi was nominated as a cabinet minister in Myanmar's civilian government yesterday, giving the democracy veteran a formal position despite being blocked from the presidency in a nation ruled for decades by the military.

The Nobel laureate, who has vowed to rule above the next president Htin Kyaw, was named first in a list of ministers read out to lawmakers by the parliament speaker, who did not specify which position she or others would hold.

"I hereby present the list of names for those who should become union ministers, proposed to the parliament by the president-elect," parliament speaker Mann Win Khaing Than told MPs.

A parliamentary vote to confirm the posts is expected later in the week. Observers say Suu Kyi is likely to take the role of foreign minister, giving her a cabinet post, international clout and a seat at the country's influential Security Council, which is dominated by the still hugely powerful military. Under Myanmar's complex political rules, the cabinet role means she will likely have to forego her formal position as head of her National League for Democracy, which she led to a stunning victory in historic November elections that were the freest in generations.

Suu Kyi, 70, is the daughter of Myanmar's independence hero and has towered over the country's democracy movement as the figurehead of its spirited, non-violent struggle against decades of military rule.

Her ban from the presidency has been a thorn in the side of her party since it was allowed a space in parliament under the out-going quasi-civilian government led by President Thein Sein, a retired general. She is barred from the presidency by the junta-drafted constitution because her late husband, British academic Michael Aris, and two sons are British.

'Heart of government'

Suu Kyi has held several rounds of talks with army chief Min Aung Hlaing since the NLD scored a thundering majority in the elections, but was unable to remove the constitutional barrier that obstructs her path to the top political job.

Taking a role in the cabinet puts an end to speculation that she would opt for a position akin to India's Sonia Gandhi, who wielded huge influence over her Congress party's administration despite having no official government role.

"She wants to be at the heart of government. She wants to do it properly, and formally, and, this is important to her, legally," said Trevor Wilson, an academic at the Australian National University and former ambassador to Myanmar. He added that she would now be able to maintain a "very close eye on things that are important to her".

The incoming president, Htin Kyaw, is seen as having absolute loyalty to Suu Kyi as her long-term confidante and ally. But his novice administration faces a raft of challenges-including conflict in ethnic minority border areas, entrenched poverty and the need to rapidly improve the country's decrepit infrastructure and long-neglected education and health services.

Another key challenge will be smoothing relations with the army that locked up Suu Kyi and other NLD politicians for years during their campaign against oppressive junta rule. The military still holds strong political sway under a charter that reserves a quarter of parliament seats for unelected soldiers and grants the army chief direct control over three key ministries; home affairs, border affairs and defense.

The new government has offered few hints about its policies, although it has set about streamlining the country's notoriously labyrinthine civil service by combining ministries and reducing the number of ministers. —AFP

CHADIAN GANG-RAPE VICTIM DEMANDS JUSTICE FOR ALL WOMEN

'I TALKED, I TALKED. THEY THREATENED ME.'

PARIS: Chadian teenager Zouhoua, whose gang-rape by young men from well-to-do families sparked unprecedented mass protests in her country, says she wants justice for herself and for "all women" who have long suffered in silence.

On February 8, the fragile-looking 16-year-old was assaulted in a brutal attack that shocked many in the poor central African nation, triggering weeks of demonstrations by thousands of young people in the streets.

Zouhoua was on her way to school in the capital N'Djamena with a friend when a car with tinted windows pulled up alongside them. Five boys were in the vehicle, whom Zouhoua later learned were rich sons of the ruling class.

"They grabbed me by the neck and threw me into the car," Zouhoua told AFP, stammering with emotion, her voice still almost child-like. "They took me outside the city by force... You know the rest." Zouhoua has since returned to France, where she already lived with relatives from 2009 to 2015. She decided to speak out publicly in Paris to fight impunity for sex criminals in her homeland. "There has never been justice before over the rape of a Chadian woman," said Zouhoua, her gaze firm from beneath a grey headscarf.

'I'm not sole victim'

"I'm not the only victim. There are other women and girls who have been raped - I know them - and they have remained anonymous, they have said nothing," she added in an interview Friday. Encouraged by her father, who lives in the eastern French town of Nancy and is an opponent of the hardline regime of President Idriss Deby Itno, Zouhoua agreed to address a meeting and give an interview.

"I expected him to say 'Wait, we need to settle this in the family,' but no, he didn't hesitate. He



PARIS: Zouhoua, who was kidnapped and raped by young Chadians dignitaries of the regime, holds a press conference, on March 18, 2016. — AFP

told me to 'go and file a lawsuit,'" the youngster said of her father. "To start with, I said nothing, but later, when I saw that everybody was supporting me, I told myself, why not speak out, (and) fight this?" When Zouhoua turned to the police in Chad, "at first they didn't react." Detectives considered that a rape claim against the sons of senior officials in the regime was taboo. "I talked, I talked. They threatened me."

Furious to discover that Zouhoua was seeking action against them, the alleged rapists posted images of the assault on social networks.

But their action backfired: photos of the naked girl in tears sent a shockwave of disgust across Chad. Despite the regime's tight security, which leaves opponents little room for manoeuvre, hundreds of schoolchildren demonstrated in the capital on February 15.

They were dispersed by riot police and one youth, 17-year-old Abbachou Hassan Ousmane, was shot dead. The protest movement spread to other Chadian towns in the days that followed. More young demonstrators were wounded and at least 17 were arrested, but the wave of solidarity spread abroad.

'No justice in Chad'

To see Chadians from the diaspora joining the protest as far afield as London and Washington, "that encouraged me," Zouhoua said. When Chadian authorities "saw that the people were demonstrating and that my picture was circulating everywhere on social networks, they were quick to arrest the criminals," she added.

The five alleged rapists, who include the sons of three generals, were taken into custody together with four suspected accomplices, including a son of Foreign Minister Moussa Faki Mahamat. But Zouhoua doubts that they will ever be brought to trial. "In Chad, there is no justice... I am not even sure that they are in prison." Although she is sceptical, she is determined to at least try to have them held to account. "I want justice to be done, so that this doesn't happen again," she said.

Zouhoua's voice sometimes chokes and a tear rolls down her cheek. It is tough to speak out to journalists about rape. But "it had to be done, it was necessary," she insisted. The teenager plans to "continue this fight", then later, perhaps, resume studies that were so brutally interrupted. — AFP

AUSTRALIA ARRESTS TWO SUSPECTED OF ISLAMIC STATE FINANCING

SYDNEY: Yesterday Australian police said they had arrested two people, including a 16-year-old girl, on suspicion of raising funds to support operations of the Islamic State militant group.

The arrests in a Sydney suburb on Monday of the schoolgirl and a man, aged 20, were part of counter-terrorism operations aimed at thwarting attacks by domestic radicals at home and disrupting the flow of funds to foreign fighters overseas.

"We anticipate that both these people will be charged later today and attend court and the charge that we anticipate they will have is one of financing terrorism," New

South Wales state police Deputy Commissioner Catherine Burn told reporters. "We will be alleging that they were involved in obtaining money to send offshore to assist the Islamic State in its activities," she said.

Australia's anti-money laundering agency said in November reports of suspected militant financing had tripled in the past year, with more than A\$50 million (\$38 million) that could be used to support militants being investigated.

The amounts being sent in this particular case were small and most likely used to help facilitate the travel of foreign fighters

into Syria, an Australian Federal Police source told Reuters on condition of anonymity. "They are doing it usually by credit cards or ATM cards - pretty easy. It's not that much money. Some of it is a very small amount of money ... sometimes less than \$1,000," he said.

'BASIS FOR CHARGES'

Authorities believe dozens of Australians have traveled to Syria and Iraq to fight alongside Islamic State militants. Australia, a staunch US ally, has been on heightened alert for attacks by home-grown radicals since 2014 and authorities say they have

thwarted a number of potential attacks, while there have been several "lone wolf" assaults.

Islamic State raises the majority of its funding from oil, kidnapping and other illicit activities in far greater amounts than what is sent by individuals, said Greg Barton, a terrorism expert at Deakin University.

Arrests like those made this week were more valuable in identifying and arresting Australians who may be at risk of further radicalization than they in putting a dent in militant finances. "It's more this gives us the basis for figuring out the connection and it also gives us the basis for laying charges," he

told Reuters.

Australian Federal Police Deputy Commissioner Michael Phelan said the latest arrests were not connected to any threat of an imminent attack.

In 2014, police shot dead a Melbourne teenager after he stabbed two counter-terrorism officers. Three months later, two hostages were killed when police stormed a Sydney cafe to end a siege by a lone gunman, who was also killed.

A 15-year-old boy fired on an accountant at police headquarters in a Sydney suburb last October and was then killed in a gunfight with police. —Reuters



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CHRISTIAN CONVERT HACKED TO DEATH IN BANGLADESH

DHAKA: Unidentified attackers hacked a Christian convert to death in northern Bangladesh yesterday, amid growing attacks on religious minorities by suspected Islamist militants in the Muslim-majority country.

Police said at least two attackers stopped Hossain Ali while the 68-year-old was taking his regular morning walk in the town of Kurigram and

then lunged at his neck with sharp weapons. "He died on the spot. The attackers exploded a molotov cocktail to create panic and left the scene on a motorcycle," Kurigram district police chief Tobarak Ullah told AFP.

Ullah said Ali had converted to Christianity from Islam in 1999 but he was not sure whether the deadly attack was carried out by Islamists or

if there was another motive. "He was not a pastor or reputed Christian. Also there were some disputes over his family properties," Ullah said.

Nobody has claimed responsibility for the killing. But in recent months militants claiming to be soldiers of the Islamic State group have claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on converts and minorities including

Shiite, Sufi and Ahmadi Muslims, Christians and Hindus.

Last week the IS said it killed a Shiite convert from Sunni Islam in the southwestern town of Kaliganj. In January an alleged Christian convert was also murdered by the same group.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government denies that Islamic

State has a presence in Bangladesh. It blames the banned homegrown militant group Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh for the upsurge in deadly violence. Bangladesh has been plagued by unrest in the last three years. Experts say a long-running political crisis has radicalised opponents of the government. — AFP



SEOUL: U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Russel, answers a reporter's question after the meeting with South Korean senior officials at the Foreign Ministry. — AP

UN LIFTS NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS ON FOUR SHIPS AT CHINA'S REQUEST

'IT ACHIEVED AN IMPACT, A REAL WORLD OUTCOME'

UNITED NATIONS/SEOUL: UN Security Council agreed on Monday to a Chinese request to remove sanctions on four ships the United Nations had blacklisted for ties to Pyongyang's arms trade. The agreement came after China secured assurances the vessels would not use North Korean crews, a US official said.

China asked the United States on March 16 for help removing the ships from the UN blacklist, according to a diplomatic cable sent the same day from the US permanent mission at the United Nations to a group of other US embassies.

The cable, reviewed by Reuters, showed wrangling between top diplomats from the United States and China over the tough new North Korea sanctions, weeks after Washington had presented a united front with Beijing, Pyongyang's main ally and trade partner.

The US mission at the United Nations declined to comment on the cable or make its ambassador, Samantha Power, available for an interview about the cable. The US Treasury Department, which administers US economic and financial sanctions, also declined to comment.

The removal of the four ships was confirmed in a press release, which was seen by Reuters and will soon be issued by the Security Council, according to UN diplomats.

While Washington has been the driving force behind the toughening international sanctions regime, China conducts 90 percent of the trade with North Korea and is the key to enforcing them.

FOURTH NUCLEAR TEST

The ships were among 31 vessels sanctioned by the 15-member council on March 2 because they were linked to Ocean Maritime Management (OMM), a North Korean shipping firm known to transport arms and other illicit goods for the secretive state.

"We discovered that they are not OMM ships," Chinese UN Ambassador Liu Jieyi told Reuters on Monday. "The basis for the listing of the ships is basically that they belong to OMM, so if you make a mistake, then you correct the mistake."

US and other Western officials have said all the original listings were carefully vetted before the ships were added to the blacklist. That list was appended to the sweeping Security Council resolutions implemented on March 2, following North Korea's fourth nuclear test in January.

The US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Security Council committee on North Korea sanctions agreed to the request after China secured written commitments the four ships would no longer use North Korean crews.

The four ships include the Jin Teng, a cargo ship detained by the Philippines days after the sanctions took effect.

"We're pleased with the outcome," said the official. "It achieved an impact, a real world outcome." He added it was a sign of a "productive working relationship with China" on North Korea and that it was "gratifying to see such instant real-world effects" of the UN sanctions regime.

US FRUSTRATION

Liu had raised the issue of the four sanctioned vessels last week in a meeting with Power, his US counterpart, according to the cable reviewed by Reuters.

Power approved the unclassified cable, which went from the US mission at the UN to American embassies in Manila, Tokyo and Seoul. The cable pointed to American frustration with what US officials characterized as China's attempts to hold up the routine renewal of a UN panel of experts in return for de-listing the ships. The panel is made up of a team of international experts who monitor and research potential breaches of resolutions against North Korea and recommend entities that could be sanctioned.

Liu had asked Power's help in removing the ships from the list in an "easy, smooth and quick way," to get the panel renewed, according to the document's characterization of Liu's request. The easiest way, Liu said, "would be to work quickly to get all these issues settled," according to the cable.

Power told Liu China's linking of the issues and attempts to hold up the renewal of the panel was "not going over well in Washington," according to the cable, and asked China to let the renewal go forward.

"You don't need to blackmail us, Power said, as we are indeed interested in operating in good faith," the cable says of Power's conversation with Liu. Liu told Reuters on Monday he expected the experts panel would be "renewed according to the normal procedure in the Security Council". — Reuters

BREAKAWAY TALEBAN GROUP DENIES ITS LEADER DETAINED IN PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD: The leader of a breakaway faction of the Taliban is leading his fighters in Afghanistan, his deputy said yesterday, contradicting three senior members of the Islamist group and denying a newspaper report that he had been detained.

Three senior Taliban told Reuters that Mullah Mohammad Rasoul, who leads a faction that has rejected the authority of the Islamist movement's leader, Mullah Mohammad Mansour, had been detained two weeks ago in Baluchistan province on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Pakistan's Express Tribune newspaper said that Rasoul was being held by Pakistani authorities. Quoting two unnamed Taliban leaders, the newspaper said Rasoul was held in Pakistan after fleeing Afghanistan following heavy fighting in recent months with militants loyal to Mansour.

Rasoul's deputy, Mullah Abdul Manan Niazi, dismissed the report as "propaganda of our enemies" and two Pakistani security officials also denied the report. "Mullah Rasoul is in Afghanistan and leading his fighters," Niazi said. But he added that his group's survival did not depend on one leader. "Our resistance will not stop with the arrest or killing of Mullah Rasoul or any other leader," Niazi said.

The mixed reports add a further twist to the opaque nature of the leadership of the Taliban, who control or threaten

more Afghan territory than at any time since their hard-line government was toppled in 2001. Rasoul is the biggest rival to Mansour, who claimed the leadership of the Taliban last year after news emerged of founder Mullah Omar's death and who has been shoring up support against rival factions.

His faction has firmly opposed joining peace talks with the Afghan government and accuses Mansour of covering up Mullah Omar's death and being under the control of Pakistan.

One senior member of the faction loyal to Mullah Mansour said that Rasoul had been in hiding in the western Afghan city of Herat but had recently decided to move to Pakistan, where many Taliban leaders are believed to be living. Two senior Pakistani security officials denied Rasoul was in Pakistani custody.

"Our last information is that he fled in fighting in Afghanistan," one of the officials said, requesting anonymity. Alongside its recent battlefield successes, the movement has been in turmoil since last year when it was forced to admit that Mullah Omar had died two years earlier.

Mansour was reported to have been shot and wounded in a leadership dispute last year and dozens of Taliban fighters were killed in clashes between the two factions in the southern Afghan province of Zabul. Taliban officials denied reports last year of Mansour's injuries. — Reuters

NORTH KOREAN CONSULAR OFFICIAL IN CHINA KILLS TWO IN CAR CRASH

BEIJING: A North Korean consular official in China has killed two people in a car crash, China's Foreign Ministry said yesterday, reporting the accident shortly after China came out in support of sanctions against its ally over its nuclear program.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency earlier reported the North Korean official was driving drunk, and the accident took place after he had left an event celebrating North Korea's launch of a long-range rocket on Feb 7.

China's Foreign Ministry did not mention those details in a statement to Reuters but said the official's vehicle hit a taxi in the city of Dandong, near the North Korean border, early on Feb 10, killing the driver and a passenger.

The North Korean official had paid compensation to the families of the victims, the ministry added, in a rare revelation of wrongdoing by an official of an allied power. China is North Korea's sole major ally but China disapproves of its nuclear program. The North conducted its fourth nuclear

test on Jan. 6 and a month later launched what it said was a space rocket. The United States and other critics said the launch was cover for its development of ballistic missile technology that could be used to deliver a nuclear weapon.

The UN Security Council unanimously agreed this month to harsh new sanctions, drafted by the United States and China, on North Korea to starve it of money for its nuclear weapons program. US State Department officials have expressed optimism that the sanctions may be more effective than earlier attempts to curtail North Korea's nuclear program, pointing to China's apparent willingness to support them.

Officials at North Korea's embassy in Beijing could not be reached for comment. Crime committed by North Koreans in China has frequently sparked public outrage in China, particularly after a string of murders apparently carried out by deserters from the North Korean army in villages near the border last year. — Reuters



TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Pakistani family members mourn the death of a relative who died after drinking tainted alcohol. — AFP

15 DEAD FROM ALCOHOL POISONING IN SOUTHERN PAKISTAN: OFFICIALS

KARACHI: At least 15 people including two women died in a southern Pakistani town after drinking tainted liquor, with dozens more sickened, police said yesterday.

The incident is the latest to highlight the proliferation of low-grade liquor in the Islamic country, which officially bars Muslims from drinking. The poisonings occurred on Monday evening in the town of Tando Muhammad Khan, some 250 kilometers northeast of Karachi.

"So far we have reports of 15 deaths including two women," Nasim Ara Panwar, the town's senior police officer told AFP. Most of the victims were minority Hindus, she added. A second police official who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media confirmed the incident and toll. "Thirty-seven people were brought to hospitals, of whom 15 died, 11 were discharged and 11 others are still being treated," he said.

Panwar added police had made four arrests in relation to the incident but were chasing a key suspect who remained at large. "We have confiscated 65,000 liters of liquor only two days ago but their production is very high," she said.

Gayan Chand Israni, the minister in charge of excise and taxation, which regulates alcohol, said an inquiry was underway and several officials had been suspended for negligence. Though legal breweries exist in Pakistan, the sale of alcohol and consumption is prohibited for Muslims and tightly regulated for minorities and foreigners.

While wealthy Pakistanis buy bootlegged foreign alcohol at heavily inflated prices, the poor often resort to home-brews that can contain methanol, commonly used in antifreeze and fuel. In October 2014 at least 29 drinkers were killed after consuming methanol-tainted liquor over the Eid public holidays. — AFP

CHINA WIDENS BAN ON IVORY IMPORTS

BEIJING: Yesterday China said it has widened a ban on ivory imports as it comes under pressure to restrict a trade which sees thousands of African elephants slaughtered every year.

Imports of all ivory and ivory products acquired before 1975 will be banned until the end of the decade, the State Forestry Administration said on its website. The measure came into force on Sunday.

It also extended until the same date existing bans on imports of African ivory carvings acquired after 1975, and all ivory hunting trophies. China is seen as the major source of demand for African ivory, with prices for a kilogram reaching as much as \$1,100.

Conservationists estimate that more than 20,000 elephants were killed for their ivory last year, with similar tolls in previous years. The WWF campaign group says 470,000 of the animals remain. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) took effect in 1975. It banned the ivory trade in 1989.

Like other countries, China permits the resale of ivory bought before the 1989 ban-and also has a stockpile purchased with CITES approval in 2008, which it releases for sale with certification. Activists say the trade in legal ivory acts as a cover for illegal imports and call for a complete ban on sales.

The issue came up during President Xi Jinping's state visit to the US last year, when the White House said in a statement that the two countries "commit to enact nearly complete bans on ivory import and export".

The measures would include "significant and timely" restrictions on hunting trophy imports and steps to halt domestic commercial ivory trade, the statement added. Beijing imposed a temporary ban on imports of ivory carvings last year, but campaigners described the move as more symbolic than effective.

The Chinese territory of Hong Kong - a key

hub for the trade-said in January it would tighten restrictions on ivory imports and exports including a ban on trade in hunting trophies, but did not give a clear timescale. China's newly extended import bans do not outlaw its existing domestic trade, and appear to potentially allow imports of some raw ivory dating from after 1975.

The State Forestry Administration said imports of ivory artifacts for "teaching and scientific research, cultural exchange, public display

and law enforcement" purposes were not covered by the extended ban.

Experts say most illegal ivory is headed for China, where it is seen as a status symbol. By some estimates the country accounts for as much as 70 percent of global demand. Underlining the scale of the trade, state media reported Monday that police in south China's Guangdong province seized about 450 kilograms of smuggled ivory in a raid earlier this month. — AFP



BEIJING: Carved ivory displayed to the media before being destroyed. — AFP

VESSEL CARRYING PLUTONIUM DEPARTS JAPAN PORT FOR US

TOKYO: A nuclear transport vessel carrying a huge cache of plutonium-enough to produce 50 nuclear bombs-to be returned to the US left a Japanese port yesterday afternoon.

The stockpile, provided by the United States, Britain and France decades ago for research purposes, is being shipped to the US as part of a bilateral storage deal. Television footage by national broadcaster NHK showed containers being loaded on to the Britain-registered ship at a port in Tokaimura, northeast of Tokyo, close to

where the highly-toxic substance has been stored, and the ship leaving the port. The vessel carrying the 331 kilograms of plutonium departed at about 3 pm (0600 GMT) under tight security guarded by patrol boats of the Japan Coast Guard, according to NHK.

The government "cannot reveal" the vessel's itinerary or any other details, an official told AFP, but anti-nuclear campaign groups said it will take two months for the ship to arrive at a nuclear facility in South Carolina. A Japanese official told AFP last

week that the material will be disposed of in the US. Five anti-nuclear groups, including Greenpeace, said in a joint statement yesterday released ahead of the vessel's departure that the shipment "exposes the failure of global plutonium reprocessing program and the threat from current Japanese nuclear policy."

The stockpile has caused disquiet among anti-nuclear campaigners and neighboring countries given Japan has the know-how to produce a nuclear weapon-even as it adamantly chooses

not to. The shipment comes ahead of a nuclear security summit in Washington from late this month, and is meant to underscore both countries' commitment to nuclear non-proliferation.

But anti-nuclear campaigners including Greenpeace last week condemned the shipment as a "dangerous distraction" from what they said is a far larger cache of roughly 10 tons of plutonium in the country. In Beijing, China's foreign ministry yesterday called on Japan to take further steps to reduce its stockpiles. "In addition,

it should return large quantities of other materials, including weapons-grade plutonium and enriched uranium," ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters. "This is indeed a concern of the international community."

Japan traditionally has relied heavily on nuclear technology for its energy needs, though the aftermath of the March 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster led to all of the country's reactors being shut down, with only a few coming back on line so far. — AFP



KANGDING: A woman walks on a street at in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. — AFP

STRUGGLE IN THE CITY FOR TIBETAN NOMADS

CHINA: By mid-morning, Lobsang's leather cowboy hat is askew, his black robes disheveled, and his breath stinks of booze. Once a nomad herder roaming the high Tibetan plateau, instead he stumbles around his sparse new concrete house.

For decades he and his wife grazed yaks and sheep, living a life little changed in centuries, until they acquiesced three years ago to government calls to give up their yak-hair tents for permanent housing.

Now they live in a resettlement village, row after row of identical blue-roofed grey shells, an hour's drive from Aba in Sichuan province along winding mountain roads.

"Everything changed when we moved to this town," said Tashi, who like her husband is in her 40s but not sure of her exact age. "First we ran out of money, then he couldn't find suitable work and then he started drinking more and more." Chinese authorities say urbanization in Tibetan areas and elsewhere will increase industrialization and economic development, offering former nomads higher living standards and better protecting the environment.

Those who move receive an urban hukou-China's strictly controlled internal residence permits that determine access to social services. The government offers free or heavily subsidized houses, medical insurance, and free schooling. But critics say the drive has a one-size-fits-all approach and many former pastoralists have not prospered, despite its promises. Unlike the voluntary urbanization of the early 2000s, when many adults maintained subsistence lifestyles while sending children and the elderly into towns, Andrew Fischer, of the International Institute of Social Studies at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, said: "The policy lock, stock and barrel shoves nomads into these resettlements thinking that is good for them. But then that gives rise to a variety of related problems like unemployment, social problems, alcoholism, et cetera, which are typical hallmarks of rapid social dislocation," he told AFP. At the resettlement facility, many relocated former herders complained to AFP they lacked

work or training.

Dolkar, 42, sold his last 13 yaks for 85,000 yuan two years ago, a decision he now regrets, and has yet to find stable employment. "I thought this was a lot of money, but I didn't realise things in the town would be so expensive," he lamented. "A person from the government came and convinced me I should move, but now I see I've lost so much. I want to go back, but it's too late."

Now available urban jobs are low-wage, manual positions in construction or sanitation. But many nomads shun menial labor, having enjoyed wealthy status in the Tibetan community by virtue of their valuable livestock holdings. "Sending people to urban areas only helps if there are jobs there," Fischer said. "It's not like everyone can become a petty entrepreneur selling dumplings in the marketplace, the jobs need to be there and in the absence of that, the government moving them to urban areas isn't going to help."

Separatist forces

Critics say one goal of the urbanization campaign is to give authorities more oversight over the people of Tibet, which has been ruled by Beijing since 1951. The resettlement village AFP visited is in what was Kham, the eastern part of pre-invasion Tibet, where Khampa warriors fought Communist forces, sometimes with CIA backing, until the late 1960s.

Since 2000, government statistics show that urban residents have leaped by about 60 percent in the Tibet region itself, where officials launched a program five years ago to establish Communist cadre teams in every locality.

The region's top Party official, Chen Quanguo, has said each village should become a "fortress" to guard against and combat the infiltration of Tibetan separatist forces. Urbanization efforts "concentrate people into areas where they are far easier to surveil and where they become more dependent on state subsidies to survive-in other words, where they are easier to control", Sophie Richardson, China director at Human Rights Watch, told AFP. — AFP

FEARFUL OF CHINA, ESCAPEES EMBARK ON A RISKY VOYAGE

AS THEY WAIT FOR YEARS TO BE RECOGNIZED AS REFUGEES

BANGKOK: Dong Junming was detained several times in his Chinese homeland before he and his family fled to Bangkok in February 2015. A year later, he was preparing to make a more desperate journey to evade Chinese authorities who still felt dangerously close.

In the months since he arrived in Thailand, dozens of Chinese asylum-seekers have been sent back home by Thai authorities. Other dissidents have simply disappeared from Thailand and Hong Kong before re-emerging in mainland Chinese custody. Beijing appears increasingly eager to snatch back countrymen who have attempted to escape its grasp. Dong is a practitioner of the Falun Gong spiritual movement, which is banned in China and whose members are persecuted there. He, his wife and daughter have a long wait to obtain refugee status and get resettled in a third country - they won't even interview with the UN refugee agency until at least 2017. In the meantime, he's unable to work legally and his family's travel documents have expired.

So Dong decided to flee once more. This time it would be by boat, to New Zealand, some 6,000 miles away. The country is so isolated that, as far as authorities know, not one refugee boat has successfully reached its shores. He would leave with six other Chinese adults, including a couple taking their two sons, ages 1 and 7. They believed New Zealand offered them the best chance of gaining refugee status. Dong, as well as eight other Chinese dissidents living in Thailand who did not make the boat journey, described lives of anxiety and frustration bordering on outright despair in interviews with The Associated Press. Though free and under no immediate deportation threat, Dong said he feared what the future might bring. So when offered a berth on the yacht in January, he took it.

The risks

"It's highly risky out there on the ocean, but we are so fearful here in Thailand that I thought I should take the risk," he said. Dong and fellow travelers boarded the yacht the night of Feb. 29. The captain was democracy activist Li Xiaolong, the father of both children aboard. He bought the secondhand vessel, which also carried his wife and two brothers.

They had a month's supply of food and water. Their confidence was boosted by a fellow activist who succeeded in making a shorter sea voyage from Thailand to Australia. They believed their own journey would be smooth. They were wrong.

Fears over the growing reach of Chinese security services crystallized among many Chinese dissidents with the recent disappearances of people associated with a Hong Kong bookstore that sold gossipy titles on the lives of Chinese leaders. One of the missing was believed to have been abducted from Thailand, another from Hong Kong, though both have since said they voluntarily returned to mainland China.

Asylum-seekers in Thailand were more alarmed that the Thai government sent back about 100 asylum-seekers from China's Turkic Muslim Uighur minority last summer, and repatriated two Chinese dissidents in November, saying they violated immigration rules. Critics viewed Thailand's mili-



KUNMING: In this image taken from a July 9, 2015 video footage run by China's CCTV, hooded ethnic Uighurs are escorted from a plane by Chinese security officials after being deported from Thailand. — AP

tary-led government as catering to China, its biggest trading partner.

With President Xi Jinping at China's helm and brimming with confidence, the communist government is pursuing greater cooperation with police abroad. One aspect of the campaign popular within China is Beijing's Skynet operation, which seeks the return of corrupt Chinese officials and others accused of absconding overseas with ill-gotten gains. Since October 2014, China has seen the return of 124 corruption suspects who had fled to 34 countries, the country's chief justice told the national legislature this month.

That campaign has had limited success in the US, which has no extradition treaty with China and requires evidence that the offences they are accused of by China would also constitute a crime

in America. Beijing has raised the heat not only on corruption suspects but also on dissidents who fled China. Forced repatriations and alleged abductions have particularly rattled Chinese asylum-seekers who have congregated in Thailand, where the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has an office.

"Beijing has become so ruthless that it grants us no way out at all," said Hu Junxiong, a democracy activist who fled to Thailand last year, after Chinese authorities detained him 35 days for helping other activists with computer and technology issues. "It won't let us flee, but stays on our tail to catch us and bring us back to China, where we surely will be met with harsh persecutions and end up in misery," Hu said in an interview from Bangkok. — AP

AN AIRLINE GLITCH LEAVES 16,000 STRANDED IN TOKYO

TOKYO: A computer system malfunction forced Japan's All Nippon Airways to cancel more than 100 domestic flights yesterday, affecting some 16,000 travelers, the carrier said. ANA ground staff at Tokyo's Haneda airport apologized to stranded passengers, some who could be seen making mobile phone calls and sending text messages while children sat on the floor of the crowded terminal hall playing video games.

Passengers lined up patiently at counters to arrange new reservations for later flights as the airline's reservation and check-in hall overflowed with inconvenienced travelers. ANA said it spotted something wrong at

about 8.20 am yesterday (2320 GMT Monday) and though the problem was largely resolved about three hours later at least 127 domestic flights were cancelled.

The trouble stopped reservations, ticket sales and boarding procedures, affecting the travel plans of at least 15,200 passengers as of 1.40 pm (0440 GMT), said spokeswoman Natsuki Uota. "The boarding procedure system recovered at 11.30 am, but we still have trouble with reservations and ticket sales," Uota said early yesterday afternoon. The airline was investigating what caused the system to go down. — AFP

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'MISSION ACCOMPLISHED'
FOR WAR CRIMES COURT?

By Jo Biddle

Srebrenica, Vukovar, Sarajevo: towns and cities indelibly scarred by a painful and shameful history and seared forever into Europe's collective conscience. For 23 years, their names and the memories of tens of thousands of victims have stalked the halls of the UN tribunal set up to punish those behind genocide, mass rapes and ethnic cleansing during Yugoslavia's violent death throes.

Now as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) prepares to deliver its final verdicts before closing its doors in 2017 and handing over to another mechanism, opinion on its legacy is divided. Established by a UN mandate in May 1993, the court based in The Hague was a trailblazer in laying down ground-breaking jurisprudence for trying the worst of all crimes-a decade before the creation of the International Criminal Court.

With a judgment on Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic due on Thursday and a verdict expected in 2017 against notorious military chief Ratko Mladic, prosecutors say they have fulfilled a tough mission. The ICTY itself boasts "it has irreversibly changed the landscape of international humanitarian law and provided victims an opportunity to voice the horrors they witnessed and experienced". It also has an unrivalled record-all of the 161 people indicted on charges of genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity have been caught and processed.

No fugitives

Even though former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic died in his cell in 2006 before his trial ended, 80 others have been sentenced, most of whom are still serving long jail terms. "I think that the tribunal has done what it had to do. I can say mission accomplished," chief prosecutor Serge Brammertz said. In the convulsions which tore apart Yugoslavia, national courts would not have been able to do the same work as the ICTY, which "can close with no fugitives at large, with all trials processed," he said.

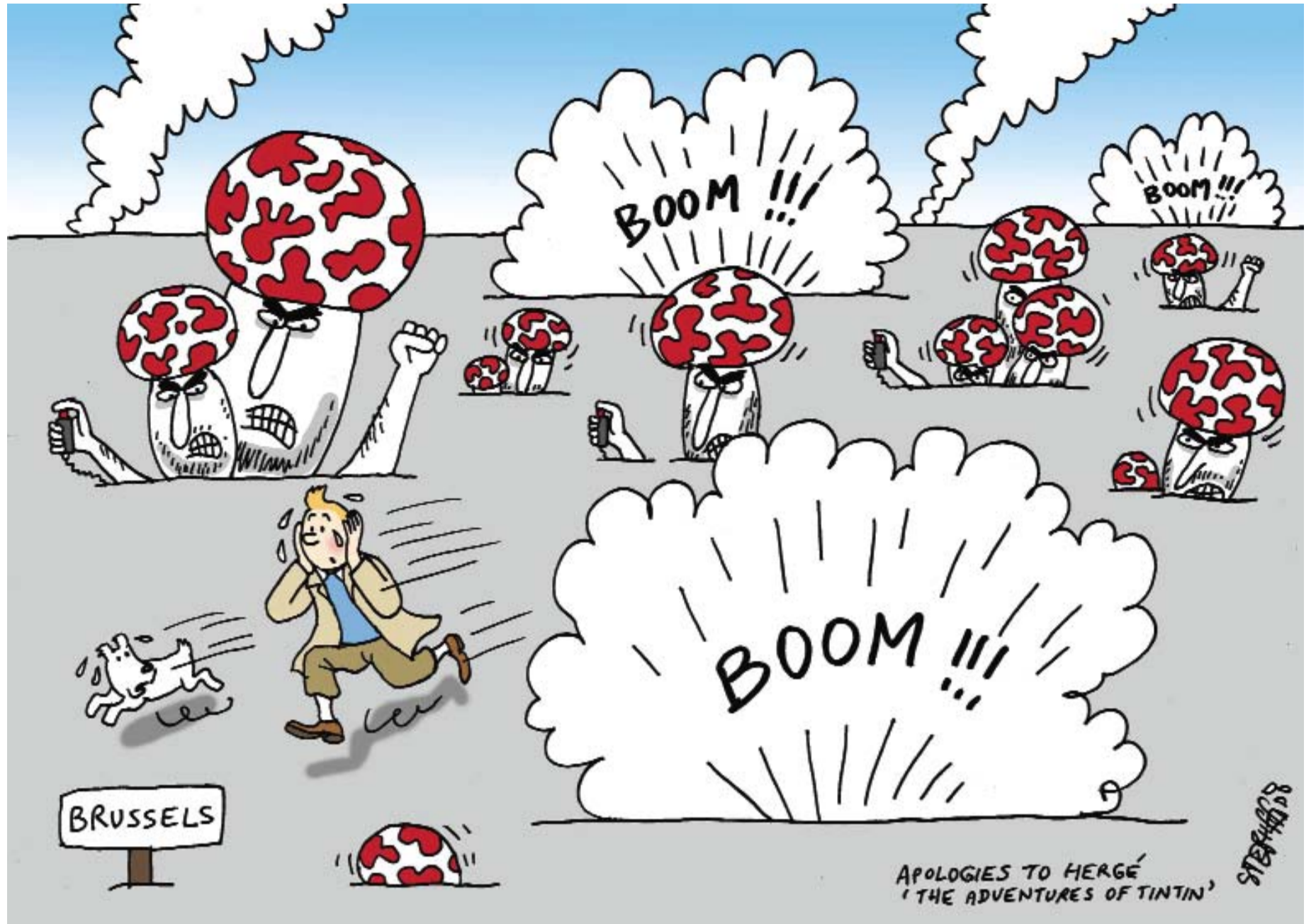
The court played an important role in investigating atrocities on the ground-even during the height of the fighting-amassing nine million pages of documents, leaving a major legacy for historians and activists. Brammertz also highlights the ICTY's outreach to national courts established in Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia where thousands of individuals are still under investigation. "National prosecutions have shrunk the space for denial," said former US ambassador for war crimes issues Stephen Rapp.

Prosecutions and accountability are "one of the ways you remove the poison that affects the whole body politic," added Rapp, now an expert with The Hague Institute for Global Justice. But the court's reputation was undeniably blemished by several high-profile acquittals, amid unsubstantiated rumors of pressure by the United States. And experts caution that some of the tribunal's loftiest ambitions-such as its UN mission to restore and maintain peace in the region-remain unfulfilled. "I don't think that's necessarily the fault of the tribunal," said war crimes expert Rachel Kerr, a senior lecturer at King's College, London. "It may be that the lesson that can be taken from it, is that international criminal justice is not actually the best tool for fostering peace and reconciliation," she said. American Eric Stover, who was among the first investigators on the ground and helped uncover a mass grave containing 200 bodies in the Croatian town of Vukovar in 1992, agrees. "Courts are backwards looking. They look at the facts and adjudicate individual responsibility. They're not designed as social engineering institutions," said Stover, now director of the Human Rights Center at the University of California, Berkeley.

Skewed legacy

Another problem was that, over time, the court was to some extent "hijacked" by the political agendas of the new Balkan nations as they jostled to join the European Union. The narrative was presented "that people were again sacrificing themselves for the good of Serbia by going up to this court that 'we don't recognize the legitimacy of... because we're going to get EU accession," said Kerr. And while justice has been served for many, the sheer scale of the barbarity means it has not been delivered to all, experts agree. Perhaps the court's most telling legacy are the haunting statements of those who pleaded guilty. "This responsibility is mine and mine alone," former Bosnian Serb president Biljana Plavsic told the court in 2002, before being sentenced to 11 years in prison. "The knowledge that I am responsible for such human suffering and for soiling the character of my people will always be with me." — AFP

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NEARING PEACE, COLOMBIANS SEEK MISSING LOVED ONES

By Alba Tobella

Dora Gonzalez found her dead husband's body, but her son-like tens of thousands of other victims in Colombia's half-century civil conflict-is still missing. "You live your life wondering whether he is still alive, whether they are torturing him, whether he is eating properly," she said. She has not seen her son German since 1995, when he was 13. He left to go to his aunt's house and vanished. In December, she found her husband Carlos and has given up all hope of finding German alive. "Horrible, horrible," said Dora, 54, fighting back tears as she recalled seeing her husband's remains. "I looked at his bones. I looked at his head, where they shot him. I saw how his bones had turned dark. That is very hard."

She had last seen Carlos in January 2006, before the Colombian army captured him while he was bathing in a river. She was told later that he was alleged to have been killed in combat. Army troops are accused of killing civilians and passing them off as FARC guerrillas to win rewards. State prosecutors located Carlos Hernandez's remains in a cemetery where they were released last year under an agreement made during peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the leftist FARC rebel force. The two sides are holding talks in Cuba and closing on a peace deal to end the conflict. They had hoped to sign a deal this Wednesday, but that deadline is looking uncertain.

Thousands missing

State investigators say they have recovered 6,500 bodies and handed 3,100 of them over to the victims' families. But tens of thousands more are thought still to lie in remote and hard-to-reach areas. "There is one subject that has not been discussed: the people whose bodies are missing in rivers and places where it will be difficult for us to find anything," said Mabel Carrero, a state prosecution official working on exhumations. There are some 45,000 people listed as missing due to the conflict, which started in the 1960s with a peasant uprising and has drawn in various armed groups.

The International Committee of the Red Cross estimates that hundreds of thousands of people have suffered "forced disappear-

ances" in the Colombian conflict. "The main need the families have is to know-to know where the person is, what happened and in what circumstances," said Deborah Schibler, the committee's representative in Colombia. For Dora, recovering her husband's body helped soothe the old wounds, but also raised new questions. "It is in that moment with the loved one, which is so painful but also so intimate, that they start to ask questions about demanding justice," said Pablo Cala, a leader of the non-governmental Orlando Fals Borda group, which gives legal advice to victims' relatives. "They want to know the truth."

'Bodies talk'

That means launching new proceedings that can last years. Victims' groups hope

that the peace talks will succeed in setting up new special tribunals to speed up such investigations. "The FARC must hand over information about victims that might show the force was responsible, and the state must also provide details about people who have disappeared which might implicate state agents," said Adriana Arboleda, leader of a grouping of victims' organizations.

Many families of civilian victims do not know who took their loved ones: the army, guerrillas such as the FARC or other militias like the right-wing ELN. But recovering the remains can yield crucial evidence. "Every exhumation tells a story," Cala said. "The bodies talk." Many families go on believing for years their loved ones are still alive and

then have the shock of learning they were killed in violence. "It is bittersweet," said Cala.

Sometimes the remains are found hundreds of miles away from where the victims went missing. In December the first bodies to be handed over under new agreements made during the peace negotiations were returned to the victims' families. They included FARC members and civilians killed by state troops for bounties. Some were children. Dora now hopes finally to find her son and learn what happened to him. "The best compensation is that they find my son's remains and give them to me," she said. "I don't care about money. I want justice. I want the people who did it to pay." — AFP



VILLAVICENCIO: Maria del Carmen Bonilla, who lost two brothers and a nephew, 'disappeared' during the armed conflict in Colombia, sits beside photographs of her loved ones at her home in Villavicencio, Meta department. — AFP

KEY POINTS ABOUT 1990s BALKAN WARS

By Katarina Subasic

The Hague-based war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia is set to announce this week its most high-profile verdict yet, for former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic. Here are some key points about the 1990s conflicts that tore the Balkans apart.

Background to the wars

Communist Yugoslavia, born at the end of World War II, was made up of six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Following the death of its autocratic leader Josip Broz Tito in 1980, the Yugoslav federation found itself in deep political and economic crisis, with bickering between various ethnic groups and the rise of nationalism. By the time the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, inter-ethnic relations in Yugoslavia were at breaking point, with nationalists mostly winning the first multi-party elections in the republics in 1990.

The most prosperous ones, Slovenia and Croatia, immediately started advocating decentralization of Yugoslavia. But the largest republic Serbia, led by Slobodan Milosevic, fiercely insisted on further centralization. Milosevic rallied fellow Serbs

throughout Yugoslavia with calls for "all Serbs in one state", seen by pro-independence republics and the international community as a bid to create a Greater Serbia by annexing Serb-populated parts of Croatia and Bosnia.

What sparked the conflicts

On June 25, 1991, the parliaments of Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, triggering the immediate deployment of the Belgrade-controlled Yugoslav army (JNA) towards the affected borders and airports. After a ten-day conflict the JNA withdrew from ethnically homogeneous Slovenia. But in Croatia, Serbian troops moved to fight on the side of Croatia's ethnic Serb rebels who opposed independence, launching a four-year war. Meanwhile in Bosnia, the most ethnically and religiously diverse Yugoslav republic and home to four million people, Muslims and Croats organized an independence referendum.

This was fiercely opposed by Belgrade-backed Bosnian Serbs, who made up more than 30 percent of the population. While Serbs boycotted the referendum, 60 percent of Bosnia's citizens voted for independence and Bosnia won international recogni-

tion on April 6, 1992. Bosnian Serbs, led by Radovan Karadzic and backed by the JNA, immediately launched a widespread conflict, declaring territories under their control to belong to a Serb entity called Republika Srpska. Shortly afterwards, Bosnian Croats turned against the Muslims or Bosniaks and the three sides fought each other for another three-and-a-half years.

What happened during war

The conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia claimed more than 120,000 lives. In Bosnia alone more than half of those in the pre-war population were forced out of their homes, either in campaigns of ethnic cleansing or bids to find safety. Bosnia's capital Sarajevo was under siege for 44 months, during which its 350,000 residents struggled to get basic necessities. At least 10,000 were killed by sniping and shelling from Serbs in the surrounding mountains. Thousands of people were held in camps on all three sides, where many were tortured, starved or executed. It is estimated that more than 20,000 women, mostly Muslims, were systematically raped. The worst atrocity occurred in July 1995 when Bosnian Serb forces overran the eastern town of Srebrenica, slaughtering almost

8,000 Muslim men and boys in a massacre described by two international courts as genocide. In Croatia, the eastern town of Vukovar was razed to the ground by the JNA and the medieval Adriatic town of Dubrovnik was severely damaged.

How the conflicts ended

The atrocities eventually led NATO to launch massive air strikes on August 30, 1995, against Bosnian Serb military positions. Following intense pressure from the US-led international community and three weeks of negotiations between leaders on each side at a US military base in Ohio, the so-called Dayton agreement was reached in November 1995. The deal to end the wars divided Bosnia along ethnic lines into two semi-autonomous entities. But the Balkan conflicts were not over, with war breaking out in 1998 in Serbia's southern province of Kosovo between pro-independence ethnic Albanian rebels and Serbia's armed forces. That war ended in 1999 after an 11-week bombing campaign by NATO, by which time about 13,000 lives had been lost and hundreds of thousands had fled their homes. Kosovo unilaterally declared independence in 2008, a move Serbia refuses to recognize. — AFP



KUWAIT: Photo shows oil workers protesting against the proposal to remove some of their benefits. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

OIL WORKERS PROTEST CUTS

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"If the minister and chairman of KOC continue to issue abusive decisions aiming to let the Kuwaiti employees leave the oil sector or violate their rights, we

will continue to protest," Al-Marzouq added. Mohammed Al-Hajiri, President of the Labor Union of Kuwait Petroleum Company noted that the salaries of the oil sector employees do not cost the government even 1 KD. Some of the MPs who attended the protest

rally threaten to grill the Oil Minister if these decisions were taken. The MPs include; Abdullah Al Tamimi, Mohammed Tana, Khalid Al Tahous and Madhi Al Hajri.

Responding to recent inquiries about offering some oil facilities for 'privatization' through PPP (Public Private

Partnership), Deputy PM, Finance Minister and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh said that Kuwait's development plan has adopted economic reforms based on PPP principles - creating real chances of partnership with the private sector.

US AIRPORTS ON EDGE AFTER DEADLY BELGIUM BOMBINGS

NEW YORK: Airports in major US cities were on high alert yesterday, with police out in force after at least 30 people were killed in suicide bombings on a Brussels airport and subway, though officials said there was no specific threat to the United States. US President Barack Obama and Democratic presidential election contender Hillary Clinton vowed to do more to take on militants, while Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump called for tighter border security and suggested US intelligence services could use torture to head off future attacks.

The Obama administration was expected to tighten security at US airports following the Brussels airport attack, which occurred in a public hall outside of the security check area. US Representative Adam Schiff of California, the ranking Democrat on the House intelligence committee, said he was concerned that there was a risk of copy cat attacks and that airport security was still a concern despite changes in recent years. "Overall though there's a lot more work we still need to do at our airports," Schiff told MSNBC.

Islamic State, a militant group that has gained control of large areas of Iraq and Syria and has sympathizers and supporters around the world, claimed responsibility. Amaq, a news agency affiliated to the group, said suicide bombers strapped into explosive belts had staged the attacks on the airport and a rush-hour metro train in the Belgian capital. Delta Air Lines Inc, United Continental Holdings Inc and American Airlines Group Inc reported that they had canceled or rerouted flights as a result of the attack. Large numbers of uniformed police officers, some in tactical gear as well as National Guard members in fatigues and carrying long weapons, were on patrol at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport.

One guard member was overheard telling a colleague "we have to keep an eye out for bags" after reports that many of the wounded at the Brussels airport had severe leg injuries, according to officials, a pattern that suggests an explosion at ground-level, possibly from a bag. Some travelers in the United States said they hoped airports would further tighten security following the Brussels attack. "Perhaps it should take place sooner, before you get through security. I find it reassuring," said Mary Ray, 71, a retired government trainer flying home to Manchester, England, from New York after a Caribbean cruise with her husband, Malcolm.

Ray said she is happy to remove her shoes or have her hands swabbed as she passes through airport security: "I think it's a deterrent." Three Mormon missionaries from the United States were injured in the airport blasts, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints said. A

US service member and his family were hurt, Fox news reported, but gave no details. European and US airports have extensive security in place to prevent weapons from being smuggled onto aircraft, but the attackers exploited an area not subject to screening.

'Scourge of terrorism'

Obama addressed the attacks briefly in a speech in Havana on his historic first visit to Cuba, vowing to support Belgium as it seeks out those responsible. "This is yet another reminder that the world must unite. We must be together regardless of nationality or race or faith in fighting against the scourge of terrorism," Obama said. "We can and we will defeat those who threaten the safety and security of people all around the world."

Islamic State was blamed for killing 130 people in Paris last November. Then in December, a married couple inspired by Islamic State shot dead 14 people in San Bernardino, California. The attacks in Belgium drew immediate response from candidates seeking their party's nomination to run for the White House in the Nov 8 election. Former US Secretary of State Clinton vowed to strengthen her drive to "defeat terrorism and radical jihadism." She said on CNN that the United States must do more to coordinate intelligence with Europe.

Billionaire Trump told NBC's "Today" program: "If they could expand the laws, I would do a lot more than waterboarding. You have to get the information from these people." He was referring to the practice of pouring water over someone's face to simulate drowning as an interrogation tactic. Obama banned its use by US interrogators after taking office in 2009. Officials in cities including New York, Washington, Boston and Miami said they were aware of no specific threats targeting them following the Brussels attack. While the attack immediately sparked discussion of further strengthening airport security, some pointed out the inherent difficulty of securing spaces that offer broad public access.

"There are limits to exactly how exhaustive those perimeters can become," US Secretary of State John Kerry said in an interview with Telemundo. "So people need to be vigilant, everybody needs to take precautions. I think it underscores to everyone the importance of people uniting." As she rushed to meet clients arriving at New York's JFK airport, 31-year-old Shannon Freyer worried that adding further layers of security at airports, which have already imposed extensive restrictions since the Sept. 11, 2001 hijacked plane attacks, would do little to make people safer. "It's just more time involved," Freyer said. "They started making us take off our shoes years ago and they still haven't stopped a thing." — Reuters

SYRIAN REGIME DIGS IN ON ASSAD AS HEZBOLLAH VOWS TO FIGHT ON

GENEVA: Syria's peace talks hit a fresh impasse over President Bashar Al-Assad yesterday, as the head of Lebanon's Hezbollah vowed his Shiite movement would keep fighting alongside the regime until Islamic State jihadists are defeated. The UN's Syria envoy, Staffan de Mistura, said he had pressured Damascus to outline its approach to the crucial issue of a political transition, as negotiations in Geneva entered their second week. De Mistura said the regime's lead negotiator Bashar Al-Jaafari told him "it was... premature to talk about it. My message was (that) violence (for him) means imminent as far as we are concerned."

Assad's fate has been a key obstacle in the latest talks aimed at ending Syria's devastating five-year war, which has killed more than 270,000 people and displaced millions. A partial ceasefire brought in last month had raised hopes for an end to the violence, which were further fuelled when Russia—a key backer of Assad announced last week it would withdraw most of its troops from Syria. But tensions have flared since, with Moscow accusing the US of "unacceptable" delays in agreeing how to punish those who break the ceasefire and warning it could resort to force against violators.

There have also been concerns about whether any peace deal could be enforced on Syria's complex battlefields, and Hezbollah vowed to stay in Syria until the Islamic State group (IS) and Al-Qaeda's Syria branch are beaten. "All that has been said about our withdrawal from Syria is false," Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah told Lebanese channel Al-Mayadeen on Monday. "We went to Syria to help keep the country from falling into the hands of Daesh (IS) and Al-Nusra Front... So long as we have a responsibility to be there, we will be there."

Hezbollah first announced it was fighting alongside Assad's troops in 2013 and has since sent thousands of fighters to battle Syria's rebels, who are backed by its arch rival Saudi Arabia and a US-led coalition. Its support has been crucial for keeping the regime in power, but the opposition has insisted the president's departure must be part of any peace deal agreed at the talks. Member of the High Negotiations Committee (HNC) opposition umbrella group, Yahya Kodmani, on Sunday accused the regime of being "obstinate." "We hope that Russia will use its powers to pressure the Assad regime in order to move into serious negotiations," he said.

But Jaafari rejected any suggestion that Assad would step down from any new government, saying his future and the political transition were "two separate issues." "President Assad has nothing to do with the... talks," he said, insisting that the subject of the president "is something that is already excluded from the scene". He also insisted Damascus was committed to the peace process, and that his delegation had "clear instructions from our leadership to engage seriously in these talks." Conceding that progress remained slow, de Mistura stressed it was vital that opposing sides reach a basic understanding on how to move to a second round of talks, tentatively scheduled for next month.

He highlighted the positive impact of the negotiations, which he said have helped to maintain a fragile ceasefire declared on February 27. But tensions flared between Russia and the US over the truce, with Russian Lieutenant General Sergei Rudskoy accusing Washington of showing "no readiness" to agree how to enforce it and warning Russia would resort to force itself if necessary. — AFP

34 PERISH AS TERRORISTS HIT AIRPORT, METRO...

Continued from Page 1

VRT said police had found a Kalashnikov assault rifle next to the body of an attacker at the airport. Such weapons have become a trademark of Islamic State-inspired attacks in Europe, notably in Belgium and France, including on Nov. 13 in Paris. An unused explosive belt was also found in the area, the public broadcaster said. Police were continuing to scour the airport for any further bombs or attackers.

Alphonse Youla, 40, who works at the airport, told Reuters he heard a man shouting out in Arabic before the first explosion. "Then the glass ceiling of the airport collapsed." "I helped carry out five people dead, their legs destroyed," he said, his hands covered in blood. A witness said the blasts occurred at a check-in desk. Video showed devastation in the hall with ceiling tiles and glass scattered across the floor. Some passengers emerged from the terminal with blood spattered over their clothes. Smoke rose from the building through shattered windows and passengers fled down a slipway, some still hauling their bags. Public broadcaster RTBF said police were searching houses in the Brussels area.

VRT said 20 were killed in the metro train and 14 at the airport. Authorities had earlier put the toll at 11 in the airport bombing and 15 in the underground train. Many of the dead and wounded at the airport were badly injured in the legs, one airport worker told Reuters, suggesting at least one bomb in a bag on the floor. Britain, Germany, France and the Netherlands, all wary of spillover from conflict in Syria, were among states announcing extra security measures. Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel spoke of "a black time for our country." "What we feared has come to pass. Our country has been struck by attacks which are blind, violent and cowardly."

The blast hit the train as it left Maelbeek station, close to European Union institutions, heading to the city centre. The VRT public broadcaster carried a photograph of a metro carriage at a platform with doors and windows completely blown out, its structure deformed and interior mangled and charred. A local journalist tweeted a photograph of a person lying covered in blood among smoke outside Maelbeek metro station, on the main Rue de la Loi avenue which connects central Brussels with the EU institutions. Ambulances were ferrying the wounded away and sirens rang out across the area.

'We are at war'

"We are at war and we have been subjected to acts of war in Europe for the last few months," French Prime Minister Manuel Valls said. Public broadcaster VTM said the Tihange nuclear power plant had been evacuated as part of the security clampdown. Brussels airport said it had cancelled all flights until at least 6 am today and the complex had been evacuated and trains to the airport had been stopped. Passengers were taken to coaches from the terminal that would remove them to a secure area. All three main long-distance rail stations in Brussels were closed and train services on the cross-

channel tunnel from London to Brussels were suspended. Security services have been on a high state of alert across western Europe for fear of militant attacks backed by Islamic State, which claimed responsibility for the Paris attack. While most European airports are known for stringent screening procedures of passengers and their baggage, that typically takes place only once passengers have checked in and are heading to the departure gates.

Although there may be discreet surveillance, there is nothing to prevent member of the public walking in to the departure hall at Zaventem airport with heavy baggage. Following an attempted ramraid attack at Glasgow Airport in 2007, several airports stepped up security at entrances by altering the pick-up and drop-off zones to prevent private cars getting too close to terminal buildings. European stocks fell after the explosions, particularly travel sector stocks including airlines and hotels, pulling the broader indices down from multi-week highs. Safe-haven assets, gold and government bonds rose in price.

The attacks appeared to be linked to the arrest of French citizen Salah Abdeslam - the prime surviving suspect for November's Paris attacks on a stadium, cafes and a concert hall - who was captured by Belgian police after a shootout on Friday. Belgium's Interior Minister, Jan Jambon, said on Monday the country was on high alert for a revenge attack. It was not clear what failings if any allowed the plan for yesterday's operation to go ahead and whether the double attack was planned in advance or put together at short notice. "We know that stopping one cell can ... push others into action. We are aware of it in this case," Jambon said.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable of condolence to King Philippe of Belgium over the victims of the two blasts that hit the Brussels international airport and Maelbeek metro station and left scores of people dead or injured. In his cable, His Highness sharply denounced such outrageous terrorist acts that targeted innocent people - and violate all religions, human values and international conventions.

His Highness the Amir reiterated Kuwait's position - rejecting all forms and manifestations of terrorism, and its support for international efforts to fight terrorism and stop its finance sources, praying to Allah the Almighty to bless the victims' souls with mercy and those injured swift recovery. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent the King of Belgium similar condolence cables.

Kuwait Embassy in Belgium has confirmed that, so far, there are no Kuwaiti casualties as a result of the suicide attacks that occurred in the capital yesterday. The embassy, in a statement, urged all citizens currently in Brussels to be most vigilant since security alert is at its maximum, as well as avoiding public places and refrain from using public transportation at the moment. It also called on citizens to abide by local security instructions. — Agencies



BRUSSELS: People walk over messages written on the ground at Place de la Bourse (Beursplein) following attacks in Brussels yesterday. Airlines cancelled hundreds of flights and European railways froze links with Brussels after a series of bomb blasts killed around 35 people in the city's airport and a metro train, sparking a broad security response. — AFP



KUWAIT HANDICAPPED ATHLETES WIN 32 MEDALS AT FAZZA INTERNATIONAL



By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah hailed the achievements of Kuwait Handicapped Athletics national team during the championships of Fazza International, Asia, Oceania and Sharqa International meetings that was held recently, and they won 32 various medals, and congratulated them on this outstanding achievement.

Sheikh Salman told journalists, after receiving athletes Monday evening, the state is keen on supporting the handicapped for more achievement and had shown that when it ordered the building of new sports complex in the coming future, adding that it will be world class.

Sheikh Salman said the outstanding work of the Handicapped Club Board of Directors, headed by Shafi Al-Hajiri, who contributed to improving the result of national teams abroad, and hoped that Kuwait national teams contin-

ue to win through cooperation between all athletes to boost Kuwait sports reputation.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Handicapped Club Chairman of the Board, Head of the Delegation Shafi Al-Hajiri said achievement of this amount of medals, 10 gold, 14 silver, 8 bronze in the three championships, which were strong with the participation of more than 1,200 athletes, is evidence on the outstanding handicapped and the strong determination they have.

Al-Hajiri said those championships is a true

start of the club's preparations to participate in the Rio De Janeiro Paralympics in September, bearing in mind that 12 players already qualified.

He said, the club, with the distinguished cooperation of the sports public authority to prepare the players to win more titles during tournaments abroad. He thanked Sheikh Salman and authority officials for their major support of Kuwait Handicapped Sports.

PAS Deputy Director General Dr Humoud Fulaiteh congratulated the KHSC athletes for

their achievements. He said PAS is keen on supporting the club and remove all obstacles they face in order to achieve more wins. He said the reception of Sheikh Salman of the delegation is evidence on the state's support of its outstanding athletes in all sports.

The delegation was also received by Handicapped Club Honorary President Al-Sheikha Sheikh Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah, Director General of Handicapped Affairs Public Authority Dr Tariq Al-Shatti, Handicapped Club Board members and athlete's families.



KENYA WARNS ACTION NEEDED TO AVOID OLYMPIC BAN

NAIROBI: Kenya's Olympic chief Kipchoge Keino warned yesterday that time was running out to escape a threatened ban if action is not taken to ensure doping is stopped.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has given Kenya until April 5 to tighten its anti-doping law and provide the funding for the new Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya (ADAK).

Keino said the lack of action so far had hampered preparations for the Rio Olympics. "Time is running out. Unfortunately, up to now we have not sat down with the Ministry of Sports to give them our plan for the training of the team," Keino told AFP.

But Keino said he was confident that the ADAK Anti-Doping Bill and Policy would be passed before it goes on recess on Friday for a two-week hol-

iday. "I have hope our parliamentary committee will do us proud to be able to pass the document and the Head of State to sign the bill into law," he said, adding "we need to criminalise doping to protect our athletes."

Over 72 athletes have already qualified for Rio, in addition to both men's and women's rugby teams, a boxer and one competitor in archery. He said the National Olympic Committee of Kenya (NOCK) needed to fundraise more cash to ensure all who can go to Rio.

"I am asking the parliamentarians to approve the document, and we will be able to move forward and start looking for funds," he said. "We also need to start preparations so that we can come back home with more medals than we did in Beijing. This cannot just happen overnight." — AFP

KENYA UNLIKELY TO BEAT APRIL WADA DEADLINE: LEGISLATOR

ELDORET: Kenya is unlikely to beat the April 5 deadline set by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to put in place laws needed to make it "code-compliant", a Kenyan legislator who is playing a key role in the process said yesterday.

Kenya faces the threat of being ruled non-compliant with the WADA code and, although that could eventually lead to sanctions, the IAAF said this month that it is highly unlikely the distance running powerhouse would be suspended from this year's Olympic Games.

Wesley Korir, who has drafted a bill proscribing doping in the east African nation which has been hit by a wave of drug transgressions, said Kenya authorities may seek an extension to the deadline to be able to complete the legislative process.

"The Bill has not been brought to Parliament as we are speaking and even if it is brought today, we cannot complete the process in two days because we shall be going on recess on

Friday and returning on April 6," Korir told Reuters in this North Rift Valley town, a centre of excellence for distance running, yesterday.

Korir, who won the Boston marathon in 2012, said Parliament's Committee for Labour, Social Welfare and Sports had summoned the Minister for Sport last week to impress upon him the importance of the process.

"We also wanted to discuss how to merge the two bills, but he did not show up," said Korir, a Member of Parliament for Cherangany Constituency in the North Rift, said before boarding a plane to the capital.

He said the parliamentary committee had adopted his Bill, but was awaiting the one drafted by the Ministry's consultants and the Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya (ADAK).

Korir's Bill has different penalties to the one drafted by a government agency, capping fines for offenders at 3 million Kenyan shillings (\$30,000) compared with ADAK's

proposed 1 million. National Olympic Committee of Kenya (NOC-K) Chairman Kipchoge Keino called for government intervention to salvage the situation.

"I am requesting the President (Uhuru Kenyatta) to intervene in this matter to save the future of the youths of this country. These people (Ministry of Sport) don't seem to care about the future of our youth," Keino, winner of gold medals at the 1968 and 1972 Olympics, said.

ADAK CEO Japther Rugut said last week the Bill was ready and was only awaiting ratification of a few aspects by WADA. Kenya failed to meet the first deadline of Feb. 11 to prove it was doing enough to tackle doping.

About 40 Kenyan athletes have failed drugs tests in recent years. The country has set up its own national anti-doping agency and WADA said on Feb. 11 it had put Kenya on probation, adding that there was still a lot of work to do. — Reuters

AFGHANS HAVE TALENT, JUST NEED MORE GAMES: INZAMAN

NEW DELHI: Afghanistan's cricketers must have more exposure to top-flight opposition if they are to do justice to their undoubted talent, Pakistani batting legend Inzamam ul Haq said yesterday.

After defeats against Sri Lanka and South Africa in their first two group matches in the World Twenty20, Afghanistan's latest adventure with cricket's big guns is drawing to a close. But even if qualification for the semi-finals is now all but impossible, they have won new fans by giving South Africa a fright and still have an opportunity to spring an upset against England on Wednesday night. The Afghan team's progress in the last few years has been one of cricket's feel-good stories but after the highs of competing in last year's 50 over World Cup and the World T20, they have no immediate fixtures against major teams on the horizon once they leave India. Inzamam, who was appointed Afghanistan's coach last October, said his charges had done themselves proud after

qualifying for the group stages by seeing off more established teams such as Zimbabwe and Scotland.

"It feels good that people are appreciating Afghanistan. Boys have worked hard. We have qualified for the world cup and played good cricket," said the former Pakistani skipper in a press conference.

"Okay, we have not been able to win a single game, but have played good game. So if we improve a level, we can win. "This Afghanistan team has got all the talent, they just need more exposure. The more they play international cricket, the more their talent will improve."

In Sunday's match against South Africa, Afghanistan were 105 for two at one stage in pursuit of the Proteas' total of 210 although they were ultimately comfortably beaten after a flurry of wickets. Burly wicket-keeper Mohammad Shahzad once again caught the eye by smacking five sixes as he raced to 44 in just 19 balls.



NEW DELHI: Afghanistan's cricket team captain, Asghar Stanikzai, center, talks to team coaching staff during a practice session in New Delhi, India, yesterday. — AP

Indian legends Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid are among those who have expressed their admiration for the exploits of a team which has to play all its matches abroad because of the security situation back home. Their captain Asghar Stanikzai said he was "proud" to hear such praise but also urged the International Cricket Council to ensure the team, which is now based in India, can build on their progress.

"Many people believed at the start of the tournament that the matches against Afghanistan would be one-sided, but we really prepared and planned and caused a bit of a scare," he said, speaking through an interpreter. "We need their (ICC) support and we are eager to play each and every world cup and we have requested full members to play a series with us."

"In one game you cannot compare the potential of the team but in a series you can... We are a side who would like to play more series." — AFP

ENGLAND WOMEN SURVIVE SPIN SCARE TO CHASE 91

DHARAMSALA: India Women nearly got out of jail courtesy their trump card, spin, in conditions as subcontinental as it could get to lift the hopes of a boisterous home crowd, but a turbo-charged start from Sarah Taylor and Tammy Beaumont helped England Women overcome a nervous breakdown. They eventually crossed the line by two wickets in a pulsating finish in Dharamsala.

India's 90 for 8, which seemed inadequate at the halfway mark, was made to look bigger as England's pre-determined approach on a surface, where the ball spun visiously, came back to bite them. It needed the calm of Natalie Sciver, who made a crucial 19, and Jenny Gunn to allay fears of a shock loss as England squeezed home with six balls to spare.

Ekta Bisht, who replaced Poonam Yadav in the XI, injected fresh life in to India's defence with a crafty display of left-arm spin bowling to finish with career-best figures of 4 for 21. But, lack of application with the bat threw India's campaign in choppy waters. They need to win against West Indies on Sunday and hope other results go their way.

After misfiring with the bat, India came out attacking, and received an early fillip when Charlotte Edwards was dismissed by the third over. But Taylor, perhaps identifying the surface

to be a raging turner, announced herself with three fours off her first seven balls to briefly throw India's plans off.

Beaumont also showed she was up for the fight by making a sprightly 20. Harmanpreet Kaur, who was smashed for three fours off her first three balls, hit back with two wickets off successive balls. Beaumont holed out to mid-wicket before Taylor was stumped superbly by Sushma Verma.

From 42 for 3, England's nervy approach was reduced to a battle of push and prod as Bisht exploited the slow, spinning surface to scythe through the middle order. Heather Knight, who had earlier picked up three wickets with her off-spin, was stumped, too, while Lydia Greenway was trapped plumb in front attempting an expansive sweep to leave the game on a knife's edge. India's fielders also lifted themselves, even though England found scoring slightly easier against the pace of Jhulan Goswami. England also had a reprieve when Katherine Brunt survived a close lbw shout, with England needing 11 off 23.

SCOREBOARD

England Women 92 for 8 (Beaumont 20, Bisht 4-21, Kaur 2-22) beat **India Women** 90 for 8 (Kaur 26, Knight 3-15, Shrussole 2-12) by two wickets.



BANGALORE: Indian cricketer Virat Kohli talks to young cricketers after a net practice session on the eve of their match against Bangladesh at The Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday. — AFP

DHONI URGES INDIA TO LIFT RUN RATE AGAINST BANGLADESH

BANGALORE: India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni urged his big-hitters to improve their run rate dramatically against Bangladesh today or face the prospect of a humiliating early exit from the World Twenty20 on home soil.

The hosts are precariously placed in fourth spot of Group Two after one defeat and one win. They desperately need a big victory to strengthen their bid for a semi-finals berth.

India's six-wicket victory over arch-rivals Pakistan on Saturday will have boosted their confidence after a shock 47-run defeat to New Zealand in their opening group match.

But Dhoni said India, who were firm favourites at the start of the tournament to lift a second World T20 title, needed to improve to qualify from a tough group that also includes Australia. "I still feel there is still scope for improvement and in the coming two games that will be our priority," said the captain. New Zealand top the group on four points after two

wins while Pakistan, Australia and India all have two points. However India's run rate, which could determine who qualifies, is considerably worse than their rivals. "In the first game our run rate went down. So it's not only about winning but you have to take care of the run-rate at some point," added Dhoni.

The hosts are seeking to become the first country to win the World T20 title twice, after clinching the crown in 2007, and also the first to win at home. Bangladesh, by comparison, will be desperate for a win after two straight losses, the latest to Australia by three wickets on Monday.

Sitting at the bottom of Group Two after also losing to Pakistan, the Tigers have almost no chance of advancing to the semi-finals, but skipper Mashrafe Mortaza vowed to battle on.

"We will keep fighting. We still have two matches to fight hard," he said. The Tigers were left reeling after the ICC's decision at the weekend to suspend their top bowlers Arafat Sunny and Taskin Ahmed

for illegal actions, forcing them to rush in replacements from Bangladesh.

There are also question marks over star batsman Tamim Iqbal who is unwell and did not play against Australia.

Teams

India (from): Mahendra Singh Dhoni (capt and wicketkeeper), Ravichandran Ashwin, Jasprit Bumrah, Shikhar Dhawan, Harbhajan Singh, Ravindra Jadeja, Virat Kohli, Mohammed Shami, Pawan Negi, Ashish Nehra, Hardik Pandya, Ajinkya Rahane, Suresh Raina, Rohit Sharma, Yuvraj Singh.

Bangladesh (from): Mashrafe Mortaza (capt), Shakib Al Hasan, Abu Hider, Al-Amin Hossain, Mahmudullah, Mohammad Mithun, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mustafizur Rahman, Nasir Hossain, Nurul Hasan (wicketkeeper), Sabbir Rahman, Soumya Sarkar, Tamim Iqbal, Shuvagata Hom, Saqlain Sajib. — AFP



DHARAMSALA: India's Shikha Pandey bats against England during the Women's ICC World Twenty20 2016 cricket match at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) stadium in Dharamsala, India, yesterday. — AP

FIVE THINGS LEARNT SO FAR IN WORLD T20

NEW DELHI: The group stages of cricket's World Twenty20 have reached the half-way mark with every team having played two of their four matches. AFP looks at the lessons learned so far:

AUSSIES STILL TO MASTER TWENTY20

World champions in ODI cricket and number one in Tests, the Australians arrived in India determined to fill the one major gap in their trophy cabinet. But after defeat to New Zealand in their opener followed by a scrappy win over Bangladesh, skipper Steve Smith admits his youthful side are struggling to adapt to different conditions and "we've got to improve". The experiment of dropping David Warner down the order from his usual position as opener has not paid off with the vice captain making just six and 17 in his two innings. The decision to leave Aaron Finch, the top-ranked batsman in T20s, on the sidelines looks increasingly misguided.

NEVER WRITE OFF THE BLACK CAPS

After their talisman Brendon McCullum retired on the eve of the tournament, this was meant to be a period of transition for New Zealand. In both their matches against India and Australia, most pundits saw their batting totals as some way short of being winning scores. But marshalled by astute new skipper Kane Williamson, their bowlers held their nerve and skittled out their opponents' illustrious top-orders cheaply. Rookie spinner Mitchell Santner tops the wickets chart and no one has managed to post a half-century against them. Most of New Zealand's own batsman have made a start without going on to compile a big innings. If they can put that right, the Black Caps look a decent bet to win their first world cup.

NEW-LOOK ENGLAND WALK THE TALK

England have long struggled in cricket's shortest form due to an inability to score runs not any more. Captain Eoin Morgan promised a new, "brash and aggressive" England and they lived up to that billing in a thrilling win over South Africa when they pulled off the highest successful run chase by any team at a

World T20. Their 230 for 8 with two balls to spare was also England's record total. Morgan will fancy his side's chances of posting big scores in their two remaining group matches against Afghanistan and a struggling Sri Lanka. If they do, then a semi-final berth may be theirs which would be a massive achievement after defeat to the West Indies in their opening game.

HARD TIMES AHEAD FOR SRI LANKA

It was known that defending champions Sri Lanka might struggle with the bat after the retirements of Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene. But pace spearhead Lasith Malinga's injury withdrawal and Rangana Herath's lack of bite mean the holders lack obvious match-winners ahead of their tougher assignments against England and South Africa. Herath was one of the stand-outs in the 2014 triumph, taking five for three in the semi-final against New Zealand. But he went wicketless in Sunday's defeat against the West Indies where he was outbowled by team-mate Jeffrey Vandersay, a late replacement for Malinga. Tillakaratne Dilshan did smack 83 against Afghanistan but no one else has passed 40 and the 39-year-old is hardly one for the future.

SPIN IS KING

Indian wickets are famous for being happy hunting grounds for spin bowlers and that's certainly been the case at the World T20. Slow-armers are commanding the top positions in the bowling tables while even at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium, a flatter ground known to favour pacemen, fast bowlers are finding life difficult. New Zealand spinners Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi and Nathan McCullum all feature in the top 10 most economical bowlers at the tournament. Santner's figures of 4-11 against India were a resounding vindication of the Black Caps decision to leave pacemen Trent Boult and Tim Southee on the bench. Even South Africa's lightning quick Dale Steyn has looked a sorry sight, conceding 35 runs in just two overs against England before being taken off. — AFP

ENGLAND DETERMINED TO AVOID FRESH HUMILIATION

NEW DELHI: Skipper Eoin Morgan vowed that England would not take lowly Afghanistan lightly in a must-win World Twenty20 tie today after exiting their last two major tournaments with egg on their face.

England's 2014 World T20 campaign ended in an embarrassing 45-run defeat against the Netherlands while a disastrous showing at last year's 50 over World Cup was capped by a chastening loss to Bangladesh. Morgan's side will hope to record a resounding win against Afghanistan today in New Delhi as they seek to up their run rate in a tight group but the captain said there would be no taking victory for granted.

Speaking to reporters on the eve of the match, Morgan recalled the "horrific" feeling in the dressing-room at the time of the Dutch debacle but said the atmosphere was totally different after Friday's morale-boosting victory over South Africa.

"Our priority is on winning. Tomorrow is a big game and we are certainly not taking Afghanistan for granted. First and foremost we need to get into that game with the right mindset," he said.

"I think Holland was a unique set of circumstances, I think we were already out of the tournament. We went into the game with a particularly wrong mindset," he added.

"Disappointment of getting knocked out of the world cup is horrific, so coming into this game we are really fresh." Although Afghanistan have lost their two matches in the group stages, they caused South Africa a fright on Sunday with a brisk start to their run chase, with opener Mohammad Shahzad scoring 44 in just 19 balls.

"I think they are a dangerous side. They have played a really exciting brand of cricket," said Morgan. "We watched the early stages of the tournament when they played and qualified, played some really good cricket. And we watched both



NEW DELHI: England cricketer Moeen Ali (L) and Liam Dawson bowls during a practice session at Feroz Shah Kotla cricket ground in New Delhi yesterday. England will play their World T20 cricket match against Afghanistan today. — AFP

games, South Africa and Sri Lanka.

"I think he (Shahzad) is a good batsman but I think it will be rude of me to single out any batsman... I think as a side they can be quite strong and very destructive." Morgan said England were considering bringing in Liam Dawson as a third spinner alongside Moeen Ali and Adil Rashid on a pitch that is expected to offer more turn than Mumbai, the venue of England's first two games.

Although Afghanistan are effectively out of the tournament, skipper Asghar Stanikzai said his side was determined to leave India with victory against a major team under their belt.

"We have played good cricket and looking to play well against England as well," he said. "There will definitely be pressure on England ... We are

eager to win at least one match in next two. The guys are playing to win."

Teams

England (from): Eoin Morgan (captain), Moeen Ali, Sam Billings, Jos Buttler, Liam Dawson, Alex Hales, Chris Jordan, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Jason Roy, Ben Stokes, Reece Topley, James Vince, David Willey.

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

WBA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP BROWNE CONTESTS POSITIVE DOPING TEST

HYDE: WBA heavyweight champion Lucas Browne says he will fight to clear his name after failing a drug test following his world title fight win over Ruslan Chagaev earlier this month.

Browne became Australia's first heavyweight world champion when he stopped Chagaev in the 10th round of their fight in Grozny, Russia, on March 5. Browne's promoter, former British fighter Ricky Hatton, said

Wednesday he had been notified that Browne tested positive following the fight.

The test conducted by the Las Vegas-based Voluntary Anti-Doping Association came back positive for the steroid clenbuterol, ESPN reported yesterday.

"We believe Lucas Browne to be a clean athlete who arrived in Chechnya a clean athlete," Hatton said in a statement. "We are therefore conducting our own further investi-

gations and cannot comment further at this time." Browne's victory gave him the so-called regular version of the WBA belt. Britain's Tyson Fury is considered the WBA's unified champion as he also holds the WBO title. Browne said he was "shocked and devastated" by the positive test and insisted he had done nothing wrong. "I am not a drug user or a drug cheat," he said in a statement released through his promoters.

"I will be fighting for as long as it takes to clear my name," Browne said he had never heard of clenbuterol until now. He said he has been told the substance is used as a weight-loss drug, which he said would be "utterly ridiculous" to use as a heavyweight.

Browne suggested the positive test could have resulted from sabotage. "My team and I were well aware of the many risks involved in going to a place like Chechnya to fight a

reigning champion and believed we had taken sufficient precautions," he said. "In addition it was at our insistence that VADA testing was implemented for the fight."

Browne was knocked down in the sixth round but fought back and knocked Chagaev to the canvas in the 10th. The referee stopped the fight later that round. Browne improved to 24-0 (21 KOs) with the victory, in front of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov. — AP

CORBIN SOLID IN DIAMONDBACKS' WIN OVER BREWERS

SCOTTSDALE: Patrick Corbin struck out seven and allowed just an unearned run while pitching into the sixth inning as the Arizona Diamondbacks beat a Milwaukee Brewers split squad 3-2 on Monday night.

Corbin, who came back from elbow surgery midway through last season, has given up only one earned run in four starts covering 14 1-3 innings this spring. He has 17 strikeouts. "Everything feels great and I felt strong there toward the end as well," the left-hander said.

"I'm just hoping I can build off that. Biggest thing was just to build up the pitch count." Nick Ahmed drove in the winning run with a two-out single in the bottom of the ninth. Ahmed had three hits for the Diamondbacks, who also got two stolen bases from former Brewers shortstop Jean Segura.

Ahmed, an infielder, has a .429 batting average through 13 games. He hit .226 in 134 games last season. "He should improve, and his swing has improved a bunch," manager Chip Hale said. "He had a great spring last year, too." Jake Lamb, competing for the Diamondbacks' third base job, committed three errors. No other Arizona player has more than two in spring training.

Corbin permitted five hits in 5 1-3 innings. Arizona closer Brad Ziegler gave up a run and two hits with one strikeout in his inning of work.

Scooter Gennett had two hits for the Brewers, including a run-scoring double. Gennett has played in only three games but has six hits in 10 at-bats.

"I like it that Scooter's swinging the bat well. That's the big thing," Milwaukee manager Craig Counsell said. "Just swinging the bat well against good pitching is meaningful." Domingo Santana reached base three times and scored once, leaving the young Milwaukee outfielder with a .500 batting average and a seven-game hitting streak.

"He missed a couple of games but he's had a solid spring. It's been good at-bats and getting on base a lot," Counsell said. "He's drawing walks, so he's just got to continue on this path through the season."

ROSTER MOVES

The Diamondbacks optioned RHPs Archie Bradley and Tyler Wagner to Triple-A Reno. LHP Keith Hessler and OF Gabriel

Guerrero were optioned to Double-A Mobile, and OF Zach Borenstein was reassigned to minor league camp.

Bradley had been in the running for the fifth spot in the rotation.

"His fastball command, we think, is where it needs to be. He just needs to get more command with his off-speed pitches," Hale said. "He understands the situation. He understands that this is the best he's felt in years, physically and mentally, and he's excited to get started wherever it is and work his way back here."

Robbie Ray and Zack Godley remain the leading contenders for the No. 5 job.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Diamondbacks OF A.J. Pollock took live batting practice. He's playing defense but not swinging the bat in minor league games as he works his way back from elbow soreness. ... Hale hopes C Chris Herrmann (hip) can catch in a game by Wednesday.

STARTING TIME

Brewers: Josh Hader, one of the team's top pitching prospects, made his first spring training start even though he was reassigned to minor league camp last week. Hader struck out five and walked two in three scoreless innings.

"I thought Josh was excellent. First inning was probably a little extra adrenaline, but he got through it, which is a big thing," Counsell said. "And then he was really good the next two innings."

Diamondbacks: Corbin threw 77 pitches and Hale said the left-hander was in command of each pitch.

"He pretty much can throw any of his pitches in any count right now, so those are weapons not a lot of pitchers have," Hale said before mentioning Corbin's changeup. "That's a huge pitch for him. He almost has two of them, one that's a strikeout pitch and one that he can throw for strikes."

URUETA LEADS COLOMBIA TO WBC

Diamondbacks short-season field coordinator Luis Urueta managed Colombia to the 2017 World Baseball Classic with his team's qualifier win over Panama on Sunday night. Colombia made the field of 16 teams for the WBC for the first time. — AP



NEW YORK: New York Rangers' Eric Staal (12) checks Florida Panthers' Vincent Trocheck (21) during the first period of an NHL hockey game yesterday, in New York. — AP

MANNING'S FIRST NHL GOAL LEADS FLYERS OVER ISLANDERS

NEW YORK: Brandon Manning's first NHL goal midway through the second period snapped a tie and powered the Philadelphia Flyers to a 4-1 win over the New York Islanders on Monday night. Nick Cousins, Sam Gagner and Claude Giroux also scored for Philadelphia, which won for the 10th time in 13 games. The surging Flyers closed within one point of Detroit for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Philadelphia trails the Islanders by three points for the first wild card. The Flyers are 2-1-0 against New York this season, with one game remaining. The Islanders have lost five of six at a most inopportune time. They finish the regular season by playing seven of their final 11 games at home. Kyle Okposo scored for New York, and Thomas Greiss stopped 21 shots. Steve Mason made 23 saves for Philadelphia.

RANGERS 4, PANTHERS 2

Rick Nash scored his first goal since returning from a leg injury and Henrik Lundqvist made 25 saves in leading the New York Rangers over Florida. Viktor Stalberg, Mats Zuccarello and Tanner Glass also scored for the Rangers, who moved two points ahead of idle Pittsburgh for second place in the Metropolitan Division. Nash gave New York a 3-1 lead at 11:14 of the third period with his 13th goal of the season and first since returning to the lineup March 12. He had been sidelined since January 22 because of a bone bruise. Vincent Trocheck and Jiri Hudler scored for the Panthers, who lost their second in a row. The Atlantic Division leaders are two points in front of Tampa Bay.

PREDATORS 5, KINGS 2

Ryan Johansen had a goal and two assists to lead Nashville past Los Angeles. James Neal

NHL results/standings													
NY Rangers 4, Florida 2; Toronto 5, Calgary 2; Philadelphia 4, NY Islanders 1.													
Western Conference													
Central Division													
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS							
Dallas	43	21	9	236	211	95	Tampa Bay	41	26	5	196	171	87
St. Louis	42	22	9	194	185	93	Boston	39	26	8	216	197	86
Chicago	42	24	7	203	179	91	Detroit	36	25	11	184	190	83
Nashville	37	23	13	202	187	87	Ottawa	34	31	8	211	223	76
Colorado	38	31	4	198	204	80	Montreal	33	34	6	192	209	72
Minnesota	34	28	11	194	186	79	Buffalo	29	34	10	173	198	68
Winnipeg	29	37	6	184	216	64	Toronto	26	35	11	174	209	63
Pacific Division													
Los Angeles	44	23	5	198	165	93	Washington	51	15	5	227	168	107
Anaheim	40	22	9	182	164	89	NY Rangers	41	24	8	207	192	90
San Jose	41	25	6	214	185	88	Pittsburgh	40	24	8	204	179	88
Arizona	31	34	7	188	217	69	NY Islanders	38	24	9	197	181	85
Calgary	31	36	6	202	228	68	Philadelphia	35	24	12	186	190	82
Vancouver	27	32	12	167	205	66	New Jersey	35	31	7	166	189	77
Edmonton	29	39	7	181	219	65	Carolina	31	27	14	175	195	76
Eastern Conference													
Atlantic Division													
Florida	40	24	9	207	181	89	Columbus	29	35	8	188	223	66

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

MAPLE LEAFS 5, FLAMES 2

William Nylander had a goal and two assists in Toronto's victory over Calgary. It was the first three-point game of Nylander's career. The performance came two days after the 19-year-old had his first multipoint effort in a win over Buffalo. Nylander has two goals and five points in his past two games. P.A. Parenteau, Zach Hyman, Colin Greening and Josh Leivo also scored for the Maple Leafs, who have won four of five. Jonathan Bernier made 23 saves. Matt Stajan and Joe Colborne scored for the Flames. — AP

added a goal and an assist for the Predators, winners in three of their last four. Mike Fisher, Filip Forsberg and Roman Josi also scored. Kings defensemen Drew Doughty and Alec Martinez each contributed a goal, but Los Angeles had its four-game winning streak snapped. Anze Kopitar had two assists. Jonathan Quick was lifted in favor of Jhonas Enroth, who began the third period in net for the Kings. Quick stopped 24 of the 27 shots he faced through 40 minutes. Forsberg became the fifth player in Predators history to score 30 goals in a season.



KUWAIT: Within its community services, CBK recently sponsored the first Mubarak Al-Kabeer Soccer Championship organized by Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorate under the title of 'No for Violence'. A special ceremony was held under the auspices of Farwaniya Governor, Sheikh Faisal Malek Al-Sabah to honor the winners.

EQUAL PRIZE MONEY DEFENDED AS MIAMI OPEN BEGINS

MIAMI: Top tennis bosses defended prize money equality for men and women as turmoil continued across the tennis scene ahead of start of the ATP and WTA Miami Open.

World number one Serena Williams, a loser in back-to-back finals for the first time since 2004, seeks a fourth consecutive Miami crown and ninth overall while top-ranked Novak Djokovic seeks his sixth Miami title and a record 28th ATP Masters crown.

But equal prize money for men and women remained an issue in the wake of disparaging comments about women's tennis Sunday by Indian Wells tournament director Raymond Moore, who resigned Monday night in the wake of harsh reactions to his critique.

Djokovic subsequently fanned the flames of controversy by suggesting that the disparity in pay was justified.

"What a mess," tweeted women's tennis legend Martina Navratilova. "Moore totally blew it and Novak really?" "It was really disheartening to see Ray Moore offer the extremely prejudiced and very old-fashioned statements regarding women tennis players," she told the BBC. "We have made it this far on our own, without help from male players, and will continue to do so in the future." WTA Tour chief executive Steve Simon on Sunday called Moore's comments "extremely disappointing and alarming" and

added, "The WTA stands on its own and was founded on the principles of equality and empowerment."

KERMODE, ADAMS BACK EQUITY

ATP president Chris Kermode supported his fellow tour chief on Monday, backing the principle of prize money equality for men and women while admitting those decisions were in the hands of tournament directors.

"Ray Moore's comments towards women's tennis were disparaging and made in poor taste, as Ray has subsequently acknowledged," Kermode said.

"The ATP fully supports equality across society while at the same time acknowledging that we operate in the sports and entertainment business. The ATP seeks to achieve fair compensation for its players by setting minimum prize money levels for ATP events in accordance with the revenues that are generated from men's professional tennis.

"The ATP also respects the right of tournaments to make their own decisions relating to prize money for women's tennis, which is run as a separate tour."

Katrina Adams, the US Tennis Association president and chief executive, made it clear the organizers of the US Open back gender equality for tournament paychecks.

"The USTA and the US Open hold player

equality as one of our bedrock principles," she said. "As the first Grand Slam to award equal prize money, we have endeavored to lead the way for gender equality in sports.

"There is no place in this sport for antiquated, sexist or uninformed ideologies and the

comments made yesterday in no way reflect the beliefs of the vast majority of those in the tennis world."

BACK ON COURT

Top seeds Williams and Djokovic and stars



KEY BISCAIYNE: Sloane Stephens works with participants at Kid's Day at during Day 2 of the Miami Open presented by Itau at Crandon Park Tennis Center yesterday in Key Biscayne, Florida. — AFP

Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray were among those whose first match dates were unveiled Monday by Miami Open organizers. Seeds have first-round byes.

US star Williams will open Thursday afternoon against Japan's Misaki Doi or American Christina McHale while Serbia's Djokovic opens Friday night against either Britain's Kyle Edmund or Czech Jiri Vesely.

Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro, the 2009 US Open winner, faces countryman Guido Pella on Wednesday with Swiss third seed Federer to face the winner Friday afternoon.

Two-time Miami champion Andy Murray, the second seed from Britain, opens Saturday afternoon against either Denis Istomin of Uzbekistan or Borna Coric of Croatia, while Spanish fifth seed Nadal meets either Bosnian Damir Dzumhur or Argentina's Leonardo Mayer. Play opens Tuesday with 12 first-round WTA matches while Murray, the 2009 and 2013 winner who lost to Djokovic in last year's final, will enjoy another day of practice and family time at his US "home" event. Wife Kim and newborn daughter Sophia are at their nearby home.

"I spend a few months a year in Miami for my training blocks and my place is only half an hour from Key Biscayne, so this tournament is as close as it gets to home when I'm stateside," Murray said on his website. — AFP

MEDIA IN SILENT PROTEST AT BUMBLING SERIE A REF

MILAN: Television journalists in Italy have gone to extraordinary lengths to protest poor refereeing in Serie A-by appearing on air with their mouths covered by scarves. The 'silent protest' followed the Torino v Juventus derby on Sunday, when match referee Nicola Rizzoli made several glaring blunders in a hotly-contested fixture won 4-1 by Serie A champions Juventus. Rizzoli, who officiated the 2014 World Cup final between victors Germany and Argentina, was not the only culprit, according to Gazzetta dello Sport, whose Monday report claimed it was "the worst

Sunday (of refereeing)" this season.

But after Sunday's game, Rizzoli is perhaps looking forward to the international break than his colleagues. Torino had reduced the arrears to 2-1 with a 48th minute penalty that stopped Gianluigi Buffon's unbeaten run in the Juventus net at a new record of 973 minutes.

The hosts then scored through Maxi Lopez to level the match, although his goal was chalked off, as television replays confirmed, for an in-existent offside.

Torino were then denied a possible penalty when Alex Sandro slid in late to

challenge Bruno Fernandes to the right of the Juve goal. And when both Juventus defender Leonardo Bonucci and Torino's Kamel Glik should have been cautioned for a second time and sent off, Rizzoli kept his hand in his pocket.

Rizzoli's performance prompted claims from irate Torino fans that Juventus, who a decade ago were sent to Serie B for their role in a huge match-fixing affair implicating football officials and referees, continue to curry favour from officialdom. Two years ago, another referee, Gianluca Rocchi was accused of bowing to

Juventus in a bad-tempered clash that saw three players including (former) Roma coach Rudi Garcia sent off.

Torino coach Giampietro Ventura somehow kept his composure throughout a tense 90 minutes on Sunday, but let fly afterwards: "It's unbelievable to have lost in these circumstances. Fair enough they went 2-0 up, but after that I don't know what happened."

"Alex Sandro should have been sent off, and in the second half we levelled 2-2 only to see the goal chalked off. "How can the referee get that wrong? I have great

respect for Juventus, who are a great side but today I can't accept that. We need to be shown some respect as well." The two television journalists, Paolo Liguori, the head of Tgcom24 and Mario Giordano, the head of TG4, took their protest to the national airwaves.

Liguori, a Roma fan, and Torino supporter Giordano appeared on the TGCom24 programme with the scarves over their mouths to "stop ourselves making caustic remarks" against Italian referees and, in the process, thwart a possible defamation suit. — AFP

WEST HAM RECITALS EARN PAYET NEW FRANCE CHANCE

LONDON: A new song has energised an old stadium this season as West Ham United's supporters have fallen beneath the spell of shimmeringly skilful French playmaker Dimitri Payet.

The Boleyn Ground, in east London, has been graced by West Ham greats such as Bobby Moore, captain of England's 1966 World Cup winners, 1980 FA Cup final hero Trevor Brooking and record appearance-maker Billy Bonds.

But as West Ham prepare to leave the 112-year-old arena for London's Olympic Stadium, it is the name of Payet, spearheading Slaven Bilic's side in an improbable top-four push, that is echoing off the rafters.

The song, to the tune of Billy Ray Cyrus' 'Achy Breaky Heart', goes: "We've got Payet, Dimitri Payet! I just don't think you understand/He's Super Slav's man, he's better than Zidane/We've got Dimitri Payet!"

Payet's eight goals and eight assists in the Premier League may have convinced West Ham's fans he is "better than Zidane", but there is no clear consensus over who, exactly, he resembles.

For Bilic, the West Ham manager, the 28-year-old stands comparison with Arsenal's German schemer Mesut Ozil. Former West Ham midfielder Scott Parker says that Payet reminds him of maverick Italian striker Paolo Di Canio, while vice-chairman Karren Brady believes he "ranks with Lionel Messi".

The player himself, touted as a potential Player of the Year in England, has only one idol. "Ronaldinho was my favourite player," Payet told British newspapers recently. "People say he enjoyed humiliating defenders, but he was always efficient. I try to put on a show while being effective because the spectators come to be entertained by beautiful play."

A cut-price £10.7 million (\$15.4 million, 13.7 million euros) signing from Marseille last June, Payet proved an instant hit, scoring five goals in his first nine league games.

FLAMBOYANT BUT ERRANT

His performances helped West Ham climb to third in the table and although

they slipped back during his two-month absence with an ankle injury-going eight games without victory-his return has seen them surge back to fifth, a point off the Champions League places.

They are also due to face Manchester United in an FA Cup quarter-final replay-the last cup tie the Boleyn Ground will stage-after Payet netted a stupendous 30-yard free-kick in a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford.

Amid reports of a mega-money offer from China, Payet signed a new five-year contract in February and this month he was elected London's Player of the Year.

It was the first individual award he had ever won, reflecting a career that, prior to his arrival in England, had been dogged by reservations about his temperament and consistency.

Hailing from the French island of La Reunion in the Indian Ocean, Payet was released by mainland club Le Havre at 16 and had to be persuaded not to abandon his dream of becoming a professional by his father, Alain.

Offered a path back to Ligue 1 by Nantes, he acquired a reputation as a flamboyant but errant talent.

At Nantes he clashed in training with former France goalkeeper Fabien Barthez. At Saint-Etienne he headbutted team-mate Blaise Matuidi in the middle of a match. At Marseille he fell out with Florian Thauvin.

It partly explains why Matuidi-now of Paris Saint-Germain-has 41 France caps to Payet's 15, despite the two being born less than two weeks apart.

But faced with the incontrovertible evidence of his West Ham form, France coach Didier Deschamps has ended Payet's nine-month international exile by calling him up for the Euro 2016 hosts' friendlies against Holland and Russia.

"If I hadn't taken Dimitri, it would have been for non-sporting reasons," Deschamps explained last week. "And as I don't have any, it seems completely logical to me that he should return."

Back in the blue of his country just in time for Euro 2016, Payet's next aim will be to have the whole of France dancing to his tune. — AFP



ZURICH: In this July 6, 2000, file photo, from left, Horst R. Schmidt, Franz Beckenbauer, Fedor Radmann and Wolfgang Niersbach of the German delegation, pose with a copy of the soccer World Cup trophy in Zurich, Switzerland, after the soccer's world governing body FIFA announced Germany will host the World Cup in 2006. The FIFA ethics committee says it has opened a bribery investigation into Franz Beckenbauer and other officials from Germany's 2006 World Cup bid team. — AP

FIFA OPENS 2006 W CUP CASES AGAINST BECKENABUER, NIERSBACH

GENEVA: The FIFA ethics committee opened a bribery investigation yesterday into German soccer great Franz Beckenbauer and other officials from the 2006 World Cup bid team.

Ethics prosecutors acted amid rising suspicion of wrongdoing linked to the winning of hosting rights in 2000, and irregular seven-figure payments years later. Beckenbauer, current FIFA executive committee member Wolfgang Niersbach and other officials were targeted three weeks ago in an inquiry report by a law firm commissioned by the German soccer federation. The new FIFA case picks up on that inquiry and relates to "the 2006 FIFA World Cup host selection and its associated funding," ethics prosecutors said in a statement.

Beckenbauer is among four officials linked to suspect payments and contracts during the bidding process. Germany won by beating South Africa, whose bid was supported by Nelson Mandela, 12-11 in a vote of FIFA executive committee members.

"The investigatory chamber will investigate possible undue payments and contracts to gain an advantage in the 2006 FIFA World Cup host selection and the associated funding," the FIFA

ethics committee said.

The other three German officials linked to possible bribery are: Theo Zwanziger, who replaced Beckenbauer on the FIFA executive committee in 2011; Horst Schmidt, vice president of the World Cup organizing panel; and Stefan Huns, chief financial officer for the organizers. Last month, a 361-page inquiry tried to explain a complex trail about payments of 6.7 million euros (\$7.3 million) and 10 million Swiss francs (\$10 million) that linked Beckenbauer, then-FIFA president Sepp Blatter, FIFA powerbroker Mohamed bin Hammam and Robert Louis-Dreyfus, the late former Adidas executive and part owner of Swiss marketing agency Infront.

The report, by law firm Freshfields, pointed to a deeper involvement than suspected of Beckenbauer - the only man to captain and coach World Cup-winning teams who then organized a successful tournament.

FIFA prosecutors have now put Niersbach and 2006 tournament director Helmut Sandrock under investigation for "possible failure to report" unethical conduct and conflicts of interest. "The list of possible violations may be supplemented as additional information becomes available,"

FIFA ethics prosecutors said. Investigations by German prosecutors and tax officials of suspected tax evasion by the German soccer federation led Niersbach and Sandrock to resign in recent months as its president and general secretary, respectively. Niersbach said he will "cooperate in every aspect" with the ethics commission, according to German news agency dpa. Swiss federal prosecutors are also investigating the 2006 World Cup allegations as part of a wider probe of FIFA's business. It has already put Blatter under criminal investigation for two separate acts of suspected financial mismanagement.

Beckenbauer is back under suspicion at FIFA one month after its ethics judges sanctioned him in another case. He was warned and fined 7,000 Swiss francs for refusing to co-operate with a FIFA ethics investigation of the 2018-2022 World Cup bidding contests.

The former Bayern Munich and New York Cosmos great has publicly denied wrongdoing or that hosting votes were bought.

Beckenbauer, now 70, resigned last week from a television analyst job with the Sky Germany channel, citing the need for a break after being a public figure for 50 years. — AP



BLACKBURN: This file photo taken on February 21, 2016 shows West Ham United's French midfielder Dimitri Payet as he celebrates after scoring their second goal during the FA cup fifth round football match between Blackburn Rovers and West Ham United at Ewood Park in Blackburn, north west England. A new song has energised an old stadium this season as West Ham United's supporters have fallen beneath the spell of shimmeringly skilful French playmaker Dimitri Payet. The song, to the tune of Billy Ray Cyrus' 'Achy Breaky Heart', goes: "We've got Payet, Dimitri Payet! I just don't think you understand/He's Super Slav's man, he's better than Zidane/We've got Dimitri Payet!" — AFP

LEICESTER FACE BARCA, PSG IN CHAMPIONS CUP

LONDON: Leicester City will play Barcelona, Celtic and Paris St Germain in this year's International Champions Cup (ICC), the Premier League leaders said yesterday.

The pre-season tournament is organised by Relevant Sports whose chairman Charlie Stillitano met representatives of top European clubs this month to discuss changing the Champions League to ensure the elite are always in it and the likes of Leicester are not.

Leicester, one of five Premier League teams involved in the 2016 event, begin their campaign against Celtic on July 23 in Glasgow. They travel to Los Angeles to face Paris St Germain on July 30 before taking on Barcelona in Stockholm on Aug 3. "This is the best roster of teams in ICC history

and having them start their 2016-2017 campaign playing against each other will be a treat for both fans and the players," Stillitano said in a statement on Leicester's website (www.lfc.com).

The Foxes will compete alongside Chelsea and Liverpool in the main draw. Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur, the other two Premier League clubs involved, will play standalone showcase matches.

Stillitano came under fire for his comments on Sirius XM satellite radio after meeting representatives of Arsenal, Manchester United, Chelsea, Liverpool and Manchester City in London to discuss a closed structure for the Champions League. "When they came up with the Champions League, the idea wasn't to have PSV

(Eindhoven) and Ghent playing in the knockout stage," he said. "What would Manchester United argue? Did we create soccer or did Leicester? Who has had more of an integral role (in European football), Manchester United or Leicester?"

"There are wonderful, wonderful elements to relegation and promotion and there are good arguments for a closed system."

Leicester were founded in 1884 and elected to the Football league in 1894. They are on course to lift their first-ever top-flight title and have a five-point lead at the top of the table, with seven games left. Manchester United, England's richest club who have won a record 20 league titles, played in the 2014 and 2015 Champions Cups but will not take part this year. — Reuters

MAN UNITED ANNOUNCE CHINA TOUR IN JULY

LONDON: Manchester United will tour China in July as part of their preparations for the 2016-17 season, the English Premier League giants announced yesterday.

United will spend eight days in the country and play two matches, with fixture dates, venues, opposition teams and ticket details to be announced in the coming days. It will be United's 11th trip to China, where the club estimates it has 107 million supporters.

"Manchester United has strong historical links with China and we are very proud of our relationship and of our fans throughout the country," United's executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward said in a statement.

"A total of almost 500,000 supporters have attended previous games during our visits to China and we have always enjoyed exceptional support in the country, so naturally it is something that everybody is very much looking forward to this summer."

United's most recent game in China was a fixture against Kitchee SC in July 2013, which was attended by a sell-out 40,000 crowd. China has become a key commercial battleground for the Premier League's leading teams. A Chinese consortium bought a 13 percent stake in the parent group of United's cross-town rivals Manchester City in December, two months after Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the club during a state tour. — AP



NEW YORK: Former French football player Youri Djorkaeff attends a press conference to announce the teams, cities, venues, matchups and dates for the 2016 International Champions Cup in New York yesterday. — AFP

Sports

Kuwait handicapped athletes win 32 medals

16

FIFA opens 2 cases against Beckenbauer, Niersbach



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CHARLOTTE: Kemba Walker #15 of the Charlotte Hornets looks to pass around teammates Tim Duncan #21 and Tony Parker #9 of the San Antonio Spurs during their game at Time Warner Cable Arena on March 21, 2016 in Charlotte, North Carolina. — AFP

SPURS STUNG AS LIN LEADS HORNETS FIGHTBACK

CHARLOTTE: Jeremy Lin scored 15 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter as Charlotte overcame a 23-point deficit to snap San Antonio's six-game winning streak, winning 91-88. Lin was 11 of 18 from the field and hit all four 3-point attempts, including three in the fourth quarter.

Courtney Lee had 17 points, Nicolas Batum added 15, and Cody Zeller grabbed 14 rebounds for the Hornets, who bounced back from a disappointing loss to the Denver Nuggets on Saturday night. Tony Parker had 19 points for the Spurs, while LaMarcus Aldridge added 18 points and 12 rebounds. Tim Duncan had 16 points and 10 rebounds. The Spurs had two chances to tie at the end of regulation, but Patty Mills and Danny Green both missed 3-point attempts. The Hornets trailed 28-7 after the first quarter.

CAVALIERS 124, NUGGETS 91

LeBron James scored 33 points and had his 41st career triple-double as Cleveland clinched its second straight Central Division title with a comfortable victory over Denver. James added 11 rebounds and 11 assists before checking out with 6:02 left to a thunderous ovation. He scored 17 in the first quarter, helping the Cavs build a 19-point lead and erase the memory of an embarrassing loss on Saturday in Miami. The Nuggets fought back and briefly led before the Cavs regrouped, scored 68 after halftime to notch their 50th win. J.R. Smith added 15 points and Channing Frye 14 for Cleveland, which played without starter Kevin Love (illness). Will Barton scored 27 for the Nuggets, who concluded a 1-4 road trip. Denver's Kenneth Faried missed his third straight game with a sore lower back.

PISTONS 92, BUCKS 91

Andre Drummond's tip-in with 2 seconds remaining lifted Detroit over Milwaukee. The Pistons, who are in a tight race for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference, came out inexplicably flat and trailed by 17 points in the first half. They were down 13 in the third quarter before chipping away at Milwaukee's lead in the fourth. Drummond was outplayed badly early on by Greg Monroe, but when Kentavious Caldwell-Pope missed from the perimeter in the final seconds, Drummond was able to tip the ball in. The Bucks weren't able to get a clean shot off after that. Drummond finished with 14 points and 16 rebounds. Khris Middleton led Milwaukee with 27 points, and Giannis Antetokounmpo added 21.

WARRIORS 109, TIMBERWOLVES 104

Draymond Green had 24 points, nine rebounds and six assists to help Golden State narrowly avoid its first two-game skid in nearly a year with a victory over Minnesota. Klay Thompson scored 17 points and hit all five of his 3-pointers, and the Warriors (63-7) overcame a second straight poor shooting night from Stephen Curry. The reigning MVP missed 11 of his 17 shots, including seven of his nine 3-pointers, but still had 19 points, 11 assists and seven rebounds. Karl-Anthony Towns had 24 points and 11 rebounds, while Ricky Rubio added 20 points, 11 assists and four rebounds for the Timberwolves (22-48), who gave the defending champs all they could handle.

BULLS 109, KINGS 102

Derrick Rose and Taj Gibson had 18 points each, Doug McDermott added 16 and Pau Gasol had 14 points and 14 rebounds to lead the Chicago Bulls to a 109-102 comeback vic-

tory over the Sacramento Kings on Monday night.

Rose was 9 for 15 from the field and hit a couple of 15-foot jumpers during Chicago's decisive 10-0 run in the fourth quarter to rally from a five-point deficit. Gasol recorded his 39th double-double of the season in his first game back after missing four games with a swollen right knee. DeMarcus Cousins had 19 points and 18 rebounds, Darren Collison had 19 points and Rudy Gay had 18 for Sacramento.

WIZARDS 112, HAWKS 102

John Wall scored 27 points and dished out 14 assists and Bradley Beal chipped in with 25 points to help Washington extend its winning streak and won for just the second time in five games. The Hawks came into the game having won five straight and eight of their past nine, pushing to a season-high 12 games above .500. But the Wizards bolstered their playoff hopes with a dazzling offensive display, shooting 51 percent from the field and knocking down 13-of-25 from 3-point range. Every starter scored in double figures. Otto Porter had 16 points and 10 rebounds. Jeff Teague led the Hawks with 23 points. Atlanta kept up with the Wizards over the first three quarters, but struggled offensively in the final period.

PACERS 91, 76ERS 75

Paul George scored 15 points and Monta Ellis added 13 to help Indiana pull away from Philadelphia. Indiana snapped a two-game losing streak and won for just the second time in five games as it tries to take advantage of a favorable schedule to make a late-season playoff push. Hollis Thompson and Isaiah Canaan each scored 15 for the 76ers, who have lost six straight and 19 of their last 20. This one was never really close.

Indiana used a 9-0 run midway through the first quarter to take a 21-10 lead and never trailed. The 76ers only got within one score once the rest of the night, after Canaan's 3-pointer with 7:06 left in the third made it 55-53. The Pacers scored eight straight and extended the lead throughout the fourth.

GRIZZLIES 103, SUNS 97

Lance Stephenson scored 12 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter as Memphis pulled out a victory over Phoenix. The Grizzlies scored the last eight points of the game, holding the Suns scoreless the final 2:12.

Stephenson's rebound basket after Jordan Farmar's airball layup attempt gave Memphis a 99-97 lead with 31 seconds to play. Zach Randolph added 14 points for the Grizzlies and blocked Jon Leuer's shot with Memphis nursing that two-point lead. Devin Booker scored 18 points and P.J. Tucker added 15 for Phoenix. Leuer had 13 points and 13 rebounds.

CELTICS 107, MAGIC 96

Isaiah Thomas had 28 points and seven assists and Boston held on to beat Orlando. Avery Bradley had 22 points and nine rebounds and Kelly Olynyk had 22 points in his fourth game back from a right shoulder sprain to help the Celtics even the season series with the Magic at two games each. Boston led by 14 early in the fourth quarter and ended the game on a 9-2 run after having its lead cut to four. It was the Celtics' first home victory since their 14-game home winning streak was snapped on March 11. Victor Oladipo led Orlando with 25 points and eight rebounds. The Magic have lost four straight and eight of their last 10. — AP

NZ BEAT PAKISTAN, ENTER WORLD T20 SEMI-FINALS

MOHALI: New Zealand stormed into the semi-finals of World Twenty20 after it defeated Pakistan by 22 runs and registered its third successive victory in Group 2 yesterday.

Martin Guptill scored 80 off 48 balls in New Zealand's total of 180-5 and also took three catches as Pakistan wasted Sharjeel Khan's rollicking start to be restricted at 158-5.

Pakistan never got its momentum back after

Khan hit 47 off 25 balls in a strong start of 65 before he was dismissed in the sixth over.

Fast bowler Adam Milne (2-26) and left-arm spinner Martin Santner (2-29) led the New Zealand attack with two wickets each.

New Zealand has already beaten tournament favorites India and Australia while Pakistan has just two points from its victory over Bangladesh after also losing to India. — AP

SCOREBOARD

MOHALI, India: Scoreboard yesterday from the World Twenty20 Group 2 game between New Zealand and Pakistan at Punjab Cricket Association IS Bindra Stadium:

New Zealand	
Martin Guptill b Sami	80
Kane Williamson c Afridi b Irfan	17
Colin Munro c Khan b Afridi	7
Corey Anderson c Malik b Afridi	21
Ross Taylor not out	36
Luke Ronchi c Malik b Sami	11
Grant Elliott not out	1
Extras: (4lb, 3w)	7
Total: (for 5 wickets)	180
Overs: 20.	
Fall of wickets: 1-62, 2-75, 3-127, 4-132, 5-164	
Did not bat: Mitchell Santner, Adam Milne, Mitchell McClenaghan, Ish Sodhi.	
Bowling: Mohammad Amir 4-0-41-0 (1w), Mohammad Irfan 4-0-46-1, Mohammad Sami 4-0-23-2 (w), Imad Wasim 4-0-26-0, Shahid Afridi 4-0-40-2.	
Pakistan	
Sharjeel Khan c Guptill b Milne	47
Ahmed Shahzad c Guptill b Santner	30
Khalid Latif c Elliott b Santner	3
Umar Akmal c Guptill b Milne	24
Shahid Afridi c Anderson b Sodhi	19
Shoaib Malik not out	15
Sarfraz Ahmed not out	11
Extras: (5lb, 4w)	9
Total: (for 5 wickets)	158
Overs: 20.	
Fall of wickets: 1-65, 2-79, 3-96, 4-123, 5-140	
Did not bat: Mohammad Sami, Imad Wasim, Mitchell McClenaghan 4-0-43-0, Grant Elliott 2-0-16-0, Ish Sodhi 4-0-25-1.	
Result: New Zealand won by 22 runs.	



MOHALI: New Zealand's Martin Guptill plays a shot during the World T20 cricket match between New Zealand and Pakistan at the Punjab Cricket Stadium Association Stadium in Mohali yesterday. — AFP



ETIHAD AIRWAYS PARTNERS WITH EKAR



MANILA: Families live in concrete pipes used as makeshift dwellings along a street in Manila yesterday. Roughly one quarter of the nation's 100 million people live in poverty, which is defined as surviving on about one US dollar a day, according to government data. —AFP

GLOBAL STOCKS PLUNGE AFTER BRUSSELS ATTACKS

TRAVEL SECTOR STOCKS NOSEDIVE, BLASTS OVERSHADOW ECONOMIC DATA

LONDON: World stocks fell and safe-haven gold and government bonds rose yesterday after attacks on the airport and a rush-hour metro train in Brussels that triggered security alerts across western Europe. Travel sector stocks including airlines and hotels fell the most, pulling the broader indices down from multi-week highs, although stocks had clawed back some of their losses by midday and bonds and gold eased back from their earlier highs.

US stocks edged lower in early trading yesterday following the deadly attacks in Belgium. Airlines, cruise companies and travel booking sites were among the biggest decliners. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 46 points, or 0.3 percent, to 17,577 as of 10:05 a.m. Eastern Time. The Standard & Poor's 500 index lost four points, or 0.2 percent, to 2,047. The Nasdaq composite dropped four points, or 0.1 percent, to 4,804.

US futures pointed to a fall of almost half of one percent at the open on Wall Street. "It is all to do with the events in Brussels ... but the reaction is muted, which also shows that after all the terrorist attacks we have seen, markets have learned to live with these kind of things," said Rabobank euro zone economist Emile Cardon.

At least 26 people were killed and many injured in the twin attacks on the Belgian capital, which took place four days after the arrest there of a suspected participant in November's militant attacks in Paris. At 1220 GMT the FTSEuroFirst 300 index of leading shares was down 1 percent at 1,326 points. Germany's DAX was down 0.5 percent and Belgian stocks were down 0.4 percent. These indices had earlier been down as much as 2 percent.

The STOXX Europe 600 Travel & Leisure index was the top sectoral faller, down 2 percent. Shares in major European airlines like Ryanair and Air France-KLM were down as much as 4.5 percent, and hotel company Accor was down 3.5 percent.

The federal prosecutor said at least one of two explosions at Brussels airport was likely to have been caused by a suicide bomber and the attacks brought some cross-border transport to a halt, including trains from London to Brussels. Gold rose 0.6 percent to \$1,255 an ounce, having been up around twice that earlier. The yield on benchmark German government

bonds fell to a two-week low of 0.18 percent before edging back to 0.21 percent. US Treasury yields fell 2 basis points across the curve.

In currency markets the Japanese yen, regarded by investors as a shelter from turbulence, rose across the board, notably against the euro. The euro was last down 0.5 percent at 125.25 yen and the dollar was down 0.3 percent at 111.60 yen. The single currency fell a fifth of a percent against the dollar to \$1.1220.

ATTACKS OVERSHADOW DATA

Liquidity had already been starting to dry up ahead of the Easter holiday and investors were beginning to think about cashing in on a steep rally in stocks over the last few weeks. "Coming up to the Easter holiday, people are going to be very reluctant to put more money into these (stock) markets. If anything, they will be more likely to take money out," said Michael Hewson, chief market strategist at CMC Markets in London.

"Anything like the events we're seeing in Brussels this morning is going to weigh on risk sentiment and risk appetite." Investors paid little attention to data showing a slight pick up in German business morale and eurozone business activity in March. Earlier, Asian stocks seasawed as hawkish comments from US Federal Reserve officials clouded the monetary policy outlook less than a week after Fed Chair Janet Yellen had set out a more cautious path to interest rate increases this year. The dollar got a mild boost from the suggestion that interest rate hikes could come sooner rather than later.

Japan's Nikkei stock index added 1.9 percent, closing at a one-week high, after markets in Tokyo reopened after a public holiday on Monday. A weaker overnight had given a tailwind to local shares. Elsewhere, sterling was one of the biggest losers among the major currencies after ratings agency Moody's said Britain's credit rating will be put under pressure by a marked slowdown in fiscal consolidation unveiled in last week's budget.

The warning came amid concerns about Prime Minister David Cameron's ability to keep Britain in the European Union after leading 'Out' campaigner Iain Duncan Smith resigned from the cabinet late on Friday. —Reuters



NEW YORK: A street sign for Wall Street hangs near the New York Stock Exchange. US stocks edged lower yesterday led by declines in travel-related companies following the attacks in Belgium. — AP

MARKETS MIXED AS SAUDI, EGYPT MAKE LATE DIP

DUBAI: Middle East markets were mixed yesterday as the later-closing Saudi Arabia and Egypt bourses gave back initial gains following a renewed drop in oil prices. Brent crude, which had risen more than 50 percent from 12-year lows in January, was down 0.8 percent at \$41.23 a barrel at 1240 GMT. The prolonged oil slump sparked panic selling on Gulf markets in January, but confidence has steadily returned as traders' worst fears of a repeat of the 2008-09 bourse collapse proved unfounded.

Having hit multi-year lows in mid-January, Saudi Arabia's benchmark is up 18.6 percent. Dubai has gained 27.9 percent and Qatar 23.2 percent although this momentum is now waning. "Following a big shake-up across equity markets globally, we have entered a period of low volatility," said Sebastien Henin, head of asset management at The National Investor in Abu Dhabi. "Companies in the region released decent Q4 results, with some positive surprises in terms of dividends. This combination of factors has helped support Gulf markets." Saudi's index was up as much as 0.5 percent in early trade as petrochemical and bank stocks led gains, but it then tracked a drop in oil prices - sparked by deadly explosions in Brussels yesterday - to end 0.07 percent lower at 6,482 points.

"Crude's rebound has been very encouraging for sentiment and the fiscal position of Saudi Arabia," said Asim Bukhtiar, Head of Research at Saudi Fransi Capital. A new government transformation plan for the kingdom, which is expected to be announced by the end of April, is creating investor uncertainty, however, said Bukhtiar. The plan,

the first of its kind and different to earlier development initiatives, is likely set out how the government hopes to bolster and diversify the economy.

"There are expectations that energy and utility prices will increase and so will taxes, levies and fees," said Bukhtiar. "The magnitude of possible increases is unknown and all kinds of rumours are circulating."

Earlier this year, many listed companies issued statements estimating the likely impact of reductions to energy subsidies, adding to investor gloom over likely first-quarter profits following the slump in oil prices. "Most of these were rough estimates and some companies are now saying the impact might not be as bad as expected," said Bukhtiar. "The next target is 7,000 and as we head into the next quarter that could be achievable."

In Egypt, Arabian Food Industries (Domty) surged 9.2 percent on its bourse debut. It had sold 12.25 million shares in a public offering this month that was hugely over-subscribed.

"Domty is up on decent volumes and this is affecting the rest of the market," said Mohamed Radwan, Head of Equity Sales at Pharos Securities in Cairo, shortly after the market open. "Investors are keen to buy Domty at a premium to the IPO price, which is giving confidence that the prices of other stocks are also at attractive levels," said Radwan, who nevertheless predicted the bourse was ripe for profit taking. The index ended 0.9 percent lower - having been up as much as 1.1 percent intraday - trimming its gains to 13.2 percent since March 14's currency devaluation. — Reuters

QATAR INVITES PRODUCERS FOR APRIL OIL MEETING

DUBAI: Qatar has invited all OPEC members and major producers from outside the exporting group to attend talks next month on a deal to freeze output at January levels to support the global oil market, Qatar's energy ministry said yesterday.

Members from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and other main oil producers are due to meet on April 17 in Qatar's capital Doha to discuss stabilising prices by freezing production. "The need has become an urgent matter to bring back balance to the market and recovery to the global economy," the ministry said in the invitation letter. Qatar holds the OPEC presidency in 2016 and has been organising the effort. Iran has maintained that it will increase exports, following the lifting of Western sanctions in January and will not freeze output. But Gulf OPEC members support the pact even if Iran declined to take part, OPEC sources said.

Libya snub

Libya does not plan to attend an April 17 meeting of oil producers about freezing supply to support prices, a Libyan OPEC delegate said yesterday, joining fellow OPEC member Iran in snubbing the initiative.

The absence of the two OPEC members would limit the impact of any freeze by producers from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries along with Russia, even though Libya's output has been curtailed for many months by unrest and the chance of it increasing production swiftly is low.

"We are not going," the Libyan delegate said, referring to the meeting in Doha next month. "Clearly, they have to allow us to go back to our production when the security situation in the country improves." Libya has made its wish to return to pre-conflict oil production rates clear since four countries reached a preliminary deal on freezing output in February.

Other producers understand this, the delegate said. "They appreciate the situation we are in."

Qatar, which has been organising the meeting, has invited all 13 OPEC members and major outside producers. The talks are expected to widen February's initial output freeze deal by Qatar, Venezuela and Saudi Arabia, plus non-OPEC Russia. The initiative has supported a rally in oil prices, which were about \$41 a barrel on Tuesday, up from a 12-year low near \$27 in January, despite doubts over whether the deal is enough to tackle excess supply in the market. Iran has yet to say whether it will attend the meeting. But Iranian officials have made clear Tehran will not freeze output as it wants to raise exports following the lifting of Western sanctions in January. — Reuters

FITCH RATINGS: NBK THE FLAGSHIP BANK IN KUWAIT

BANK MEASURES UP TO LEADING REGIONAL BANKS

KUWAIT: Fitch Ratings, the international credit rating agency, said that NBK is the flagship bank in the Kuwaiti banking sector and measures up to leading regional banks. The bank enjoys a dominant market share in Kuwait and is widely thought of as one of the region's strongest franchises.

Earlier, Fitch affirmed NBK Long-term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'AA-', the highest in the Middle East and North Africa, with a Stable Outlook.

Flagship status

In its report published recently, Fitch Ratings said: "It is difficult to compare NBK with domestic peers, due to the dominance of the bank's domestic franchise and superior diversification". The agency added: "We therefore view NBK's closest peers as other leading GCC banks that are flagship banks within their domicile."

"NBK's company profile is underpinned by its status and dominant franchise in Kuwait. The bank has a more diverse business model than peers, which includes regional and international operations, a leading capital markets subsidiary and a majority stake in a domestic Islamic Bank", Fitch said.

Diverse Business Model

Fitch affirmed that NBK's business model is significantly more diverse than peers, geographically and by activity. More importantly, in Fitch's view, is the diversification that NBK has achieved domestically. Its acquisition of Boubyan means that NBK is the only bank in Kuwait to offer both conventional and

bank's strong capital markets division and stable earnings from the bank's treasury function. Fitch sees this increased diversification over peers as a major contributor to the bank's sound and stable earnings base.

Strong Management

Fitch considers that NBK has one of

Conservative Strategy

Fitch highlighted that NBK has implemented its conservative strategy effectively over a sustained period. The bank has successfully diversified within Kuwait on its entry into Islamic Banking and its main focus is now on organic growth. Fitch does not see any major strategic changes as a result of the new senior management team, who have been with the bank for a long period.

Solid Execution

Fitch also said that "NBK has a strong track record of execution over a sustained time period. Financial metrics have remained sound and above peers for a significant period, particularly with respect to profitability and asset quality. The bank's strategy of diversification has largely been successful."

NBK enjoys the highest credit ratings by the major international rating agencies: Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings. In their latest reports, the three rating agencies affirmed NBK's credit ratings with a stable outlook. NBK also maintains its position among the 50 safest banks in the world for the ninth time in a row.



Islamic banking. The acquisition has brought synergies and expanded the bank's customer base. From a low base, Boubyan is growing rapidly and performance has improved markedly. Income is further diversified by the

strongest management teams within the Kuwaiti Banking sector with a good mix of experienced locals and expatriates. Management has a high degree of depth and stability, and succession planning has been well managed.

QATARGAS EYES EXPANDED LNG SUPPLY DEALS WITH UK, DUTCH TERMINALS

MILAN/LONDON: Qatargas is looking to Britain and the Netherlands in an effort to weather a looming global glut of gas supplies by expanding import deals into Europe's most liquid markets, industry sources said. The world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) must look in buyers for its unsold supply just as new Australian and US producers muscle into its prized Asian markets.

Slowing demand globally is only adding to producer woes, thrusting Europe's gas markets and dozens of under-used import terminals into the spotlight. Qatargas has held talks with Petronas UK Ltd to gain greater access to the Dragon import terminal in Wales, as well as with Uniper, formerly known as E.ON Global Commodities, for the Gate terminal in Rotterdam, two sources said.

Uniper declined to comment, while Qatargas and Petronas did not respond to requests for comment. Stefaan Adriaens, commercial manager at Gate, said he could not comment on whether Qatargas was interested in increasing capacity at the terminal either via Uniper or directly.

"They see competition in Asia, so if they are looking for capacity, then I presume it's to have an alternative to Asia," he said. Dong Energy, EconGas, Uniper, Shell and Eneco hold Gate capacity but around 0.9 billion cubic metres remains available.

Unlike the last four years, import capacity at Gate and other north-west European terminals is becoming more valuable in response to the start of US LNG exports. "As more people are looking to Europe the capacity value has increased,

whereas in other areas it's quite the contrary. Everybody was hoping for Asia demand but there demand was slower so I think capacity value has decreased there," he said.

TALKS

In 2013, Qatargas signed a five-year deal to supply 1.14 million tonnes a year (mtpa) to Petronas' half-share of the Dragon terminal at Milford Haven. Qatargas 4, a joint venture between Qatargas and Royal Dutch Shell, signed the deal with Petronas, followed by a five-year agreement with E.ON Global Commodities to ship 1.5 mtpa to the Gate terminal.

Both deals are flexible, according to the original announcements, meaning Qatar is not obliged to ship any LNG to Britain or the Netherlands and can divert cargoes at will. At the time, companies with import rights at Dragon and Gate were eager to drum up business and effectively gave Qatar free options to make use of their capacity.

While Qatari deliveries to Dragon/Gate have been rare up to now, weak Asian demand coupled with surging supply makes Europe an increasingly attractive destination for cargoes. Talks between Petronas and Qatargas over expanding the existing deal at Dragon initially sought to double volumes and extend the duration of the deal by up to 10 years, one of the sources said.

A proposal was also made to commit Qatargas to delivering a third of the overall volume, he said. At Gate, the choices boil down to exacting supply guarantees from Qatargas or making it pay for optional import slots, sources said. —Reuters



BEIJING: Investors watch stock prices on screens at a securities company in Beijing yesterday. Chinese stocks closed lower yesterday as investors took profit from a strong bounce the previous day fuelled by news that authorities have loosened restrictions on margin trading. —AFP

AS TURKEY READIES FOR 4G, ROW BREWS OVER FIBRE NETWORK

ISTANBUL: As Turkey prepares for the launch of high-speed 4G cellphone services next month a row is brewing over rivals wanting cheaper access to partly state-owned Turk Telekom's fibre optic network, saying that otherwise they cannot compete in a market where fixed-line and mobile services are set to converge. At stake is a fast-growing market of 78 million people where the median age is around 30, younger than anywhere else in Europe, and an attractive proposition for telecoms companies, as younger people demand more bandwidth to stream movies, play online games and communicate both at home and on the move.

Turk Telekom has spent 20 billion lira (\$7 billion) over the last decade on building the country's most extensive fibre-optic network and is now looking to bundle high-speed fixed line and mobile services into a single contract to attract more mobile customers after the April 1 launch of 4G services.

While Turk Telekom has just 23.4 percent of the mobile market, compared with 46.2 percent for Turkcell and 30.4 percent for Vodafone Turkey, analysts say its fibre network is the big attraction.

It has laid 213,000 km of fibre, six times more than Turkcell, while Vodafone is further behind still. It charges its rivals to use the network, setting the price itself. Turkcell and Vodafone want prices regulated and are pushing for the creation of a joint company to manage the network.

"We have to bring fibre to every household and that requires a mobilisation for digital transformation," Turkcell Chief Executive Kaan Terzioğlu told Reuters. He estimated that by working together on building fibre networks, rather than investing separately, operators could save \$12.5 billion.

'NOT FAIR, OR POSSIBLE'

Turk Telekom is hoping that faster mobile data will whet customer appetites for better fixed line broadband. "That's been the global trend of 'convergence', where customers move to a single provider for mobile, fixed voice, broadband, and TV," said Cenk Sezginsoy, a partner and managing director at Boston Consulting Group.

Turkcell has a fibre network of around 35,000 km, mostly in big cities. Its fibre network serves 900,000 subscribers, compared with 1.5 million for Turk Telekom. —Reuters

News

in brief

Kuwait oil price down to \$34.20 pb: KPC

KUWAIT: The price of Kuwaiti oil went down yesterday by \$9 cents to settle at \$34.20 pb, compared to \$34.79 pb the day before, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) yesterday. In global markets, oil posted multi-week gains, with US crude up for a fifth week in a row.

DIB narrows price guidance for sukuk

DUBAI: Dubai Islamic Bank (DIB) has narrowed pricing guidance for a US dollar-denominated sukuk issue which is due to price later yesterday, a document from lead arrangers showed. The five-year Islamic bond is now earmarked to price at 235 basis points over midswaps plus or minus 5 bps, according to the document, which added that investor orders, including those from the arrangers, totalled more than \$1 billion. This is inside indicative pricing of the 245 bps area over the same benchmark announced earlier in the day. The final size of the deal is expected to be "in the context of \$500 million", the document added. Benchmark size is usually understood to mean at least \$500 million. DIB's transaction is being arranged by seven banks: Bank ABC, DIB, Emirates Islamic Bank, HSBC, National Bank of Abu Dhabi, Sharjah Islamic Bank and Standard Chartered.

Egypt Suez Canal revenue drops to 3.108bn EGP

CAIRO: Egypt's Suez Canal revenue fell in February, reaching 3.108 billion Egyptian pounds after 3.179 billion pounds the month before, data from the canal authority showed. The website did not explain why a dollar figure for the revenues, which is usually reported, was not given for February. Egypt's central bank devalued the pound to 8.85 per dollar from 7.73 on March 14 and announced it would pursue a more flexible exchange rate. It later strengthened the pound to 8.78 per dollar. A spokesman for the Suez Canal Authority did not respond to requests for comment on the revenue figures. The canal is one of Egypt's main sources of foreign currency. Egypt has been struggling to revive its economy since a 2011 uprising scared away tourists and foreign investors, other main sources of hard currency.

Saudi Airlines sees 5bn riyal sukuk issue in Q2

RIYADH: National carrier Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) is seeking to raise 5 billion riyals (\$1.3 billion) via the first tranche of a sukuk issuance program in the second or third quarter of this year, its director-general Saleh Al-Jasser said yesterday. The funds will be used to finance fleet expansion, as the carrier aims to operate 200 aircraft by 2020, he told reporters at a business conference. Details of the second tranche of the sukuk program have not been determined, he added. The airline has been spinning off units in the last several years; it is now preparing documentation to hive off its cargo unit in an initial public offer of shares, Jasser said without giving details.

BG Egypt suspends some development wells

CAIRO: BG Egypt has suspended work at some development projects in Egypt after the company was unable to reach agreement over the price of gas with the government, an official at the Egyptian General Petroleum Corp (EGPC) told Reuters yesterday. "BG has stopped work at 9A+ and 9B after failure to reach an agreement on the fixed price to be paid for extracted gas, and it withdrew rigs working on the 9A+ wells on the seventh of March," the EGPC official said. The development areas include several deepwater wells in the West Nile Delta. BG Egypt, a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, is looking to raise the price it is paid for gas to \$5.88 per million British thermal units from \$3.95 currently, the official said. Egypt has over the past year raised the price it pays many international oil companies for natural gas production in order to encourage more investment in the sector.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.		
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
ASIAN COUNTRIES		
Japanese Yen	2.642	
Indian Rupees	4.399	
Pakistani Rupees	2.881	
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.080	
Nepali Rupees	2.743	
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	35.150	
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	38.523	
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.419	
Tunisian Dinar	159.080	
Jordanian Dinar	424.660	
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.026	
Syrian Lira	2.147	
Morocco Dirham	31.040	
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES		
US Dollar Transfer	301.150	
Euro	333.070	
Sterling Pound	421.610	
Canadian dollar	224.650	
Turkish lira	101.190	
Swiss Franc	305.430	
US Dollar Buying	301.350	

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	0.427095	0.436095
Czech Korune	0.004561	0.016561
Danish Krone	0.041505	0.046505
Euro	0.333820	0.341820
Norwegian Krone	0.031862	0.037062
Romanian Leu	0.086602	0.086602
Slovakia	0.008983	0.018983
Swedish Krona	0.032646	0.037646
Swiss Franc	0.304324	0.314524
Turkish Lira	0.099884	0.110184
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.220611	0.232111
New Zealand Dollar	0.197943	0.207443
Canada Dollar	0.225451	0.233951
US Dollars	0.297800	0.302300
US Dollars Mint	0.298300	0.302300

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003431	0.004005
Chinese Yuan	0.045053	0.048553
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036852	0.039602
Indian Rupee	0.004301	0.004691
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000019	0.000025
Japanese Yen	0.002614	0.002794
Kenyan Shilling	0.003096	0.003096
Korean Won	0.000251	0.000266
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070925	0.076925
Nepalese Rupee	0.002862	0.003032
Pakistan Rupee	0.002677	0.002957
Philippine Peso	0.006411	0.006691
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.218748	0.224748
South African Rand	0.013831	0.022331
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001707	0.002287
Taiwan	0.009089	0.009269
Thai Baht	0.008320	0.008870

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.794227	0.802227
Egyptian Pound	0.030909	0.036027
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000194	0.000254
Jordanian Dinar	0.421800	0.429300
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020562	0.044562
Nigerian Naira	0.001243	0.001878
Omani Riyal	0.777736	0.783416
Qatar Riyal	0.082213	0.083426
Saudi Riyal	0.079620	0.080570
Syrian Pound	0.001279	0.001499
Tunisian Dinar	0.147506	0.155506
Turkish Lira	0.099884	0.110184
UAE Dirhams	0.081215	0.082364
Yemeni Riyal	0.001364	0.001444

2016 Chevrolet Captiva Now Available at Chevrolet Alghanim Showrooms

Offering seamless connectivity, enhanced safety, and an upgraded design



KUWAIT – Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, is happy to announce the release of the new 2016 Chevrolet Captiva in its showroom. The new Captiva offers SUV customers unsurpassed smartphone connectivity, active safety features designed to prevent accidents, and redesigned interior and exterior styling that refreshes the model and brings it in line with design cues of current Chevrolet models.

Safety First

The new Captiva addresses the discerning needs of tech-savvy young professionals through its new Chevrolet MyLink infotainment system, which provides unsurpassed connectivity and convenience for smartphone users through phone projection technology.

In parallel, the 2016 Captiva takes accident prevention to yet another level with the introduction of Side Blind Zone Alert and Rear Cross Traffic Alert. These active safety features use radar sensors located in the rear bumper to monitor the vehicle's side blind spots, help drivers maneuver when backing up or changing lanes, and potentially avoid



accidents.

The Captiva's active and passive stability and safety features also include ESC (Electronic Stability Control) that features ABS (Anti-lock Braking System), TCS (Traction Control System), ARP (Active Rollover Protection), EBD (Electronic Brake-force Distribution) and HBA (Hydraulic Brake Assist).

Additionally, the 2016 Captiva features Hill Start Assist, Hill Descent Control, dual front and curtain air bags, and dual pre-tensioner seatbelts.

Innovatively Dynamic Design

From a design perspective, one of the new Captiva's most noticeable changes is the treatment to the front end, particularly the headlamps, which are more compact and come integrated with daytime running lights. The other major redesign is on the front grille, with the Chevrolet bowtie repositioned on the upper section of the redesigned signature dual-port grille. The overall treatment has given the Captiva a refreshed, high-tech and contemporary feel.

Likewise, the rear fascia is updated with integrated, stylized chrome exhaust tips and LED taillamps for a sportier, more up-to-date appearance.

new MyLink system, the radio and navigation controls are now integrated and operable from the large full-color touchscreen on the center console. Enhanced connectivity and convenience includes a Text Message Alerts feature for smartphone users with Bluetooth profile, which reads incoming texts through the vehicle's speakers as well as voice-controlled connectivity, to help keep phones in pockets and hands on the wheel.

The new MyLink also gives drivers the best of both worlds when it comes to infotainment. It provides easy, intuitive operation of basic functions, yet it is also highly customizable and capable of linking to devices such as smartphones, USB devices and MP3 players, giving users more ways of staying connected, like accessing their favorite music files, photo albums and videos via Bluetooth or USB/AUX.

Awe-Inspiring Performance

Under the hood of Captiva are two engine choices that include the latest technological features, offering an exceptional performance and fuel efficiency, in addition to automatic transmission with Driver Shift Control, allowing you to enjoy the convenience of continuous power without switching gears as you speed up or slow down.

The Captiva comes with a 2.4L four-cylinder E85-capable gasoline engine capable of 167 hp at 5,600 rpm and 230 Nm at 4,600 rpm. It also features a 3.0L six-cylinder engine with 264. Power is sent to the driving wheels via a first-in-class six-speed automatic transmission with Driver Shift Control (DSC).

After Sale Services

All customers who purchase a Chevrolet from Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons will receive the benefits of the Chevrolet Care, which entails new levels of post-sale support and trust. The Chevrolet Care is an exceptional customer service that is based on four main pillars: competitive and transparent service costs (especially for four-wheel drive vehicles), scheduled service appointment booking with same day delivery, quality service by certified technicians and 3yr/100,000km warranty with 24x7 roadside assistance.



Combining Luxury with Comfort

Improvements have also been made inside the Captiva. Thanks to the introduction of the



OIL MARKET RATTLED BY DEADLY BRUSSELS BLASTS

LONDON: Oil prices seasawed yesterday, rattled by investor nervousness after deadly blasts in Brussels prompted a flight towards so-called safe-haven assets such as gold. Oil had risen earlier in the session following a drop in US inventory levels that helped ease some of the concern around oversupply that could dampen future price recoveries. Brent crude futures were up 5 cents at \$41.59 a barrel by 1127 GMT, having risen to a session high of \$41.75. Brent has gained over 50 percent from January's 12-year lows.

US May crude futures were down 6 cents at \$41.46. "The stocks (fall) in Cushing (U.S.

oil delivery hub) helped ... but obviously now you have these headlines from Brussels and that can lead to some risk-off positioning. But the movements for now are not very significant," Petromatrix strategist Olivier Jakob said.

The dollar index, gold and German Bunds, all perceived to be less risky options at times of geopolitical or financial uncertainty, rallied in price. Equities came under pressure, led by steep falls in airline and other travel stocks, after the attacks. US crude stockpiles at the Cushing, Oklahoma hub fell 570,574 barrels to 69.05 million in the week to March 18, traders said on

Monday, citing data from market intelligence firm Genscape. Cushing inventories had previously risen towards 70 million barrels, causing market participants to fear they could hit capacity.

"Oil and a number of other markets have reached a bit of a pause phase," said Ric Spooner, chief market analyst at CMC Markets. "For oil we have had a substantial rally. A lot of that has been preemptive in nature, preempting production cuts, and assisted by the weaker U.S. dollar," he said.

"We have arrived at the situation where the market is waiting for news to catch up with it a little," Spooner said. Producers

from OPEC and non-members meet on April 17 in Qatar to discuss an output freeze. Iran has said it would consider joining in once it had recovered market share. A senior oil official was quoted as saying the country's crude exports have reached 2.2 million barrels per day (bpd) since sanctions were lifted in January, marking a rise of 900,000 bpd.

Gold rallies

Gold rallied more than 1 percent yesterday after two explosions at Brussels airport killed at least 26 people and a further blast hit the Belgian capital's Metro, with investors seeking assets seen as a haven from risk. Belgium's federal prosecutor said the airport explosions resulted from a suicide attack, public broadcasters VTM and RTBF reported. The Belga agency said shots were fired and there were shouts in Arabic shortly before two blasts rang out.

Spot gold rallied to a high of \$1,259.60 an ounce in the wake of the news, and was at \$1,249.86 at 1030 GMT, up 0.5 percent. US gold futures for April delivery were up \$6.40 an ounce at \$1,250.60.

Gold fell for three days to Monday on uncertainty over the path of US interest rates. Speculation rates would rise pushed prices down 10 percent last year, but they have rebounded 20

percent since Jan. 1 as those expectations faded. "Before the explosions we had some fairly hawkish comments from one of the Fed officials saying a rate increase could now be on the agenda for April," Societe Generale analyst Robin Bhar said. "I'd have thought that would have weakened gold, but clearly safe-haven buying on the back of the explosions in Brussels has (pushed prices higher)."

Atlanta Federal Reserve President Dennis Lockhart said on Monday the United States may be in line for a rate hike as soon as next month, another sign that policymakers are comfortable letting U.S. monetary policy diverge from other major economies. European stocks fell and investors rushed for the safety of government bonds after the explosions in Brussels. The euro fell, the yen and the Swiss franc rose, and the dollar index climbed 0.3 percent after the news. Swiss gold exports fell to an 18-month low in February as shipments to leading gold consumers India, China and Hong Kong slid from the previous month.

"Exports to China, Hong Kong and India plunged by over 40 percent month-on-month and are thus nearly 30 percent lower than in the same period last year. This points to subdued gold demand in Asia," Commerzbank said in a note. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report						
Tuesday 22 March 2016						
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low	
Price Index	-3.74	5,251.80	5,255.54	5,269.04	5,245.71	
Weighted Index	-1.07	356.88	357.95	358.68	355.78	
KXS 15	-5.21	835.15	840.36	843.18	832.26	

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	104	104	1000	104	2	104	0.0
IKARUS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0
IPG	310	295	220,436	65,029	10	300	5.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	730	0.0
ENERGYH	46.5	45.5	87,702	4,047	19	46.5	2.5
GPI	40.5	40.0	531,400	21,324	18	40.5	0.0
ABAR	104	104	1,001	104	3	104	0.0
Oil & Gas			841,639	90,608	52	793.35	4.58
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	0.0
BPCC	480	470	72,906	34,989	7	480	5.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	610	0.0
ALQURAN	192	192	88,154	16,926	9	192	0.0
Basic Materials			161,060	51,915	16	933.30	3.37
KCEM	385	375	136,222	51,901	10	375	0.0
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	0.0
CABLE	320	310	147,916	45,858	5	320	0.0
SHIP	140	140	10,000	1,400	1	140	0.0
PCEM	1,020	1,020	1,250	1,275	1	1,020	0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	420	0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	72	0.0
ACICO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290	0.0
GGMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	450	0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	134	0.0
KPAK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	310	0.0
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	236	0.0
EQUIPMENT	52	51	124,300	6,414	5	52	1.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	0.0
SALBOOKH	71	66	215,000	14,920	16	71	0.0
AGLTY	475	460	2,638,301	1,374,736	83	465	0.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	0.0
CLEANING	38.5	38.0	305,000	11,703	10	38.0	0.5
CITYGROUP	440	440	217	95	1	440	-0.5
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	46.0	0.0
KPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	206	0.0
HUMANSOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	750	0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	146	0.0
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	265	0.0
GFC	30.0	30.0	20,000	600	3	30.0	2.5
MAYADEEN	19.5	18.5	5,957,539	112,988	45	18.5	0.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	800	0.0
MTCC	85	83	1,251,309	105,152	50	85	2.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	680	0.0
ALAFCO	208	196	406,406	80,842	44	208	10.0
MUBARRAD	65	64	160,000	10,265	5	64	1.0
LOGISTICS	64	63	100,700	6,345	8	63	-1.0
SCEM	85	85	200,000	17,000	5	85	0.0
QCEM	82	82	500	41	1	82	3.0
FCEM	63	63	55,022	3,466	2	63	-2.0
RKWC	98	97	40,966	3,984	3	98	1.0
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	0.0
Industrials			12,070,648	1,848,985	298	986.50	2.41
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	174	0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	63	0.0
PAPCO	102	102	36,500	3,723	7	102	0.0
CATTL	132	132	65,000	8,580	2	132	-2.0
DANAH	73	72	199,491	14,443	9	73	0.0
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	182	0.0
FOOD	2,400	2,380	29,258	69,712	6	2,380	-20.0
Consumer Goods			330,249	96,459	24	1050.92	-3.42
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	0.0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	172	0.0
Health Care			0	0	0	0.00	0.00
KCIN	990	990	10	10	1	990	-10.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	0.0
SULTAN	71	65	1,290,000	88,912	25	65	-5.0
CABLETV	28.5	28.5	1,000	29	1	28.5	1.0
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385	0.0
IFAHF	180	180	1,150	207	3	180	-10.0
OULAFUEL	116	112	20,569	2,332	14	114	2.0
MUNTAZAHAT	83	83	20,000	1,660	1	83	-1.0
JAZEERA	890	860	106,746	93,173	9	880	1.0
SOOR	114	112	14,743	1,663	7	112	0.0
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	0.0
ALNAWADI	75	75	65,000	4,875	1	75	0.0
ALRAI	146	140	13,712	1,937	9	146	6.0
ZIMAH	55	53	1,193,269	64,599	77	54	-1.0
UFIG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0
Mezzan	1,080	1,060	261,868	277,836	8	1,060	0.0
Consumer Services			2,988,067	537,232	156	928.73	-1.85
ZAIN	385	375	5,115,621	1,938,525	98	375	-10.0
OOREDOO	1,200	1,180	5,589	6,695	5	1,200	0.0
HITSTELEC	29.5	29.0	569,184	16,506	10	29.5	1.0
VIVA	1,000	990	86,173	85,607	71	990	-10.0
Telecommunications			5,776,567	2,047,334	184	617.43	-3.86
NBK	700	690	1,614,847	1,121,906	50	690	0.0
GBK	208	206	352,832	72,909	9	206	-2.0
CBK	485	475	36,444	17,564	7	485	5.0
ABK	335	335	142,615	47,776	7	335	-5.0
ALMUTAHED	425	420	166,305	70,029	9	425	1.0
KIB	196	194	268,061	52,530	6	194	0.0
BURG	345	340	67,705	23,030	7	340	0.0
KFIN	485	475	8,525,022	4,111,896	174	485	-5.0
BOUBYAN	415	410	453,494	188,182	19	415	0.0
AUB	202	200	41,500	8,303	6	202	2.0
ITHMR	36.0	35.0	1,979,454	69,967	35	35.5	0.0
WARBABANK	172	168	490,386	82,822	80	168	-4.0
Banks			14,138,665	5,866,913	409	802.54	-0.38
KINS	300	280	160,360	46,194	18	280	-20.0
GINS	700	700	5,787	4,051	1	700	0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	470	0.0
WINS	116	114	2,000	232	3	116	2.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	0.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	40.5	0.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	0.0
Insurance			168,147	50,476	22	1078.00	-10.42

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	34.5	33.0	249,2916	84,285	46	34.0	0.5
KRE	52	51	1,485,724	76,461	41	51	-1.0
URC	92	92	10	1	1	92	1.0
NRE	108	98	2,089,600	218,875	84	98	-8.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	365	0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	560	0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	0.0
MASSALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	51	0.0
ARABREC	29.5	28.0	868,179	24,809	23	28.0	0.0
ERESCO	51	50	405,000	20,253	10	50	-1.0
MABANEE	870	860	211,597	182,778	7	860	-10.0
INJAZZAT	75	75	42,748	3,206	5	75	5.0
INVESTORS	21.0	20.0	2,189,367	44,838	44	20.0	-0.5
IRC	28.5	28.0	92,700	2,616	4	28.0	-0.5
ALTUJARIA	81	80	163,000	13,043	5	80	0.0
SANAM	34.0	32.0	51,500	1,679	7	34.0	2.5
AYANIRE							



THE FLAGSHIP INFINITI SUV QX80 IS READY TO SHINE AT THE HAMRA MALL

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babbain Co, the authorized distributor of Infiniti in the State of Kuwait, is showcasing its most advanced flagship Infiniti QX80 SUV at the Al Hamra Mall for five days that will provide esteemed mall visitors to experience its bold design, meticulously crafted luxurious interior and instant opportunity to book an exclusive test drive.

Infiniti QX80 has always been a cornerstone for Infiniti Al-Babbain catering to high-end luxury customers and strengthening the brand's image through HALO model status. The redesigned Infiniti QX80 was launched just over a year back in December 2014, and the uptake for the new model has been strong.

Infiniti Al-Babbain's focus has always been to bring their products closer to their customers and at important places which provide a unique setting for customers to experience Infiniti's products at their own convenience.

To complement the promotional display, Infiniti Al-Babbain launched a special financial program on Infiniti QX80 that will benefit prospective owners with 0 percent interest rate over 5 years. This promotional incentive is offered exclusively during the month of March 2016.

The New Infiniti QX80 underwent an extensive exterior design refinement focusing on the model's front end appearance, with new upper grille shape and added lower grille. The revised front fascia also features new

LED high/low beam headlights, LED turn signals, LED fog lights and a new bumper with flush-mounted sonar sensors.

The QX80 boasts several new technologies starting with the advanced High Beam Assist, Predictive Forward Collision Warning (PFCW) systems, Front Emergency Braking and Front Collision Warning System, alongside available features such as Blind Spot Warning, Blind Spot Intervention, Lane Departure Warning (LDW) and Lane Departure Prevention (LDP).

On the promise of performance, the QX80 does not disappoint. The proven 5.6-liter V8 engine combines the responsive acceleration of Infiniti's VVEL (Variable Valve

Event & Lift) technology with the efficiency of Direct Injection Gasoline (DIG) to produce 400 horsepower and 560Nm of torque. A smooth 7-speed automatic transmission is standard on all models.

The Infiniti QX80 promotion at the Hamra Mall is just one of the many promotions offered by Infiniti Al Babbain during the month of March 2016. The Infiniti portfolio offers an extensive line-up of vehicles that ranges from sedans, sports and specialty vehicles, crossovers to full size SUV to meet the diverse needs of premium customers.

The entire portfolio shares a common DNA that blends aggressive bold styling with breath-taking presence and exhilarating drive performance.



BERLIN: Thomas Rabe, CEO of media group Bertelsmann (left) and Anke Schaeferkordt, CEO of group RTL Germany attend financial results 2015 press conference yesterday in Berlin. —AFP

EUROZONE BUSINESSES END Q1 ON BRIGHTER NOTE

LONDON: Business activity in the euro zone and sentiment in powerhouse Germany ended the first quarter on a brighter note, surveys showed yesterday, suggesting the European Central Bank's extra stimulus may already be having a positive effect.

The ECB chopped interest rates again and bolstered its asset purchase program earlier this month as part of an ongoing battle to drive up growth and inflation in the 19-nation bloc. Markit's flash composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), regarded as a good growth indicator, jumped to 53.7 this month from February's 53.0, which was the lowest reading since the start of 2015.

The latest result was above all forecasts in a Reuters poll, which had a median prediction of 53.0. Any reading above 50 denotes growth. Markit said the PMI pointed to first quarter GDP growth of 0.3 percent, slightly weaker than a Reuters poll prediction earlier this month of 0.4 percent.

Sister surveys from Germany and France, the bloc's two biggest economies, showed the growth rate held steady in the former and was at a five-month high in the latter. "The surveys offer some encouragement that activity and sentiment have improved somewhat as fears about the global economy have eased," said Jennifer McKeown at Capital Economics.

German business morale rose more than expected in March, snapping a three-month run of falls as companies' assessments of both the current situation and the outlook improved, Munich-based Ifo economic insti-

tute said yesterday.

The mood among German analysts and investors also rose in March, albeit not by as much as expected, a survey by think tank ZEW showed. Still, European stocks fell and investors rushed for the safety of gold and government bonds yesterday, after two explosions at Brussels airport and blasts at metro stations in the Belgian capital overshadowed the data.

WEAK UNDERBELLY

What hasn't revived yet in the eurozone is company pricing power. As they have for all but two months in the last four years, firms cut prices to stimulate trade and the output price index only nudged up to 48.6 from 48.5. Eurozone inflation was -0.2 percent in February, nowhere near the ECB's target of close to but just under 2 percent.

In Britain, which does not use the euro, inflation held steady at 0.3 percent in February, official data showed yesterday, putting no pressure on the Bank of England to raise interest rates from record lows anytime soon. A PMI covering the bloc's dominant service industry also came in above expectations for no change from February's 13-month low of 53.3. It jumped to 54.0, matching the most optimistic forecast in a Reuters poll.

But some of the activity was driven by the running down of old orders. A backlog of work index slipped below 50 for the first time since May, dipping to 49.8 from last month's break-even point. —Reuters

IRANIANS EXASPERATED AS US SANCTIONS HIT DEAL MAKING

GLOBAL LENDERS STEER CLEAR OF IRAN, BUSINESS COMMUNITY FRUSTRATED

DUBAI/LONDON: More than two months after international nuclear sanctions on Iran were supposed to have ended, frustration is deepening that few trade deals are going through as foreign banks shy away from processing transactions with the country. Iranian hopes of rapidly ending the country's economic isolation are fading as particularly European banks - some of which have already been hit by huge US fines for sanctions busting - fear falling foul of the many other restrictions imposed by Washington that remain in force.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has accused the United States of foot-dragging following the official implementation in January of a nuclear deal with major powers. "The Americans have not acted on their promises and (only) removed the sanctions on paper," he said in a televised address on Sunday, complaining that international financial transactions faced problems because banks "fear the Americans".

Many nuclear-related sanctions did end when the 2015 nuclear deal was implemented on Jan. 17, including measures imposed by the European Union and rules allowing US authorities to go after foreign companies and individuals dealing with Iran. Agreements on a number of major contracts have been announced with great fanfare, with Tehran hoping relief from the crippling sanctions will lead to billions of dollars in trade and investment, reviving the economy and raising Iranians' living standards. However, significant sums have yet to start flowing.

US banks are still forbidden to do business with Iran and while lenders based elsewhere are not covered by this ban, major problems remain. Chief among these are rules prohibiting transactions in dollars - the world's main business currency - from being processed through the US financial system.

The Iranian business community believes the United States has failed to spell out exactly what is permitted and what is not, leading to the uncertainty that makes international banks reluctant to process Iranian-linked transactions. "We have to try to put pressure on America to make this issue clear. Otherwise, removing the sanctions does not mean anything," said Ferial Mostofi, chairwoman of privately-owned Iranian project management firm KDD Group.

KDD Group, which is active in sectors including iron, steel and mining, has noticed greater business interest from abroad, she said, but so far no deals have been concluded. "If the banking situation stays as today, definitely we

shall be facing problems for the payments," said Mostofi, who also chairs the Investment Commission at the Iran Chamber of Commerce.

The US Treasury, which is responsible for enforcing sanctions on Iran, gave no immediate response to a Reuters request for comment.

Iranians based in Dubai, historically one of Iran's main trading partners, complain they cannot get letters of credit to finance deals with their home country, while others have even had their company bank accounts closed in recent weeks. The problems are also complicating Iran's plans to sell more oil, as well as recover up to \$100 billion in assets that had been frozen by the sanctions in foreign bank accounts.

AGREEMENTS, FEW DEALS

Since January, Iran has struck agreements worth an estimated \$50 billion with countries including Italy, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Germany and others involving trade, project finance and other investment. Agreements include a contract to buy 118 Airbus jets worth \$27 billion. However, the funding needed to turn agreements into firm deals is another matter.

One Airbus executive told a conference in Paris last month that "we only see the back of banks at the moment", telling them: "Don't be afraid!" Banks remain deterred by a \$9 billion US fine on BNP Paribas in 2014 for violating US financial sanctions and other penalties, and the head of the French banking federation told the

conference that lenders had yet to be assured of "complete legal security and clarity". That will be tough as long as Washington keeps the ban on processing dollar transactions for Iran in the US system.

"Until US sanctions are lifted European banks with major operations in the States, of which there are many, will still be exposed to onerous trade restrictions unless they can prove complete separation of European and US divisions of their business," said George Booth, a partner at law firm Pinsent Masons. "That's easier said than done. It should not be underestimated the level of internal restructuring required to satisfy this criteria," said Booth, who advises firms hoping to do business with Iran.

Seyed Arash Shahr Aeni, deputy chief executive of the Export Guarantee Fund of Iran, an Iranian government agency, said so far only smaller banks were willing to become involved, and transactions were limited to around \$50 million. "Some small amounts have gone through but the huge amounts will require the involvement of big foreign banks which were active in Iran projects before the sanctions were imposed. They are still reluctant to start doing business with Iran."

In recent weeks SWIFT, the global payments network, has reconnected several Iranian banks to its system, allowing them to resume cross-border transactions with foreign banks four years after they were cut off. While an important step towards re-integrating

Iran into the global financial system, the outcome has appeared patchy so far.

Two banking sources said most international banks were still refusing to accept cheques from holders of accounts at one major Iranian commercial bank that has been reconnected. Ali Sanginian, chief executive of Amin Investment Bank, Iran's largest investment bank, blamed the delay in reintegrating Iranian lenders on the remaining sanctions, the banks' anxieties and outdated technology used in Iran. An international banker in the region said his bank's aversion to Iranian transactions had not changed. "Around 85 percent of trade is in US dollars and if you're dealing in dollars you cannot risk that by involvement with Iran," the banker said.

Of the transactions that are happening, some are in euros and other currencies, permitted under the current arrangement. "Notwithstanding the relaxation of the position, it is still unclear as to whether if you are moving US dollars around they may get held up in the banking system," said James Kidwell, chief executive of shipping group Braemar. "Some people are probably choosing to transact in euros to avoid that problem."

Iran has managed to sell oil to India and other buyers in euros. It told trading partners which owe it billions of dollars that it wants to be paid in euros, Reuters reported last month, citing a source at state-owned National Iranian Oil Co. —Reuters



ABIDJAN: Journalist of Jeune Afrique Patrick Smith (left) delivers a speech next to Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara (right) and Ghana's President John Dramani Mahama (center) during the Africa CEO business forum yesterday in Abidjan. —AFP



SHANGHAI: Two men ride past shipping containers stacked at a port in Shanghai yesterday. —AFP

ETIHAD AIRWAYS PARTNERS WITH EKAR

EMPLOYEES TO GET ACCESS TO SMART MOBILITY SOLUTION

ABU DHABI: Etihad Airways, the national airline of United Arab Emirates, and Ekar, an innovative mobile app-based car rental company in the Middle East, have yesterday celebrated an inaugural partnership, offering the airline's employees exclusive access to the smart mobility solution.

Ekar is an easy to use car-sharing platform that provides pay-as-you-go hourly and daily car rental from the comfort of a laptop or smartphone.

Etihad Airways is the first airline in the region to embrace smart car-sharing and rental as an added employee benefit. Brand new Nissan vehicles provided by Ekar, with each model holding a five-star crash safety rating, have been reserved exclusively for Etihad Airways. Parked at the airline's accommodation buildings in Abu Dhabi, employees can easily reserve and unlock the cars using the Ekar app and can drive anywhere within the UAE for AED 27 per hour.

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.

NYU Abu Dhabi consists of a highly selective liberal arts and science college (including engineering), and a world center for advanced research and scholarship - all fully integrated with each other and connected to NYU in New York. Together, NYU New York, NYU Abu Dhabi, and NYU Shanghai form the backbone of a unique global network university, with faculty and students from each campus spending "semesters away" at one or more of the numerous study-abroad sites NYU maintains on six continents.



PROTEST AGAINST TAXI APPS CAUSES CHAOS IN JAKARTA

DRIVERS PROTEST UNFAIR COMPETITION FROM RIDE-HAILING APPS

JAKARTA: Thousands of taxi drivers caused traffic chaos in the Indonesian capital yesterday in a violent protest against what they say is unfair competition from ride-hailing apps such as Uber.

TV footage showed long lines of taxis and three-wheel minicabs blocking a central expressway, men setting tires alight and jumping on

enough to halt the motorcades of Indonesia's president and vice-president. Drivers say competition from ride-hailing apps, which don't face the same costs and rules as regular taxis, has severely reduced their income. Many come to Jakarta from other parts of Indonesia and support their families as taxi drivers.

Driver Jeffrey Sumampouw said

port industry on its head worldwide. In the US and Europe, the apps have been acclaimed by urban customers tired of struggling to find cabs, while taxi companies accuse the mavericks of running unlicensed services.

Uber has been making a big push into Asia, intensifying competition in a region where there

motorcycle taxis and provides other services like document and food delivery, has also exploded in popularity in the past year.

The demonstrations yesterday elicited little if any sympathy from commuters in a city of 10 million people that already suffers massive congestion. "This protest is so terrible. They really are rude and overbearing. I was very hurt," said Dewi Gayatri, who missed her flight for a business trip to Makassar in eastern Indonesia.

"I still like Uber, and hope the government protects Uber, because it's so easy to order and cheaper," she said. Indonesia's vice president Jusuf Kalla complained it was the first time his motorcade had been stuck in traffic since being elected nearly two years ago.

Kalla, who was on his way to pay respects to 13 army officers killed in a helicopter crash in Sulawesi on the weekend, said "technology could not be resisted."

Officials have given mixed signals recently about how ride apps would be regulated. Indonesia's president Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has previously defended the Go-Jek app in particular as making life easier for Jakarta residents and refused calls to ban it.

Minister of Information Technology and Communications Rudiantara, who goes by one name, said last week the government wants to "level the playing field" by ensuring all transport is regulated. "We are not talking about blocking or unblocking because technology is neutral," he said at a press conference following a protest involving hundreds of drivers.

Haryono, a driver for the Blue Bird taxi company, said he wanted to keep on working yesterday but couldn't avoid the protest. "I was forced to stop and join with them," he said. "I cannot do anything because they look angry. It would be dangerous for me, my passenger and my vehicle if I denied their request." —AP



JAKARTA: Children watch as Indonesian taxi drivers gather to protest against Uber and other ride-hailing services, outside the parliament building in Jakarta yesterday. —AFP

vehicles that refused to join in the protest. Green-jacketed drivers for Go-Jek, an app used to hail motorcycle taxis, retaliated by hurling rocks and other objects. An Associated Press reporter saw drivers surround one taxi, forcing its terrified female passenger on to the road with her luggage. It was the second major protest by taxi drivers in Jakarta this month and was large

his earnings have slumped more than 60 percent since Uber and other apps starting getting popular in Jakarta about a year ago.

"The government must defend us from illegal drivers who have stolen our income," he said. "We almost cry every day because it's difficult to get passengers." Smartphone-based apps such as Uber have turned the public trans-

already was a slew of ride-hailing apps such as Malaysia's Grab, which operates in several Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia. On Monday, Grab said it had formed a strategic partnership with Lippo, which is one of Indonesia's largest conglomerates, and claimed its "GrabCar" business in Indonesia grew 30 percent last month. Go-Jek, an Indonesian startup that hail

3

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GULF BANK'S MONTHLY SALARY ACCOUNT AND RED ACCOUNT DRAWS SET TO TAKE PLACE LIVE ON MARINA FM

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced that it will be holding its monthly Salary Account draw and Red Account draws, simultaneously, March 31, 2016 at 1pm, live on Marina FM's famous Diwaniya show. The Salary & Red Account will have a joint car draw which includes a brand new 2016 Cadillac CTS in addition to cash draw prizes up to KD 1,000 each. Furthermore the Al-Danah 1st quarterly draw winner, for a cash prize of KD200,000, will be announced. The draws will be held under the supervision of a Ministry of Commerce representative.

The new 2016 salary offer for Kuwaiti salary provides customers who transfer

their salary a guaranteed cash gift of up to KD 200 or up to 60,000 Gulf Reward Points upon their first salary transfer as well as receiving a Gulf Bank Signature Credit card free for life.

New Red Account or Salary Account customers will also have the chance to enter a monthly cash draw to win KD 1,000 each and quarterly car draws with the chance to win a new 2016 Cadillac CTS.

For further information about the Salary, Red, Al-Danah accounts and prize draws, visit one of Gulf Bank's 55 branches, or call Gulf Bank's Customer Contact Center on 1805805.



MANILA: Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) executive director Julia Abad gestures during a press conference at the Central Bank of the Philippines headquarters in Manila yesterday. —AFP

ITALY'S BANK TROUBLES TEST ECB'S METTLE

MILAN: The European Central Bank is trying to strongarm Italian banks into cleaning up their balance sheets, a year and a half after they fared the worst of all euro zone lenders in its first stress tests as overarching supervisor. The banks have made scant progress on requested reforms, threatening to undermine a fragile recovery in the bloc's third largest economy. They argue the ECB's demands are unrealistic and delay the very consolidation the sector needs.

The standoff poses one of the biggest challenges to Europe's central bank since it became the euro zone single banking regulator in November 2014. After Greek banks, Italian ones are now taking up most of its time. Banks like Carige and Monte dei Paschi di Siena have their liquidity monitored daily and the ECB, working in teams with Italy's central bank, is firing off missives telling lenders to raise capital, find a buyer and sell off bad loans.

"They phone, they e-mail and they come down to see us," said a source at one Italian bank, who declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the issue.

"They are a constant presence. For one reason or the other there is always an inspection - I'd say they are here two months out of three." Letters to Veneto Banca and Banca Popolare di Vicenza, which must raise a combined 2.75 billion euros in cash and list on the market to meet ECB demands, threaten all the measures allowed by the EU banking resolution directive-including the last resort of the ECB removing top executives and taking over management.

A crucial test of the strategy is a much-anticipated

merger between Banca Popolare di Milano and Banco Popolare that would be Italy's first tie-up since the ECB took on supervision.

RENZI WEIGHS IN

The boards of BPM and Banco Popolare are meeting this week and sources close to the matter say Banco Popolare is considering a cash call of up to 1 billion euros as part of measures sought by the ECB to clear the merger. Any deal would still need the blessing of both banks' shareholders, including powerful unions who fear a tie-up will lead to job cuts.

Bankers close to the talks say the ECB's conditions for approving the combination have been so stringent that after months of negotiations, the two banks considered abandoning the deal, which would create Italy's third biggest bank.

"If this merger falls through, the ECB will have to take responsibility for this," said a frustrated adviser for one of the banks. "It's like the doctor killing the patient."

Danielle Nouy, the ECB's bank supervisory chief, said on Tuesday the merged bank had to be strong from the start. "We are working very hard with our Italian colleagues to make sure that we put the adequate requirements, no more than is needed but no less, either," she told the European parliament.

The ECB is demanding a leaner structure and a business plan for the new group within a month: the original deal outline included a 19-member board, two headquarters, no cash call and Popolare di Milano keeping its autonomy and a separate board for six years.

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi-who last year rammed through a decree intended to encourage banking mergers-weighed in on Friday to put pressure on the lenders to reach an agreement.

A sell-off in Italian banking stocks - some have lost more than half their value so far this year - and a flight of deposits from banks seen as more vulnerable, means the government feels time is running out. "2016 is the year when Italy must sort out its banking problems once and for all," Renzi said.

ECB'S CREDIBILITY DRIVE

Analysts say the ECB, which is headed by former Bank of Italy chief Mario Draghi, wants to establish itself as a credible institution, ensuring Europe's banking industry is on a sound footing and taking laggards to task.

"The regulator is being extra cautious and particularly severe and active when it comes to Italy but the situation warrants it," said Andrea Resti, an adviser to the European Parliament on banking supervision. After a three-year recession, Italy's banks are saddled with 360 billion euros (\$405 billion) of bad loans - one third of the European total and equivalent to one fifth of Italy's output.

Banks are reluctant to sell soured debts quickly, fearing that would blow a hole in their accounts and force them to raise cash in rough markets.

One reason for the sector's fragility is the fragmented financial industry with 650 banks, most of which are tiny lenders with patronage ties to local communities. —Reuters

CHARGES SOUGHT IN MANILA MONEY-LAUNDERING SCANDAL

MANILA: A watchdog body yesterday sought criminal charges against two suspects allegedly behind an \$81 million money-laundering scandal that has shaken the Philippines. The Anti-Money Laundering Council asked Justice Department prosecutors to file charges against businessman Kim Wong and Chinese casino junket operator Weikang Xu for their alleged role in laundering the sum stolen from Bangladesh's foreign reserves through the Philippines.

The hackers managed to transfer the \$81 million from the account of the Bangladesh Bank (central bank) with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. They moved the sum electronically to RCBC bank in the Philippines and it eventually ended up in casinos in Manila where most of it has disappeared.

The hackers apparently took advantage of Philippine laws granting strict secrecy to bank depositors as well as exempting casinos from money-laundering oversight.

The complaint, citing testimony of a Senate probe of the scandal last week, showed that the accounts of both suspects had received the money. "Wong knew or should have known that the funds that were remitted/transferred... were part of the stolen funds from Bangladesh Bank, and are therefore proceeds of an unlawful activity," the complaint read.

The justice department has also summoned Maia Deguito, branch manager of the RCBC bank, to answer questions ahead of pos-

sible charges against her as well.

RCBC bank, one of the country's largest, said it had sacked Deguito as well as assistant branch manager Angela Torres over the scandal. The two were fired for "violating bank policies and procedures and falsification of commercial documents," and for facilitating the alleged money-laundering of the \$81 million, an RCBC statement said.

"Appropriate charges in court will be filed by the bank against Deguito and Torres by next week," RCBC said. Other bank officials will likely face "various sanctions," in the coming days, it added.

Deguito had previously denied any wrongdoing but also said she was living in fear.

"I did not do anything wrong. If this is a nightmare, I want to wake up now," she previously told a Manila TV station. The incident has raised fears that the Philippines will be seen as a haven for money-laundering despite previous efforts to tighten controls. Julia Abad, executive director of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, conceded that money-laundering laws needed improvement.

She said that when the \$81 million came into the country's banking system, it failed to raise eyebrows because similar huge amounts were already coming in. "On its face, there is nothing irregular about that transaction of \$81 million," she told reporters yesterday. But she also said her council only had about nine analysts overseeing hundreds of transactions each day. —AFP



Canon Middle East's top performing channel partners pose for a photograph at PIXMA launch event and awards night.

CANON HONORS UAE PARTNERS FOR STELLAR PERFORMANCE IN 2015 NEW PIXMA G SERIES PRINTERS WITH REFILLABLE INK TANKS UNVEILED

DUBAI: Canon Middle East, the leader in office imaging solutions, in recognition of its success in the United Arab Emirates, handed out nine business awards to top performing channel partners in the Office Personal Products (OPP) and Office Imaging Products (OIP) categories.

Alongside the awards ceremony, Canon Middle East unveiled three new printers - the PIXMA G1400, PIXMA G2400 and PIXMA G3400 for the UAE market. All three printers are capable of printing up to 7,000 colour and 6,000 black pages from a single set of ink bottles. Featuring Canon's brand new genuine Continuous Ink Supply System (CISS), each printer uses refillable ink tanks to offer vol-

ume printing that significantly reduces ongoing ink expenditure.

"The demand for cost effective all-in-one office inkjet printers has significantly increased within the segment of home office users in the UAE. For offices where high yield printing is the norm, or home users who enjoy printing all their best photographs, these printers offer genuine value and low cost printing, with an unrivalled page number output for ultimate productivity. We are happy to cater to this growing segment and take forward Canon's vision of providing cutting-edge technology to business and home-office users," said Hendrik Verbrugge, Marketing Director, Canon Middle East.

The launch event saw the participation of Canon Middle East's tier-1 partners - Redington Gulf and Simba Gulf along with other major tier-2 partners which included IT dealers, system integrators and resellers. A total of nine awards were handed out which also included an award for the best performing partner of 2015 won by Blue Bell Computers.

In the OPP InkJet category, Earth Gate Trading won the award for the best performer of 2015 whereas in the Laser category, Print Land Trading took the honors. In the OIP segment for the Black & White printer category, JTC international FZ won the award for the best performer in 2015. In the consumables

category, Satrah Computers won in the OPP segment while Era Trading were adjudged winners in the OIP segment.

Recognising partners, Canon Middle East acknowledged their long-standing relationship with Accent Office Supplies with 'Consistent Long-Term Strategic Partner' award and with an aim to welcome new partners, honored DKA and Tina Technology with the '2015 New Rising Partner' awards.

"Canon is a leader in the imaging and business solutions category in terms of technology, performance and range. This success has been built on many factors, including our product range, the service we offer, and importantly, our ongoing program for the

development of Channel Partners across the region. As part of our ongoing partner program, Canon Middle East seeks to continuously recognize the contribution of key players and team members of the IT Dealer Channel who contribute to our success," said Verbrugge. Earlier, as part of the event, Jeetendra Berry, Vice President of Redington Gulf and Ramzan Shafee, Business Development Manager, Simba Gulf welcomed the attendees while Venkatasubramanian Hariharan, Regional Sales Director, Canon Middle East unveiled the CME direction for the year 2016. Anup Kodakkal from the product management team unveiled the new PIXMA G series printers.



CUPERTINO: Members of the media and invited guests take a look at the new iPhone SE during an event at Apple headquarters on Monday in Cupertino, California. —AP

APPLE'S NEW IDEVICES SAY SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

CUPERTINO, California: As it struggles to match the success of its big-screen iPhones, Apple is now contending that small can be beautiful, too. The giant tech company showed off downsized versions of its signature iPhone and iPad Pro tablet on Monday, hoping they'll appeal to first-time buyers and those who have shied away from the bigger-screen models Apple has sold in recent years.

At a time when overall smartphone sales are slowing, Apple touted its new four-inch iPhone SE as the "most affordable" new phone the company has offered. While it comes with an upgraded camera, faster processor and other features, the SE has a starting price of \$400, or \$50 less than the older iPhone 5S that it's replacing. By contrast, the iPhone 6S Plus, which had been Apple's newest and biggest phone, starts at \$750.

The company also knocked \$50 off the price of its Apple Watch, showed off some new bands for the wearable gadget, and announced some software enhancements for its mobile devices and the Apple TV system. Apple's spring product event came one day before the tech giant is set to square off with authorities in federal court over the FBI's demand for help unlocking a mass shooter's encrypted iPhone. The dispute has dominated headlines in recent weeks, as Apple CEO Tim Cook acknowledged in brief remarks at the opening of Monday's event.

"We did not expect to be in this position, at odds with our own government," he said. "But we believe strongly that we have a responsibility to help you protect your data and your privacy." Few of Monday's announcements surprised industry experts. Analysts say Apple clearly hopes the new devices will broaden its appeal and get more people to use the latest versions of its lucrative online services - such as Apple Pay, Apple Music and the mobile App Store - at a time when overall sales of Apple's sleek iDevices are leveling off. "We're at a point, in a mature market, where it's about having niche products that satisfy different needs," said veteran tech industry watcher Bob O'Donnell of Technalysis Research.

Apple is packing some new features into these smaller packages. The new SE, for example, has the same four-inch screen as the iPhone 5S that Apple began selling in 2013. But the new phone has the company's latest A9 processor, a 12-megapixel camera and a secure chip that allows the use of Apple Pay, the company's digital payment service. Apple Pay was previously only available with iPhone 6 and 6S models.

Apple hopes the phone will appeal to first time buyers as well as those who find larger models cumbersome, said Apple executive Greg Joswiak. He said the company sold 30 million 4-inch iPhones last year.

No big blockbuster

But most analysts expect the new phone to sell modestly compared to the company's other models. And while they may give Apple a boost during the historically slow spring and summer months, analysts say the new devices may not be new or different enough to command the excitement Apple's other recent releases have enjoyed. "It's not going to be a big blockbuster," said O'Donnell.

Several financial analysts had projected Apple could sell about 15 million of the new model this year, although most were expecting it to have a higher starting price. By comparison, analysts estimate Apple has sold 265 million of the larger iPhone 6 models over the last two years. While shoppers bought a record 74.8 million iPhones in the final three months of 2015, Apple has signaled demand in the current three-month period will fall short of the 61 million iPhones sold in the January-March quarter last year. Overall smartphone sales are slowing around the world, as most people already own one.

Apple also showed off a new version of its iPad Pro, with a 9.7-inch screen and many of the features Apple offered with the 12-inch iPad Pro tablet that Apple introduced last year - including the ability to work with a detachable keyboard and stylus. The smaller screen Pro has a starting price of \$600 without cellular capability, while the bigger Pro starts at \$800. While sales of Apple's iPad have been declining for several years, its rival Microsoft has successfully launched a new line of Surface Pro tablets that come with a detachable keyboard. Apple marketing chief Phil Schiller argued Monday that the iPad Pro is the "ultimate replacement" for computers running Microsoft Windows.

Apple is also promoting new uses for its devices, particularly in health care. On Monday, for instance, the company announced CareKit, a set of tools for developers who create mobile apps for medical use. Such apps could help patients monitor chronic conditions such as Parkinson's disease and share that data with their doctors. Last year, Apple released ResearchKit, similar tools for apps that collect data for health research. —AP

FBI: ATTACKER'S PHONE POSSIBLY ACCESSIBLE WITHOUT APPLE HELP

LOS ANGELES: The government has been adamant for weeks: FBI investigators need to unlock an encrypted iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino attackers, and Apple Inc was the only one that could do it. In a stunning reversal on Monday, federal prosecutors asked a judge to halt a much-anticipated hearing on their efforts to force Apple to unlock the phone. The FBI may have found another way, and Apple's cooperation may no longer be needed, according to court papers filed late Monday, less than 24 hours before yesterday's hearing.

"An outside party" came forward over the weekend and showed the FBI a possible method to access the data on Syed Rizwan Farook's encrypted phone, according to the filing.

"Testing is required to determine whether it is a viable method that will not compromise data on Farook's iPhone," the filing said. "If the method is viable, it should eliminate the need for the assistance from Apple." If it's viable, that also means the government has significantly undermined its arguments against Apple, said Kristen Eichensehr, a visiting law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles.

"If they found another way into the phone, that doesn't just weaken their case. It means they can't satisfy the legal standard to sustain the court's order," said Eichensehr, referring to Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym's Feb. 16 ruling compelling Apple to create software that would disable security features on the phone.

Pym granted the government's request to postpone Tuesday's arguments in the case and stayed her previous order. She ordered the government to file a status report by April 5. The development raised more questions than it answered. It's unclear who is helping the FBI with the phone and why it took so long for a possible solution to be identified.

One thing seems clear - that the government likely would not have disclosed it had found another possible way to unlock the phone unless it was almost certain the method would work, said Robert Cattanach, a former US Department of Justice attorney who handles cyber-security cases for the Dorsey & Whitney law firm. He said the disclosure alone weakens the government's case by introducing doubt that it could only access the phone with Apple's help. "They've created ambiguity in a place

where they've previously said there is none," he said.

In a conference call with reporters, Apple attorneys said it's premature to declare victory in the case because authorities could come back in a few weeks and insist they still need the company's help. The attorneys spoke under an Apple policy that wouldn't allow them to be quoted by name.

The company hopes the government will tell Apple about whatever method it uses to access the phone's encrypted files. But the attorneys said it may be up to the FBI to decide whether to share the information.

Cracking iPhone

Lawmakers, civil rights advocates and other tech companies have criticized the FBI for not doing more to

try to crack the iPhone itself before seeking to force Apple's hand.

"To me, it suggests that either the FBI doesn't understand the technology or they weren't giving us the whole truth when they said there is no other possible way" of examining the phone without Apple's help, said Alex Abdo, staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union. "Both of those are scary to me." The ACLU has filed a court brief supporting Apple's position. Prosecutors have argued that the phone used by Farook probably contains evidence of the Dec. 2 attack in which the county food inspector and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, slaughtered 14 at a holiday luncheon attended by many of his work colleagues. The two were killed in a police shootout hours later. —AP



WASHINGTON: An iPhone is seen in Washington. The dispute over whether Apple must help the FBI hack into a terror suspect's iPhone is about to play out in a Southern California courtroom. Federal prosecutors asked a judge on Monday to halt a much-anticipated hearing on their efforts to force Apple to unlock the phone. —AP

KUWAIT CSC SELECTS EMC TO POWER PERFORMANCE BACKED GROWTH

KUWAIT: EMC Middle East yesterday announced that the Civil Services Commission (CSC) of Kuwait has selected industry leading solutions from EMC's Data Protection and Availability Division to effectively accelerate the organization's IT transformation journey.

CSC has selected EMC Avamar and EMC Data Domain to create an efficient and reliable backup infrastructure that provides cost-effective continuous data protection and disaster recovery so as to enable uninterrupted service to users.

Customer Benefits:
* Improved Performance: With EMC Avamar, CSC has been able to significantly drive backup and recovery performance from hours to minutes.

* Enhanced Trust: EMC Data Domain enables new deduplication capabilities to improve storage utilization and to provide cost effective, continuous data protection to meet compliance requirements.

* Enhanced Efficiency: The all-new architecture allows CSC to cut back operational overheads associated with

traditional tape based architecture and drastically improve storage utilization by over 420%.

* Simplified Administration: The heightened automation capabilities allow CSC to drive resource productivity and utilization, creating a performance backed foundation that provides protection and availability of steadily growing volumes of critical data and applications.

Customer Challenges:

Established in 1960, the Civil Services Commission (CSC) of Kuwait is responsible for overseeing the development and performance of civil service systems and staff across the State of Kuwait. In its role, the entity acts as the central personnel authority, responsible for instating effective employment processes to recruit ideal candidates, in addition to overseeing the establishment of appropriate payroll, training and development mechanisms across all public entities.

The critical role that the CSC plays in the overall government agenda mandates the need for the entity to

invest in the right technology solution, not only to protect the wealth of critical data pertaining to personnel and departments, but also ensure the uninterrupted access and delivery of critical information and services to internal and remote users across the nation.

In addition, the CSC needed a solution that would minimize duplication of data across sites and departments, to enhance performance while effectively enabling mandatory data retention periods.

CSC and EMC together embarked on an ambitious project aimed at completely replacing traditional tape based infrastructure with a complete end to end backup and recovery solution that provisioned the agility, efficiency and de-duplication capabilities to support the CSC's objectives.

CSC selected EMC Avamar to create the next generation backup infrastructure that fuelled backup and recovery performance through heightened automation, improving storage utilization and performance resulting in significant cost savings. EMC Data Domain Boost allows CSC to avail of

transparent load balancing and new deduplication capabilities to increase performance of critical applications. CSC came full circle with the project with the deployment of EMC RecoverPoint to enable continuous data protection and to enable application recovery at any point in time.

The solution allows CSC to improve critical data retention policies, designed to meet compliance regulations and to expedite recovery speeds for many applications and files - reducing the recovery times from months to days, from days to hours and from hours to minutes.

Together with EMC, CSC has powered a performance backed infrastructure to support the entity's critical role in the overall government agenda. The deployment provisions the scale, management simplicity and efficiency that CSC needs to successfully cope with surging amounts of data and take a step forward in its journey to extend new Back-Up-As-A-Service capabilities, to internal and external stakeholders across numerous public entities in the State of Kuwait.

WHO: SEXUAL TRANSMISSION OF ZIKA MORE COMMON THAN THOUGHT

GENEVA: Sexual transmission of the Zika virus is more common than previously thought, the World Health Organization said yesterday, citing reports from several countries. After a meeting of its emergency committee yesterday, the UN health agency also said there is increasing evidence that a spike in disturbing birth defects and neurological problems are caused by Zika, which is mostly spread by mosquito bites. When WHO declared the explosive outbreak in the Americas to be a global emergency last month, it said that the evidence that Zika was responsible was only circumstantial.

WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan said "reports and investigations in several countries strongly suggest that sexual transmission of the virus is more common than previously assumed." The US is investigating more than a dozen possible cases of Zika in people who may have been infected through sex. Dr Bruce Aylward, who is directing WHO's response to Zika, said the cases seen so far of sexual transmission of Zika have been from men to women. He doubted sex would play an important role in the disease's spread.

"The mosquito is undoubtedly still the

main driver of transmission," he said. Chan also said nine countries have now reported increasing cases of Guillain-Barre syndrome, a rare condition that may be linked to Zika and can cause temporary paralysis and death in people of all ages. She said that problems connected to Zika, including Guillain-Barre syndrome, are now being seen not just in women of child-bearing age, but children, teenagers and older adults.

Zika is also now spreading to new countries, WHO said. It noted local transmission has now been reported in 31 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean. "All of this news is alarming," Chan said. Despite the lack of definitive evidence proving that Zika causes birth defects and neurological problems, Chan said officials shouldn't wait for definitive scientific proof before making recommendations.

"Microcephaly is now only one of several documented birth abnormalities associated with Zika infection during pregnancy," she said, adding that it can cause growth problems, injuries to the central nervous system and fetal death. WHO's emergency committee called for "intensified" research into the relationship between new clusters of babies

born with abnormally small heads and other neurological disorders. It said particular attention should be given to studying the genetics of the different Zika virus strains and establishing studies to determine if there is a causal relationship.

Main suspect

The agency also noted it was important to continue studying whether other factors could be responsible for the jump in microcephaly and neurological problems, including whether several causes combined might be to blame. Aylward explained that scientists were focusing on diseases as the main suspect, noting the evidence seems "really compelling that you're looking at an infectious process here." So far, cases of babies born with small, deformed heads linked to Zika have only been confirmed in Brazil and French Polynesia, though officials say they expect reports from other countries once the virus has been circulating there long enough to affect pregnant women. Colombia has reported several suspected cases of microcephaly.

"Women who are pregnant in affected countries or travel to these countries are understandably deeply worried," Chan said.



GENEVA: World Health Organization (WHO) chief Margaret Chan arrives to a press conference on Zika virus outbreak yesterday at the health organization headquarters. — AFP

WHO recommends pregnant women avoid travel to areas with ongoing Zika outbreaks and that if their partners travel to affected

countries, they should practice safe sex or abstain from sex for the duration of their pregnancy. — AP



KOLKATA, India: Residents of an area gather around a roadside water source to wash their clothes and fill drinking water for their houses in Kolkata. — AP

INDIA HAS THE MOST PEOPLE WITHOUT CLEAN WATER, REPORT SAYS

'WATER IS THE ONE THING THAT CAN TEAR THIS COUNTRY APART'

NEW DELHI: India has the world's highest number of people without access to clean water - imposing a major financial burden for some of the country's poorest people, according to a report released yesterday. The international charity Water Aid says 75.8 million Indians - or 5 percent of the country's 1.25 billion population - are forced to either buy water at high rates or use supplies that are contaminated with sewage or chemicals. That accounts for more than a tenth of the 650 million people worldwide without clean water access - more than any single country in Africa or China, where 63 million have no access.

Improve service

The situation worldwide has improved since 1990, with 2.6 billion people gaining access to clean water since then. But the report urged more action in "a world where one in 10 people are trapped in a cycle of poverty and disease for want of a safe, affordable water supply of their own." Poor Indians without water access are forced to spend an average of about 72 cents to buy 50 liters (13 gallons) of water a day, the amount recommended by the World Health Organization, according to the report. That's nearly 20 percent of their typical daily income, according to the report. By comparison, people in Britain spend about 10 cents a day for

50 liters. "Poor management of water resources is the biggest problem holding India back," the report said. "Misappropriation in planning and execution of water supply projects is another key factor. And projects often use inadequate sources, or pipelines do not reach habitations." The alternative to buying supplies - using dirty water - comes with sober consequence, sickening countless people every year. About 315,000 children die from diarrheal diseases each year, with 140,000 those deaths happening in India.

India already faces chronic water shortages and drought, as rivers become increasingly polluted and groundwater reserves rapidly decline thanks to the unchecked use of water pumps by farmers and villagers. The problem is set to worsen as global temperatures rise and rain becomes more erratic with climate change. Within 15 years, the country is expected to have only half the water it needs to meet competing demands from cities, agriculture and industry.

Some Indian cities, including New Delhi and elsewhere in the northern state of Rajasthan, are rolling out water kiosks in drought-prone areas. Others, including Nagpur, in the central state of Maharashtra, are experimenting with privatization schemes to try to improve service. The breadbasket state of Punjab, which produces the vast majority of India's grains, has set up public water filtration units to clean groundwater contaminated by sewage and agricultural chemicals, including pesti-

cides and fertilizers.

Public goods

"We don't handle public goods well," said environmental economist Pavan Sukhdev. "You need public management systems to manage public goods, and there are no market lessons to help guide that management." Experts worry the water crisis could exacerbate community conflicts or regional tensions, and have urged authorities to impose strict regulations on water pumping and water use. India's Supreme Court "has already held that the fundamental right to clean water is a right to life," said court advocate Satya Tripathi, adding that it's only a matter of time before the issue comes back before the court.

"The government really has to pay attention. Water is the one thing that can tear this country apart." While India has the most people lacking clean water access, the much smaller countries of Papua New Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Angola, Chad and Mozambique topped the list of countries with the highest population percentages lacking clean water. And in Papua New Guinea, the 4.5 million without access - or 60 percent of the Southwest Pacific island country's population - spend more than 50 percent of their typical income on average on water each day, according to the report. Rising seas and more frequent extreme weather events - both consequences of ongoing climate change - "will make water supplies, and life in general, ever more fragile," it said. — AP



KOLKATA, India: A water man or locally called as 'bhari' fills drinking water from a roadside hand pump while another waits to deliver in houses.

DEPRESSION, ADDICTION COMMON AMONG YOUNG TRANSGENDER WOMEN

Mental health issues like depression and addiction are more common among young transgender women than the general US population, according to a new study. While the study can't say why this was true, the researchers say the results highlight the need for culturally competent treatment and care. "There is a critical need for skilled and well-informed mental health professionals," said Sari Reisner, the study's lead author from Boston Children's Hospital. The researchers write in JAMA Pediatrics that mental health issues and addiction affect 4 to 26 percent of people in the US. Often, those issues emerge during adolescence and young adulthood.

For the new study, the researchers interviewed 300 transgender women in Boston and Chicago between 2012 and 2015. The participants, who ranged in age from 16 to 29, were sexually active and were participating in an HIV prevention study. Overall, about 42 percent had one or more health or addiction diagnoses. About one in five had two or more diagnoses. Rates of diagnoses among the participants were about two to four times greater than in the general US population, write the researchers.

About a third of participants had been depressed at some point, and about 15 percent currently had the condition. About one in five participants reported suicidal thoughts within the past 30 days. Within the last six months,

about 8 percent of participants had anxiety and about one in 10 had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). About 11 percent reported alcohol dependence in the past year. Likewise, about 15 percent reported some other kind of addiction during that time.

The likelihood of mental health and addiction issues appeared to increase with age. That finding, coupled with a smaller lifetime prevalence of depression than what's been seen in previous studies in older transgender women, suggests there is an opportunity to prevent poor outcomes. The new results do not show that transgender women are inherently predisposed to mental health issues, Reisner told Reuters Health. For example, he and his colleagues point out, gender transition and gender affirmation are stressful events. They may affect a transgender and gender-variant person's psychiatric health and well-being during adolescence and young adulthood.

The increased prevalence of mental health and addiction issues likely stems from the intersection of several minority stressors, said Dr. Johanna Olson-Kennedy, who is medical director of the Center for Transyouth Health and Development at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. The minority stress theory suggests people in minority groups are at a greater risk for health problems due to increased exposures to stressors like prejudice and stigma. — Reuters

DOCTORS OFTEN DISAGREE ON WHEN TO CALL ABNORMAL BREAST CELLS CANCER

NEW YORK: Doctors often disagree on whether women have breast cancer if they have abnormal cells that don't look like invasive tumors under a microscope, a US study suggests. The researchers asked three different pathologists to give a second opinion on women's biopsy slides. When the slides showed either invasive breast cancer, or harmless or benign cells, the doctors agreed with the original diagnosis at least 97 percent of the time. But when the initial diagnosis was "atypia" - healthy cells that grow faster than normal - the pathologists thought doctors had originally overestimated the danger in more than half of cases. And they thought doctors had overestimated the danger for almost one in five women who were originally diagnosed with a common noninvasive malignancy of the breast known as ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS).

"It's easier for physicians to diagnose diseases at the extremes of the spectrum - we are good at diagnosing normal breast tissue and the very abnormal cells of invasive breast cancer," said lead study author Dr Joann Elmore of the University of Washington School of Medicine and Harborview Medical Center in Seattle. "Between these extremes, agreement of pathologists deteriorates," Elmore added by email. Atypia and DCIS are gray areas on a spectrum of cancer severity between benign, or generally harmless, cells and fast-growing invasive tumors, said Dr Richard Bleicher, breast clinical program leader at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia.

"It's sort of akin to trying to differentiate blue from teal from green - there is a bit of subjectivity," said Bleicher, who wasn't involved in the study. For the study, three

different pathologists working independently reviewed one biopsy slide apiece from 240 women aged 50 to 59. Overall, they agreed with the original biopsy diagnosis about 92 percent of the time, Elmore and colleagues report in the Annals of Internal Medicine.

Additional tissue

They thought about five percent of the original diagnoses had overestimated the danger, and roughly 3 percent had underestimated the cancer risk. In the real world, pathologists might have consulted with colleagues or requested additional tissue samples if the diagnosis wasn't clear from one slide, potentially increasing the accuracy of diagnoses and limiting the disagreement among doctors, the authors note.

Still, the findings highlight the challenges doctors and patients face in deciding the best course of action when results don't fall clearly into an extremely low-risk or high-risk category, Elmore said. Women with an abnormal mammogram may rush to get a biopsy, hoping for an immediate resolution and a clear diagnosis, Elmore noted. But when the biopsy results fall in a gray area, their path forward isn't always as clear cut as they would like. "I encourage women who receive an initial diagnosis of either atypia or DCIS to realize that they do not need to act immediately on the results; they have time to obtain a second opinion to verify the diagnosis," Elmore said. At the same time, women may find that even when doctors agree on the diagnosis, they may not agree on treatment, Dr Alexander Borowsky, a researcher at the University of California, Davis, wrote in an editorial. — Reuters

IN FLORIDA, CALLS TO KEEP 'SAVING THE MANATEES'

CRYSTAL RIVER, United States: When Brandy Pounds swam in central Florida's Crystal River earlier this month, she came so close to an endangered manatee that she could feel the sea cow's breath tickling her toes. "And then I turned around and we were face-to-face," said the 41-year-old therapist from Texas. "We made eye contact. It was pretty cool." Languid, whiskered and weighing as much as 1,200 pounds (545 kilograms), the bulbous Florida manatees - a subspecies of the West Indian manatees - were among the first creatures to be named by the United States as a federally endangered species in 1967, alongside the iconic bald eagle and American alligator.

For decades, manatees have been celebrated and protected by environmentalists and celebrities alike, earning the title of the official state marine mammal of Florida and the admiration of celebrities like singer Jimmy Buffett, who co-founded the popular non-profit Save the Manatee Club in 1981. But times may be changing for these slow-moving sea-grass eaters. A controversial proposal by the US Fish and Wildlife Service calls for downgrading them from "endangered" to "threatened," based on their ballooning population size.

In Florida alone, the agency said the manatee population has grown to a record 6,350 as of February. Early estimates of their population are hard to come by, but the first aerial surveys flown over Florida in 1991 counted 1,267 manatees. A final decision, expected sometime in 2017, would apply to all West Indian manatees in the region, from Florida to the Caribbean and northern South America. "I believe this is just a first step of celebrating a success story," Ivan Vicente, visitor services specialist at the Fish and Wildlife Service Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge Complex, told AFP. "It's only a very minor difference," he said of the change in terminology. "It just means that the species is not as vulnerable to extinction as it once was, but still vulnerable. So the level of protection does not change."

Threats remain

Opponents say a host of threats remain, including disease, loss of habitat, cold stress and collisions with watercraft. "We really think it is premature," said the Save the Manatee Club's director of science and conservation, Katie Tripp. She said the change could amount to less money for manatee protection, and doesn't take account of future risks the manatees

will face. Among them, the expected loss of winter refuge they get from clustering around power plants that discharge warm water. As those plants are gradually made more environmentally friendly,

as many as 4,000 manatees - which are creatures of habit - could die from the cold, she said.

For Tripp, it doesn't matter that five times more manatees exist today than 25 years ago. "We are not

at all focused on a number and we don't want the agency focused on a number either. It is just about the habitat," she said.

Idle speed for manatees

In the winter, hundreds of Florida manatees congregate in the natural warm water springs near Crystal River, where boat captain and Mike Dunn, co-owner of Manatees in Paradise, says manatees have shaped the local way of life. Dunn leads small tours of six tourists at a time into Three Sisters Springs and the surrounding canals. Snorkelers must watch a video first that explains how to avoid harassing manatees - no chasing, no poking, no hugging allowed. Killing a manatee is also forbidden. Violators of federal protections may face fines of up to \$100,000 and a year in prison.

Dunn drives his boat slowly, moving at idle speed according to local regulations to reduce the risk of striking a manatee. He waves his arms and chastises other boaters whenever he sees them going faster than they should. "It's all about respect," according to Dunn, who said he views as "absurd" any effort to downgrade the manatees' status. — AFP



CRYSTAL RIVER, Florida: Tourist boats gather in Crystal River, Florida. — AFP



HORIZON FCB AND ABEER2 LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN FOR AUTISM

KUWAIT: In line with its corporate social responsibility efforts, the advertising agency, Horizon FCB launched a campaign to support Abeer2 voluntary team for mentally disabled. Under the umbrella of GUST's 'The Cause' project, this campaign aims to spread autism awareness through gathering donations. Horizon FCB concocted a creative idea revolving around changing the color of the previous Kuwaiti flag from red to blue, the color of autism. The campaign coincides with World Autism Day and aims to attract curiosity behind the hashtag #%A, ('for them' we changed to the color blue). By responding to the campaign, people would be redirected to the website Jaribha.com where they can donate to Abeer2.

Abeer Al-Safran, a co-founder of Abeer2, said, "We are proud to launch this campaign that supports the humanitarian cause of aiding those with intellectual disabilities, with a specific emphasis on autism. We are working hard to spread awareness in society and try to reach families who have similar cases, as they need special care to help integrate them into society. We achieve this through providing a specialized center for children and young adults with intellectual disabilities where experts can provide them with the educational support they need to develop their skills and help them achieve their true potential.

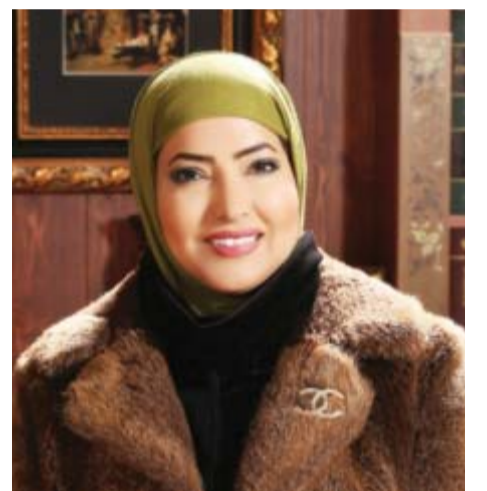
Thanks to your donations and support, we are able to continue on this journey

and provide the best services that we can offer." Al-Safran conveyed gratitude towards Horizon FCB's active role in supporting this cause. From planning to launching the campaign, the agency attracted media coverage and sparked the interest of the community with a noticeable response from Kuwaiti youth. Many organizations supported this cause by spreading the message through coverage, printing, distribution, and social networking.

As part of Kuwait Voluntary Work Center, Abeer2 was established in 1999 to help integrate those with mental disabilities into society with the help of trained volunteers and specialists. 'The Cause' project falls under GUST's corporate social

responsibility involving the collaboration of students and faculty. These efforts are in line with the United Nation's sustainable development goals and also touches upon a local community issue.

Horizon FCB is an advertising agency with 40 years of experience across the region. It focuses on creativity and responsibility, producing ideas that affect customer behavior. Horizon FCB is part of the Horizon Group, which includes BPN (media planning and buying agency), Blue Barracuda (digital agency), Golin (public relations agency) and Frontline Shopper (shopper marketing agency), with more than 400 staff members across the region. It is also part of Interpublic Group (NYSE: IPG).



Abeer Al-Safran

J&J EXPANDS PROJECT THAT AIMS TO PREDICT, PREVENT DISEASES

'IT MAY WELL SAVE A LOT OF MONEY AND A LOT OF SUFFERING'

BOSTON: Johnson & Johnson has ramped up its ambitious project to learn how to predict who will develop particular diseases and find therapies to prevent or stop the disease early, when it's most treatable. Since the health care giant announced its groundbreaking project in February 2015, it's expanded to include two dozen research programs with partners - in government, universities, patient advocacy groups and other drug and diagnostic test companies. Their expertise and resources should speed discoveries and allow Johnson & Johnson to spread its funding across more ventures.

Tomorrow J&J will give an update and announce the latest two projects. They're meant to identify which pregnant women will develop gestational diabetes, and to identify and treat people at risk of or in early stages of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, the third-leading cause of death worldwide.

"We've really been trying to introduce a new paradigm," the J&J project head, Ben Wiegand, told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview. "We're moving from disease care to health care." Wiegand said the mapping of the human genome and other recent scientific advances have made that goal feasible. J&J's "Disease Interception Accelerator" now is working on multiple studies in Type 1 and gestational diabetes, cataracts and vision-damaging presbyopia, depression in women during and after pregnancy, lung disorders and cancers of the cervix, mouth and throat caused by human papilloma virus.

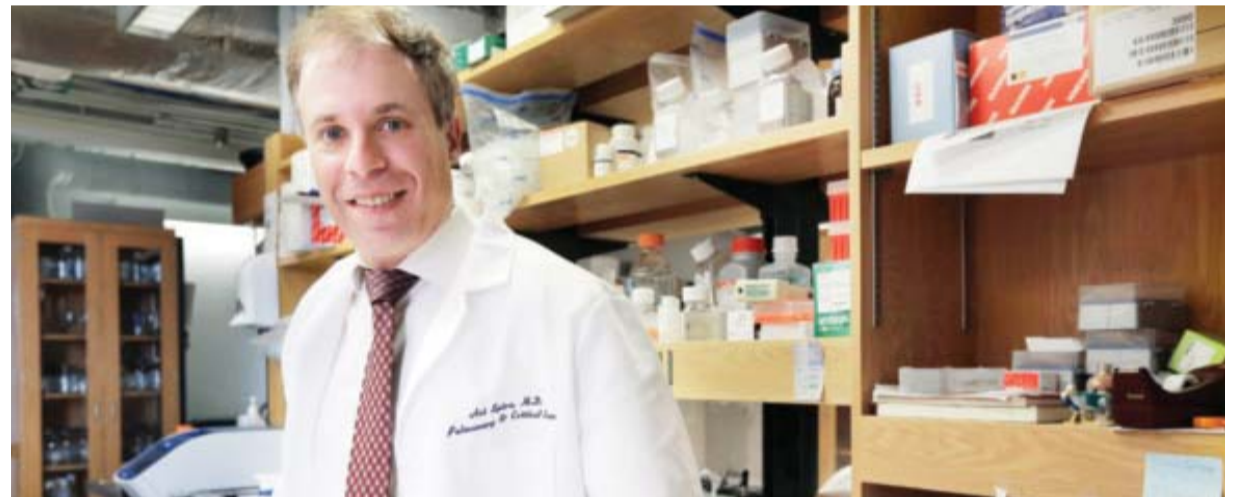
The project is remarkable in an industry whose bread and butter is medicines that patients with chronic diseases take for years. The idea is to first discover biomarkers - measurable biological and molecular signs in blood and other patient samples - indicating a disease will develop or is beginning. Next,

scientists would develop affordable and easy-to-use diagnostic tests for those biomarkers.

Statin drugs

Finally, researchers would develop new therapies, or determine which existing ones would work, to head off full-blown disease in those people. Those could include medicines, nutrition changes and physical or psychological therapy. If successful, those strategies could be used much as cholesterol tests are given to patients, with those who have a problem being prescribed statin drugs to prevent a heart attack or stroke.

"This is the way to go," said Dr Robert Hardi, president of the Academy of Physicians in Clinical Research. "If anybody can pull it off, they can" - with help from partners. He noted that researchers already are developing biomarker tests in areas such as cancer that help doctors pick the best treatment for each patient. "It may well save a lot of money and a lot of suffering," added Hardi, a gastroenterologist in Chevy Chase, Maryland. One of the newest projects piggybacks on existing research at Boston University School of Medicine. It's been working since 2011 under a Defense Department grant to identify which military members and veterans will develop lung cancer. That group has a high risk because many are heavy smokers and they're exposed to fuel fumes and other dangerous substances while deployed, said Dr Avrum Spira, a pulmonologist heading that study. It's been testing blood and skin cells and doing chest scans on hundreds of participants, aiming to link changes in those tests over time to which people later develop lung cancer. J&J has given Spira's group \$8 million to test 1,000 civilian smokers, to identify cell changes in



BOSTON: Boston University professor Avi Spira, a medical researcher in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, stands for a portrait in his lab at Boston University School of Medicine. — AP

the individuals who eventually develop chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis. They'll then test therapies to stop further destruction of lung airways. With another \$2.1 million from J&J, Spira said, his team is studying how the immune system fails in the early development of lung cancer and whether new drugs that fight cancer by boosting the immune system could prevent it. Another new collaboration is seeking biomarkers indicating which pregnant women likely will develop gestational diabetes, so they can be treated to prevent it. Half those women would otherwise develop Type 2 diabetes within 10 years, and their babies have an eightfold risk of developing it eventually, Wiegand said. Preventing diseases or treating them early on is much cheaper than trying to save people diagnosed with advanced disease, so Wiegand believes that insurers will cover the diagnostic tests being developed and new,

proven treatments. Johnson & Johnson, based in New Brunswick, New Jersey, is a leading maker of diagnostic tests, as well as vaccines, surgical equipment and prescription medicines, putting it in a good position to offer products for many of the disorders being studied.

For the project to have a big impact, the US must to address the shortage of primary care doctors, said Dr Wanda Filer, president of the American Academy of Family Physicians. She said pediatricians, family doctors and internists, along with nurse practitioners, already focus on preventive care such as vaccines, so they're best suited for identifying and helping at-risk patients. With patients more focused on medical costs as they bear more of them now, Filer said, they'll need to be convinced new diagnostic tests and pre-emptive treatment are worth the cost. "This could be transformational," she added. — AP

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'ASWAT 3' ROCKS AUDIENCE AT SHAHEED PARK

Under the Patronage and with the Attendance of the French Ambassador to Kuwait Christian Nakhle, Al-Shaheed Park witnessed the musical performance 'ASWAT 3' on Tuesday 15th March 2016 on the outside stage, as part of its Kuwait Cultural Week. Other members of the audience included some other important figures from the French Embassy, Waleed Al Khashti (Zain's Corporate Communication and Relations Director), Marino (IKEA's Executive Manager), Yousef Al Baijan (Al Shaheed Park's General Manager), and Fareah Al Saqqaf (the Chairperson).

The East and the West, talking about the history of Kuwait since its beginning until today; as well as how the different cultures of the people who live in Kuwait merge together and how they all share each other's joys and sorrows. In that regard, Issam Taleb, the Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Action and the manager of the French Institute in Kuwait, stated that 'ASWAT 3' is the result of the cooperation between LOYAC and the French Institute, after having worked together on ASWAT 1 and 2. This asserts our belief in the role that art plays in spreading love and peace. He also stated his intention to start preparing from now for ASWAT 4 that is proposed to take

place in November of this year in cooperation with LOYAC, along with other Francophone activities in Kuwait. Fareah Al-Saqqaf also indicated that over 20 young man and woman participated in this performance. Some are Kuwaitis and some are non-Kuwaitis who were born and raised in Kuwait. What brings them together is very strong. What brings them together is their love for Kuwait, dance, beauty, music, and for one another, because art brings them together; thus, they are bound to be ambassadors of love and peace. Three of them were chosen to represent LOYAC as part of a performance with the French team in France; they excelled there,

and today they have returned to us with the experience and creativity they gained in this field. She also noted that this work embodies LOYAC's values that call for love, peace, and celebrating other cultures, not only accepting them. Saqqaf also thanked the French Institute and the French embassy for their close and beautiful support and cooperation for the past three years and until today, as well as LOYAC and LAPA's strategic partners - the National Council of Culture, Arts, and Letters, and the Amiri Diwan. She also thanked the sponsors of this cultural, artistic, and humanitarian project - IKEA and Zain.

Zain's Corporate Communication and Relations Director, Waleed Al Khashti, stated that it is a great honour today for Zain to be a sponsor of ASWAT 3, having already sponsored ASWAT 1 and 2, as well as our economic partnership for over 13 years - since LOYAC's birth. We also believe that part of our social partnership is to encourage the youth to enhance their abilities and skills in all fields. He added that they will continue to support them - fulfilling the company's vision and aims, noting that Zain has many partnerships and activities related to youth, universities, exhibitions, and events; adding that Zain will be present in other future events with LOYAC.

TSC EDUCATES CHILDREN ON IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



As part of their commitment to support the communities in which it operates and in line with TSC's recent Healthy Living campaign, The Sultan Center recently participated in the Health Weekend event at KidZania. The KidZania Health Weekend event which took place from March 17 - 19 focused on educational activities to help raise awareness on the importance of leading a healthy active lifestyle through a balanced diet, regular exercise, and looking after your body by understanding how to check vital signs. The event also included interactive seminars and a nutritionist to answer question relating to food and nutrition. During the event, The Sultan Center team focused on advising parents and children on selecting healthy and nutritional snack options that provide the body with fuel and energy. The team emphasized the large variety of healthy and energizing

snacks children can select by encouraging them to taste foods they might normally have tried or considered to be snack options. The Sultan Center also distributed fun facts for children on nutrition along with a short survey in which children could see how much exercise they get and require on a daily basis. Representative from TSC distributed healthy snacks for all children who visited the booth. Lisa Al-Gharib, Marketing Manager at TSC said: "Participation in the KidZania Health Weekend supports TSC's commitment toward educating the consumer on the importance of embracing a healthy lifestyle from an early age, and selecting products that are healthy and nutritious". The Sultan Center participates in various types of education and health programs in line with "Because We Care" program aimed to spread awareness on the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle.



MARINA HOTEL KUWAIT ACTIVELY PARTICIPATES IN EARTH HOUR 2016

Marina Hotel Kuwait went dark by switching off the hotel's lights for one hour on March 19, 2016 in support of Earth Hour, a World Wildlife Fund (WWF) initiative. By spending an hour in dark, the hotel joins the efforts of an extensive range of organizations around the world that continue to work towards drawing more attention towards global warming. The activity, which relays Marina Hotel's commitment and support for a green and sustainable future, involves everyone in the hotel to switch off the lights in public areas and all guestrooms. As a symbolic gesture to warn against glob-

al warming for 60 minutes, non-essential lighting and electrical appliances around the property were switched off in an effort to reduce their environmental impact and draw attention to environmental issues. Employees of each department including Sales and Marketing, Front Office, Food and Beverage, Housekeeping, Engineering, Finance, IT, Admin, Human Resources along with the General Manager, Nabil Hammoud were present, assisting with candles set-up around the hotel and creating awareness for guests to contribute to global environmental change.

Participating in the Earth Hour, Marina Hotel Kuwait joins the growing list of supporting businesses that are committed to take stand on climate change and create a cleaner, safer and more secure future. Earth Hour is an annual international event created by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), to raise awareness towards the need and take action on climate change. With the challenges of the global economy, leaders and people remain focused on the growing threat of climate change and place a high priority on environmentally-friendly solutions as one of the ways to overcome those challenges.

GUST HOSTS SIXTH GULF PROGRAMMING CONTEST

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) will be hosting the Sixth Gulf Programming Contest on March 23rd and 24th. The competition, which is organized by the Computer Science Department at GUST, will be taking place in Kuwait for the first time. This year's sponsors are Boubyan Bank and Zain. Dr Tahir Ali, Assistant Professor and Head of the Computer Science Department and coach of the GUST team, said "This contest is an opportunity for our students to raise the standard of their performance and enhance their programming skills in the emerging field of Computer

Science. It is also a chance to prepare the students for tomorrow's work-force, by helping them apply everything they learned in their courses at GUST to real world situations." GPC 2016 serves as an opportunity for university students from around the region majoring in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Management Information Systems, or any IT related subjects to display their abilities in programming and problem solving. Participating teams will be given eight to ten programming problems to solve during a five hour period using one PC only. GUST will welcome the arriving teams from other GCC nations which will be arriving starting 22nd of March. Further information about the upcoming competition can be found on <http://gpc2016.gust.edu.kw>

**KUWAIT MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
KUWAIT NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE, ARTS AND LETTERS
MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
EMBASSY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT
PRODUCTION CENTRE KINOFEST**

28 March - 3 April 2016

RUSSIAN FILM WEEK IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT

ABDULHUSAIN ABDULRIDHA THEATRE
(Salmiya Theatre, Salmiya, Hamad Al-Mubarak Street)

ALL STARTING AT 19.00
ALL WITH ENGLISH AND ARABIC SUBTITLES

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RUSSIAN FILM WEEK IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT

ABDULHUSAIN ABDULRIDHA THEATRE
(Salmiya Theatre, Salmiya, Hamad Al-Mubarak Street)

<p>March 28 at 19.00</p>	<p>THE IRON IVAN 2012, 122 min. Drama, sports, biography. He was called the Champion of champions. His strength and forceful character have become a legend. Even in his fifties the great wrestler who did not acknowledge any compromise in matters of honor and justice could easily knock out young athletes. And only love managed to beat the Russian Boogaty cold.</p>
<p>March 29 at 19.00</p>	<p>THE BATTLE FOR SEBASTOPOL 2015, 118 min. Military, drama, romance, thriller. This is the true story of Ludmila Pavlichenko, a legendary Soviet woman sniper. Soldiers went into combat carrying her name. Enemies hunted her. She saw death and suffering on the battlefield, but her hardest test was love, which war could take away from her.</p>
<p>March 30 at 19.00</p>	<p>THE LEGEND NUMBER 17 2012, 134 min. Biography, drama, sports movie. Biopic of Russian ice hockey legend Valeri Kharlamov from early childhood, rising to the pinnacle of the sport and his untimely death.</p>
<p>April 1 at 19.00</p>	<p>THE BRESTSKAYA FORTRESS 2010, 140 min. Drama, history, war movie. The film shows the heroic defense of Brest Fortress, which has taken upon the first stroke of German fascist invaders on June 22 1941. The main idea of the film is best formulated in the scripture, found on the wall of one of casemates - "die but don't surrender".</p>
<p>April 2 at 19.00</p>	<p>OLD KHOTTABYCH 1956, 86 min. Fantasy, family. Vovka, a 12-year-old Soviet Young Pioneer, discovers an ancient vessel at the bottom of a river. When he opens it, a genie emerges. He calls himself Hassan Abdulahman Ibn Khattab, but Vovka renames him Khottabych. The grateful Khottabych is ready to fulfill any of Vovka's wishes.</p>
<p>April 3 at 19.00</p>	<p>THE LUCKY TROUBLES 2010, 97 min. Comedy, military, sport. Slava Kolotiloff is a school teacher live in town named "Fingers". He comes to Moscow to manuscript his first novel. In Moscow he fall in love with beautiful woman named Nadia. On the other hand Nadia ex-boyfriend Danya, is ready to do whatever it takes to win her back.</p>

ALL WITH ENGLISH AND ARABIC SUBTITLES

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SYMPHONY STYLE HOTEL CATERING SERVICE... LEAVE AN IMPRESSION!

If you are looking for catering service, look no further than Symphony Style Hotel, Kuwait. The newly launched Catering in Style Service from Symphony Style Hotel is specially designed to fulfill all your events

themes and needs. From wedding to engagements, graduations, private launches and much more, this is what Catering in Style service is created for. We created the perfect blend of skillful trained team and variety of menus

and accessories that caters for any event; we also took into consideration the local and international taste to fulfill your desired themes for Afternoon, tea parties, Zwaras, Diwaniya's and any other desired flavor. Our catering service

doesn't only supply events, but it also caters largely for your business needs. We tailored super brain menus and energy boosting coffee breaks that are served at the comfort of your own offices and corporate premises for you to

enjoy and recharge. So, no matter what your occasion is formal, informal, indoor, outdoor, traditional or themed, the catering service of Symphony Style hotel will surely fulfill them all whatever and whenever you need.



ACK ORGANIZES ITS FIRST 'HEALTH DAY CARNIVAL'

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) hosted its first 'ACK Health Day Carnival' under the theme "Health and Smoking" to raise awareness on smoking's effect on human health and the environment. The event was full of engaging activities such as stage shows, carnival games for children, an exhibition fair hosting exhibitors such as Kuwait Red Crescent

Society (KRCS), Al-Qadseya Team, Ultra-Med Dental Clinic, Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources, Al-Seef Hospital and Shuaiba Medical Center. The carnival also hosted a decathlon with 12 competing teams to celebrate health and encourage youth to play sports. The event was sponsored by "Decathlon" and "Gold's Gym", two leading brands in

the world of fitness.

Abdulmohsen Al-Rifai, Occupational Health and Safety Manager at ACK, officially welcomed the guests noting the importance of educating children on the negative effects of smoking. Rifai commented: "Not only ACK, but the whole society is not fully aware of smoking related hazards. There is a dire need for

aggressive anti-smoking awareness campaigning. This event is one of many attempts ACK is pursuing to discourage tobacco use on campus. As an educational institution, we believe that a difference can be made by educating smokers to quit and motivating non-smokers, especially youngsters not to take up this habit. Remember, smoking is an avoidable health risk."



AGILITY, KUWAIT HEALTHY LIVING PROMOTE GARDENING, HEALTHY EATING AMONG CHILDREN

Agility, a leading global logistics provider and Kuwait Healthy Living, a non-profit organization that aims to enhance the quality of life in Kuwait, recently concluded a two month campaign that promoted sustainable community gardening and healthy eating among children in the country.

The campaign was launched at the Fatima Al-Misbah Public School in Shaab where twenty participating primary students were taught the benefits of community gardening, including cooperation and collaboration, and the importance of health and wellness.

Following the first session, each student received a tomato seedling that they planted in their school garden

with help from Henadi Al-Saleh, Agility's Chairperson. Speaking about the project, Saleh said, "At Agility, we recognize the importance of community advancement and we drive efforts to promote sustainability and youth development. We understand that our children are the future of Kuwait and by encouraging sustainable thinking and healthy living, we can go a long way in building habits that will benefit the country in many different ways." The Agility and Kuwait Healthy Living teams continued to work with these students for the rest of the two months to ensure that the plants were well taken care of until the crop of tomatoes was ready for harvest.

During each visit to the garden, the

students were also taught the importance of a well-rounded diet through activities like healthy eating pledges and information about the food pyramid and different food groups.

The final session included the children using the tomatoes grown by them to make healthy sauce with help from a Kuwait Healthy Living chef at the Dasman Diabetes Institute.

Sheikha Bibi Al-Sabah, Founder of Kuwait Health Living, commented, "Community gardening provides an experience that goes beyond the classroom. It helps empower students and instills a seed in them for lifelong lessons that include patience, teamwork, healthy eating, nature, and many others."



CANON MIDDLE EAST CELEBRATES EARTH HOUR 2016

Canon Middle East (CME), a leader in imaging solutions, participated in Dubai Electricity and Water Authority's (DEWA's) community event at Business Bay Park to observe Earth Hour 2016. The event raised awareness about the effects of climate change with family-oriented activities and a symbolic walk.

Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD and CEO of DEWA said, "We are pleased to organise this event in partnership with the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy and the Emirates Wildlife Society (EWS), in association with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and in cooperation with Dubai Properties Group (DPG). This supports the directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, who has laid down the foundations for a sustainable future for present and future generations through a vision, creative initiatives, and quality programs. The directions of His Highness have been translated into real initiatives with a

close follow-up from His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, which has helped Dubai in becoming a world model for clean and renewable energy, sustainability, and other environmental issues that are of interest to governments and individuals alike."

Global philosophy

Anurag Agrawal, Managing Director, Canon Middle East said: "At Canon Middle East we are committed to integrating our global philosophy of Kyosei, the purpose of living and working together for the common good, into every aspect of our work. Climate change is one of the most pressing issues, and together with DEWA we're reaching out to people to encourage them to be a part of a global effort towards halting climate change. We believe in reaching out to the maximum people and making them more responsible for their planet."

Canon's activities included a screening of an environmental video

focused on Climate Change, entitled "Disruption" (watchdisruption.com), and a beautiful 3D photo stand inspired by the ocean. The theme was chosen to highlight the effect that climate change has on our oceans. Visitors were seen to be enjoying themselves at both areas during the event.

Through these activities, Canon conveyed its message of conserving the environment for a better tomorrow. As a special gesture, the participating visitors were also handed out giveaways, including an anti-stress globe and a plush turtle.

In recognition of Canon's CSR commitment, the organization received the Dubai Chamber CSR Label in 2016 for the fourth consecutive year and was recertified to ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard in 2013. Honouring Canon Middle East regional CSR efforts in 2015, The Arab Organization for Social Responsibility awarded Canon Middle East for 'Best Environmental Practices in the Arab World'.



00:25 Mortal Thoughts
02:10 The Patriot
04:50 George Washington
06:20 The Beast Of Hollow Mountain
07:40 The Garbage Pail Kids Movie
09:15 Race For The Yankee Zephyr
11:05 The Watsons Go To Birmingham
12:35 The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course
14:05 Clifford
15:35 Natural Causes
17:05 Seven Years In Tibet
19:20 Everybody's Fine
21:00 The Apartment
23:05 Mortal Thoughts



00:50 River Monsters
01:45 I Was Bitten
02:40 Gator Boys
03:35 Tanked
04:25 Into The Pride
05:15 Gator Boys
06:02 Treehouse Masters
06:49 Gator Boys
07:36 Meet The Sloths
08:00 Meet The Sloths
08:25 Preposterous Pets
09:15 Gator Boys
10:10 Treehouse Masters
11:05 Tanked
12:00 Preposterous Pets
12:55 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
13:50 Gator Boys
14:45 Treehouse Masters
15:40 Treehouse Masters
16:35 Tanked
17:30 Into The Pride
18:25 River Monsters (Best Of Series -1)
19:20 Dog Rescuers
20:15 Tanked
21:10 Into The Pride
22:05 Treehouse Masters
23:00 Dog Rescuers
23:55 Gator Boys



00:30 Doctors
01:00 Doctors
01:30 Unforgotten
02:25 Ripper Street
03:20 Doctors
03:50 Doctors
04:20 Stella
05:10 Father Brown
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Stella
07:50 Call The Midwife
08:50 Doctor Who
09:45 Doctors
10:15 Doctors
10:45 Father Brown
11:40 Stella
12:35 Call The Midwife
13:25 Doctor Who
14:20 Doctors
14:50 Doctors
15:25 Stella
16:15 Call The Midwife
17:10 Doctor Who
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:05 Father Brown
20:00 New Tricks
21:00 New Tricks
22:00 Silent Witness
22:55 Father Brown
23:45 Doctors



00:00 With All Due Respect
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
08:00 Charlie Rose
09:00 Countdown
10:00 Countdown
10:30 On The Move
11:00 On The Move
12:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
13:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
14:00 Bloomberg Go
15:00 Bloomberg Go
16:00 Bloomberg Go
17:00 Bloomberg Markets
18:00 Bloomberg Markets
19:00 Bloomberg Markets
European Close
20:00 Bloomberg Markets
21:00 Bloomberg Markets
22:00 Bloomberg Markets
23:00 What'd You Miss?



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
04:00 News Update
05:00 News Update
06:30 Dialogue
07:00 News Hour
08:00 Global Business
09:00 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



00:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
01:00 CNBC Conversation: Felipe Calderon
01:30 U.S. Squawk Alley
02:30 Inside China
03:00 Asia Squawk Box
05:00 Asia Street Signs
07:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
08:00 Capital Connection
09:00 Squawk Box Europe
12:00 Europe Street Signs
13:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
16:00 Squawk On The Street
18:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
19:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
20:00 U.S. Power Lunch
22:00 U.S. Closing Bell



00:00 Killer Kids
01:00 I Escaped My Killer
02:00 Fatal Vows
03:00 I Killed My BFF
04:00 The First 48
05:00 I Escaped My Killer
06:00 Fatal Vows
07:00 The FBI Files
08:00 The FBI Files
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 Beyond Scared Straight
11:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
12:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
14:00 The First 48
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 I Married My Killer
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 Nightmare In Suburbia
23:00 My Haunted House



00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 The Island With Bear Grylls
02:00 Men, Women, Wild So You Think You'd Survive?
03:40 What's In The Barn?
04:05 The Liquidator
04:30 Garage Gold
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 Chasing Classic Cars
06:00 Flying Wild Alaska
06:50 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 What's In The Barn?
08:55 The Liquidator
09:20 Garage Gold
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Chasing Classic Cars
10:35 The Island With Bear Grylls
11:25 Men, Women, Wild So You Think You'd Survive?
13:05 What's In The Barn?
13:30 The Liquidator
13:55 Garage Gold
14:20 Outback Truckers
15:10 Wheeler Dealers
16:00 Fast N' Loud
16:50 Chasing Classic Cars
17:40 You Have Been Warned
18:30 The Weapon Hunter
19:20 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
20:10 The Liquidator
20:35 Garage Gold
21:00 You Have Been Warned
21:50 The Weapon Hunter
22:40 Big Giant Swords
23:30 Wheeler Dealers

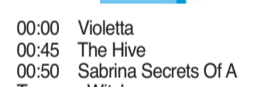
02:20 Ghost Lab
03:10 Swamp Murders
04:00 True Nightmares
04:45 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
05:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
05:30 The Haunted
06:20 Fatal Encounters
07:10 On The Case With Paula Zahn
08:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner
08:50 On The Case With Paula Zahn
09:40 Fatal Encounters
10:30 Murder Shift
11:20 Deadly Affairs



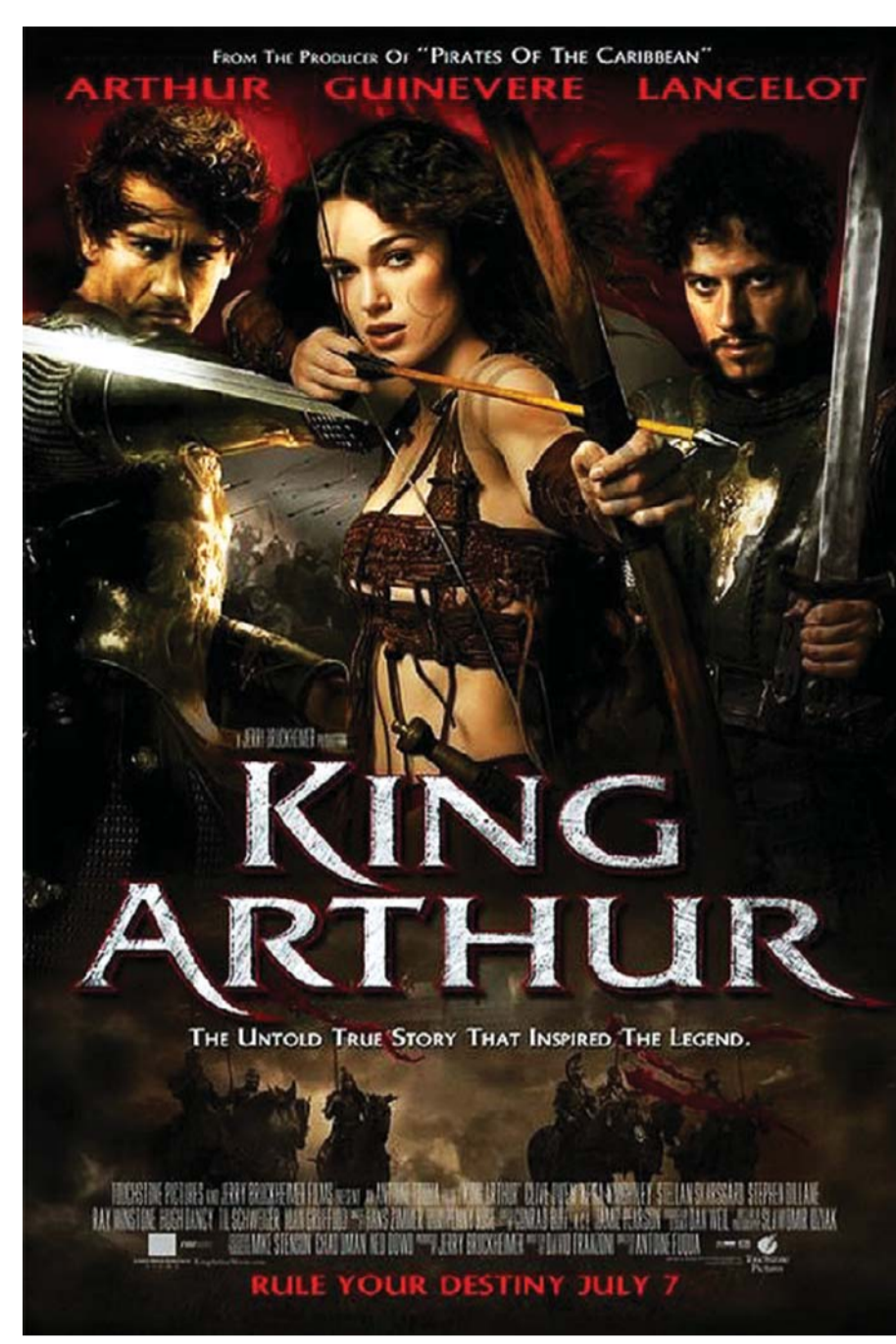
00:35 Race To Escape
01:20 How It's Made
01:44 How It's Made
02:08 You Have Been Warned
02:55 Cosmic Collisions
03:42 Science Of The Movies
04:29 Race To Escape
05:16 You Have Been Warned
06:03 Cosmic Collisions
06:50 Unchained Reaction
07:37 How Do They Do It?
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:23 Race To 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



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 Politics
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
15:30 Origins
15:55 Chasing Classic Cars
16:20 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
17:10 100 Miles From Nowhere
18:00 Extreme Engineering
18:50 Codes And Conspiracies
19:40 Origins
20:05 Chasing Classic Cars
20:30 Origins
20:55 Origins
21:20 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations
22:10 Extreme Engineering
23:00 Origins
23:25 Origins
23:50 Codes And Conspiracies



00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
02:05 Binnie And The Ghost
02:30 Violetta
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
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 Lolirock
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



KING ARTHUR ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

06:00 Loopdidoo
06:15 Art Attack
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
06:50 Calimero
07:00 Zou
07:20 Loopdidoo
07:35 Art Attack
08:00 Calimero
08:10 Zou
08:25 Loopdidoo
08:40 Miles From Tomorrow
09:05 Sofia The First
09:30 Goldie & Bear
09:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
10:35 Doc McStuffins
11:00 Sofia The First
11:30 Goldie & Bear
12:00 Miles From Tomorrow
12:25 Secret Agent Oso
12:50 Handy Manny
13:15 Jungle Junction
13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
14:00 Sofia The First
14:25 Goldie & Bear
14:50 Doc McStuffins
15:15 Zou
15:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:55 Loopdidoo
16:10 Miles From Tomorrow
16:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
17:00 Sofia The First
17:25 Jungle Cubs
17:50 Aladdin
18:15 Gummi Bears
18:40 Goldie & Bear
19:05 Miles From Tomorrow
19:30 Sofia The First
19:55 Doc McStuffins
20:20 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
20:35 Miles From Tomorrow
21:00 Goldie & Bear
21:30 Sofia The First
22:00 Jungle Cubs
22:25 Aladdin
22:50 Gummi Bears
23:20 Lilo And Stitch
23:50 Zou



00:10 The Chase
01:05 Emmerdale
01:30 Eggheads
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Tracey Ullman's Show
03:25 Raised By Wolves
03:55 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
04:20 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
09:15 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
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?



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
05:35 Eat Street
06:00 The Best Job In The World
06:25 Wineroads
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
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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
20:00 A Marriage Of Flavours
20:25 Confucius Was A Foodie
21:15 Eat Street
21:40 Eat Street
22:05 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
22:30 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
22:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
23:20 David Rocco's Dolce India
23:45 Tales From The Bush Larder



00:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
00:55 The Grace Helbig Show
01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
02:20 E! News
03:15 Hollywood With The E! True Hollywood Story
05:05 E! Entertainment Special
06:00 Kourtney And Kim Take Miami
06:55 Style Star
07:50 E! News
08:20 E! News
09:15 Giuliana & Bill
10:15 Giuliana & Bill
11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
11:35 E! News
12:05 House Of DVF
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
23:00 Dash Dolls

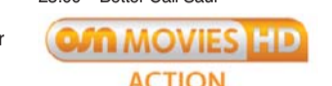


00:00 Community
00:30 Playing House
01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
01:30 Married
02:00 South Park
02:30 The League
03:00 Your Family Or Mine
03:30 The Goldbergs
04:00 Two And A Half Men
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 The Last Man On Earth
06:00 Mad Love
06:30 Community
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 Two And A Half Men
08:30 Breaking In
09:00 Your Family Or Mine
09:30 The Grinder
10:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
10:30 Community
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon

12:00 The Bernie Mac Show
12:30 Two And A Half Men
13:00 My Name Is Earl
13:30 Community
14:00 The Goldbergs
14:30 The Grinder
15:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
15:30 Playing House
16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
16:30 The Bernie Mac Show
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 Your Family Or Mine
18:30 Living With Fran
19:00 Modern Family
19:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Playing House
21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
22:00 Married
22:30 The Brink
23:00 The League
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:00 Bates Motel
01:00 Quantico
02:00 Rosewood
03:00 Allegiance
04:00 Good Morning America
06:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
07:00 Covert Affairs
08:00 Heroes Reborn
09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
10:00 Quantico
11:00 Covert Affairs
12:00 Coronation Street
13:00 Coronation Street
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Heroes Reborn
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 Heroes Reborn
19:00 The Voice
21:00 Castle
22:00 Supergirl
23:00 Better Call Saul



00:00 American Heist
02:15 The Gauntlet
04:00 Toxin
06:00 Hercules
08:00 King Arthur
10:15 The 13th Warrior
12:00 Big Ass Spider!
14:00 Hercules
16:00 Stranded
17:45 King Arthur
20:00 The Prince
22:00 Bad Ass 3: Bad Asses On The Bayou



00:00 Keith Lemon: The Film
02:00 The Foot Fist Way
04:00 Space Dogs
05:45 Renaissance Man
08:00 Dunston Checks In
10:00 Space Dogs
12:00 All About Christmas Eve
14:00 UHF
16:00 Dunston Checks In
17:45 Blues Brothers 2000
20:00 Think Like A Man Too
22:00 Hot Tub Time Machine 2



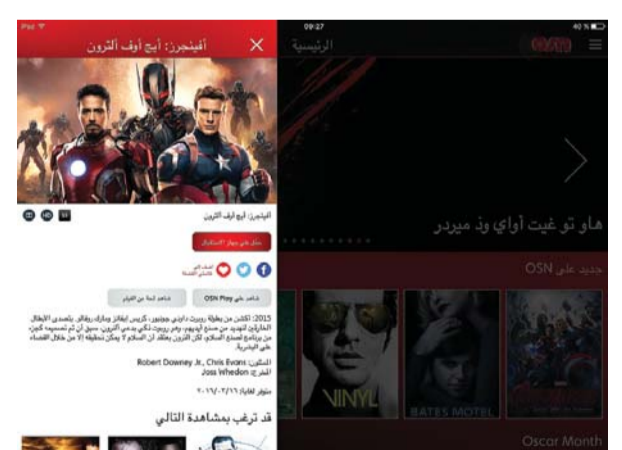
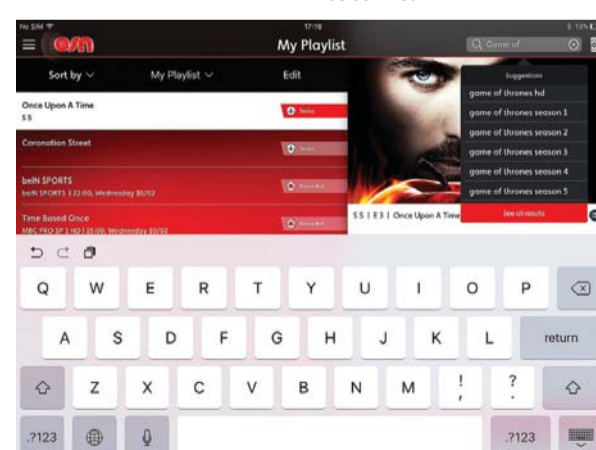
01:00 Carrington
03:15 What Dreams May Come
05:15 Secret Window
07:00 Half Of A Yellow Sun
09:00 When A Man Loves A Woman
11:15 What Dreams May Come
13:15 Diana
15:15 Secret Window
17:00 When A Man Loves A Woman
19:15 Frank
21:00 What's Love Got To Do With It
23:00 I Origins



01:00 The Atticus Institute
02:45 Selma
05:00 Metallica: Through The Never
07:00 The Book Of Life
09:00 Selma
11:15 The 7th Dwarf
13:00 4 Minute Mile
14:00 Barely Lethal
17:00 Transcendence
19:00 The Good Lie
21:00 The Last 5 Years
23:00 The November Man



01:00 Stone Markers
03:00 Young Ones
05:00 Barefoot
07:00 The French Minister
09:00 The Truth About Emanuel
11:00 Barefoot
13:00 Breathe In
15:00 Half Of A Yellow Sun
17:00 The Truth About Emanuel
19:00 The Disappearance Of Eleanor Rigby: Him
21:00 Rosewater



OSN LAUNCHES NEW APP FOR UNMATCHED TV EXPERIENCE

OSN APP GIVES SUBSCRIBERS ULTIMATE CONTROL OVER THE OSN PLUS HD • ALLOWS USERS TO SEARCH OSN'S MASSIVE LIBRARY OF CONTENT

DUBAI: OSN, the leading pay-TV network in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), has launched a new App that offers subscribers effortless access to their OSN Plus HD box with new ways to discover OSN's vast library of content. Designed to enhance the OSN TV viewing experience, the App's intuitive interface allows subscribers to easily search OSN's extensive library on OSN On Demand and OSN Store, keep track of new channel listings, or search for previously recorded shows, with ease.

The App, designed and developed by Accedo, also allows subscribers to control their OSN Plus HD box remotely using it to activate downloads and schedule recordings of easy-to-find content directly from their iPads. User engagement is increased further with the App's social media sharing features and the ability to link content with microsites and third-party services such as IMDB.com, which provide a rich source of additional information on OSN shows. The app seamlessly integrates OSN Play and also doubles up

as a second remote control for your OSN Plus HD box. Accessible in English and Arabic, convenience and flexibility is at the heart of the App, allowing subscribers to discover even more content according to OSN's Chief Technology Officer, Mark Billings. He added: "OSN has a reputation for innovating, engaging and delighting its subscribers. We designed the OSN App with our viewer in mind to encourage even more engagement with our content and offer a world-class, immersive and dynamic TV viewing experience."

Adam Nightingale, Vice President for EMEA at Accedo said "The OSN App is the first companion app in MENA. Its rich UX and deep integration with OSN's existing services will help provide an even more enjoyable way of finding and consuming great content and will help accelerate changing viewing habits within the region." The app is available for download now at the AppStore under 'OSN App'. For more information, please log on to: www.osn.com

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait CINEMA

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (17/03/2016 TO 23/03/2016)

SHARQIA-1 TRIPLE 9 SOLACE TRIPLE 9 SOLACE TRIPLE 9 SOLACE TRIPLE 9	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM 6:15 PM 8:15 PM 10:30 PM 12:30 AM	UNNATURAL ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME UNNATURAL	8:45 PM 10:45 PM 12:45 AM	UNNATURAL UNNATURAL UNNATURAL UNNATURAL UNNATURAL	4:45 PM 6:45 PM 8:45 PM 10:45 PM 12:45 AM
SHARQIA-2 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:05 AM 10:00 PM 1:00 AM	FANAR-2 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 5:45 PM 7:45 PM 10:00 PM 12:30 AM	AVENUES-3 KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3 TRIPLE 9 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE TRIPLE 9	1:00 PM 3:15 PM 5:30 PM 7:45 PM 10:00 PM 12:15 AM 10:00 PM 1:00 AM
SHARQIA-3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT ZOOTOPIA ZOOTOPIA KUNG FU PANDA 3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:15 PM 2:45 PM 5:00 PM 7:15 PM 9:15 PM 11:45 PM 11:45 PM	MARINA-1 SOLACE SOLACE TRIPLE 9 SOLACE SOLACE TRIPLE 9 TRIPLE 9 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE SOLACE	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:45 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:15 AM 10:00 PM 1:00 AM	360 -- 1 KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE -3D	12:00 PM 2:15 PM 4:30 PM 6:45 PM 9:00 PM 11:15 PM 11:15 PM
MUHALAB-1 KAPOOR AND SONS- Hindi THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT KAPOOR AND SONS- Hindi UNNATURAL THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT UNNATURAL BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	11:45 AM 2:30 PM 5:00 PM 7:45 PM 9:45 PM 12:15 AM 12:15 AM	MARINA-2 LONDON HAS FALLEN ZOOTOPIA KUNG FU PANDA 3 ZOOTOPIA LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:15 PM 6:15 PM 8:30 PM 10:30 PM 12:30 AM	360 -- 2 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT NO THU KUNG FU PANDA 3 THU THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT	12:00 PM 2:30 PM 5:00 PM 7:30 PM 7:30 PM 10:00 PM 12:30 AM
MUHALAB-2 SOLACE SOLACE SOLACE ZOOTOPIA SOLACE TRIPLE 9 TRIPLE 9 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE TRIPLE 9	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 5:30 PM 7:45 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM 9:45 PM 12:45 AM	MARINA-3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3-3D KUNG FU PANDA 3 THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	1:00 PM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 5:30 PM 7:30 PM 9:30 PM 12:05 AM 12:05 AM	AL-KOUT.1 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:30 PM 2:30 PM 4:30 PM 6:30 PM 8:30 PM 10:30 PM 12:30 AM
MUHALAB-3 LONDON HAS FALLEN KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3 LONDON HAS FALLEN LONDON HAS FALLEN	12:30 PM 12:30 PM 2:30 PM 4:30 PM 6:30 PM 8:30 PM 10:30 PM 12:30 AM	AVENUES-1 EMELIE EMELIE ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME EMELIE EMELIE ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME EMELIE ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME	11:30 AM 1:15 PM 3:15 PM 5:15 PM 7:15 PM 9:15 PM 11:15 PM 1:15 AM	AL-KOUT.2 UNNATURAL ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME ZOOTOPIA UNNATURAL ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME UNNATURAL UNNATURAL	1:00 PM 3:00 PM 5:00 PM 7:15 PM 9:00 PM 11:00 PM 1:00 AM
FANAR-1 ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME ZOOTOPIA UNNATURAL ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME	12:30 PM 2:30 PM 4:45 PM 6:45 PM	AVENUES-2 UNNATURAL UNNATURAL	12:45 PM 2:45 PM		

Electro-Mechanical Contracting Company

JOB VACANCIES

Mechanical Specialist HVAC

- Chiller Technician (Mechanical & Controls)
- Chiller Forman
- BMS Technician

Please submit your resume to
<mailto:companyhr83@gmail.com>
info@megatech-kw.com.

REQUIRED

Filipina executive secretary

A well reputed aluminum company needs to hire an executive secretary. 2 years relevant experience fluent in English, efficient in MS Office.

Send your detailed resume at
saryaterkawi@gmail.com

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sathyanarayana
Kandragula Karuna Vikas, holder of Indian Passport No. G1500671, Jakkamvari street, Royapeta Narsapur, West Godavari Dt., A.P - 534275, hereby change my name to Karuna Vikas Kandragula. (C 5148)

I, Rehana holder of Indian Passport No. Z2518899 Katka Muslim Colony Banswara, Rajasthan, hereby change my name to Rehana Zainuddin Katka. (C 5150)

I, Shaikh Asma Mohammed Rauf, holder of Indian Passport No. L0082285, Dadamiya Chawl 52115, Jaku Club Santacruz East Mumbai 55, Maharashtra, India, hereby change my name to Baig Asma Akbar. (C 5149)

23-3-2016



Flight Schedule

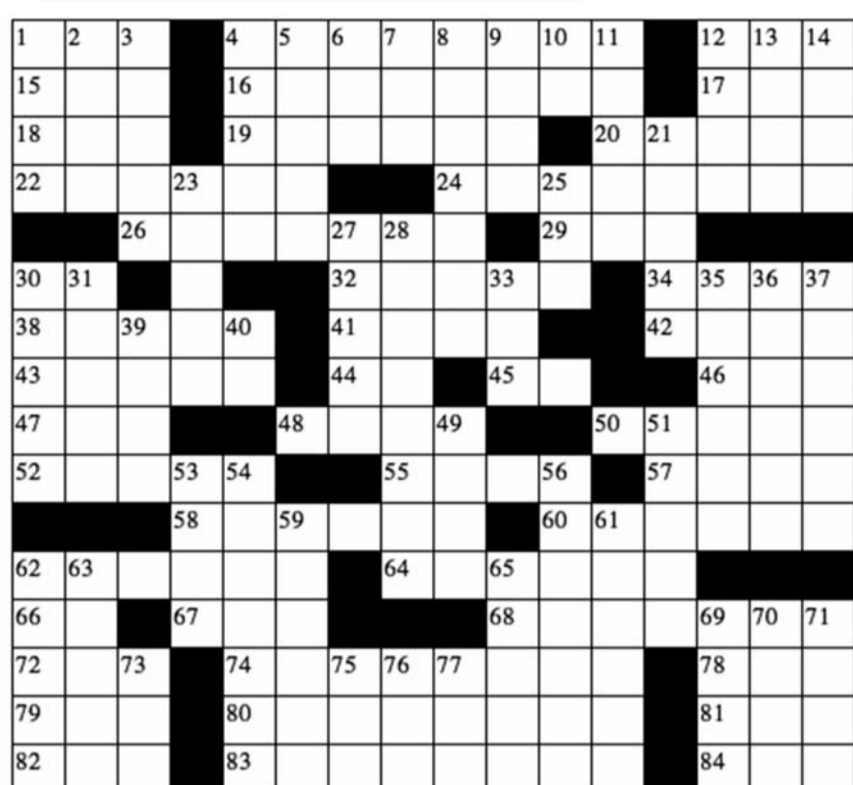
Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 23/3/2016					Arrival Flights on Wednesday 23/3/2016					
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time		Airlines	Fit	Route	Time		
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	KAC 512 Mashhad	14:50	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05	KNE 481 Taif
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	KAC 788 Jeddah	14:50	FDB	072	Dubai	00:05	KAC 576 Sharm el-Sheikh
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	KNE 462 Madinah	14:55	MSC	404	Asyut	00:55	KAC 673 Dubai
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	KNE 472 Jeddah	15:05	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55	KAC 791 Madinah
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	OMA 645 Muscat	15:30	MSC	416	Sohag	01:00	FDB 058 Dubai
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	KAC 562 Amman	15:40	JAI	573	Mumbai	01:00	QTR 1079 Doha
ETH	3713	LGG	02:00	ABY 127 Sharjah	15:45	MSC	416	Sohag	01:00	GFA 222 Bahrain
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	UAE 857 Dubai	15:45	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30	KAC 617 Doha
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	QTR 1072 Doha	15:45	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35	SVA 503 Madinah/Jeddah
KKK	6507	Istanbul	02:30	IRC 6521 Lamerd	16:20	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45	KAC 773 Riyadh
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	JZR 787 Riyadh	16:25	KKK	6508	Istanbul	03:50	KAC 539 Sharm el-Sheikh
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	FDB 051 Dubai	16:30	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:50	KNE 463 Madinah
RJA	644	Amman	03:05	ETD 303 Abu Dhabi	16:40	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55	KNE 473 Jeddah
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	RJA 640 Amman	16:55	FDB	068	Dubai	03:55	JZR 554 Alexandria
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	KAC 542 Cairo	16:55	MSR	613	Cairo	04:00	MSR 501 Cairo
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	SYR 341 Damascus	17:00	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10	ABY 128 Sharjah
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	SVA 510 Riyadh	17:15	QTR	1077	Doha	04:15	OMA 646 Muscat
CLX	784	Luxembourg	03:25	ETD 919 Abu Dhabi	17:15	THY	765	Istanbul	05:00	KAC 563 Amman
DHX	170	Bahrain	04:45	GFA 215 Bahrain	17:15	CEB	7695	Manila	05:15	JZR 266 Beirut
THY	770	Istanbul	05:40	MSR 614 Cairo	17:30	JZR	560	Sohag	05:20	IRC 6512 ABD
FDB	5061	Dubai	05:55	JZR 777 Jeddah	17:50	FDB	070	Dubai	06:10	ETD 304 Abu Dhabi
BAW	157	London	06:40	KAC 502 Beirut	17:55	JZR	164	Dubai	06:30	JZR 238 Amman
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	UAE 875 Dubai	18:00	RJA	645	Amman	06:55	FDB 052 Dubai
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	FDB 063 Dubai	18:05	THY	771	Istanbul	07:05	QTR 1073 Doha
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	JZR 177 Dubai	18:20	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:05	UAE 858 Dubai
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	KAC 786 Jeddah	18:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:10	JZR 538 Cairo
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:45	JZR 483 Istanbul	18:40	KAC	545	Alexandria	07:15	RJA 641 Amman
OMA	641	Muscat	07:50	ABY 123 Sharjah	18:45	ETH	3713	LGG	07:15	SYR 342 Damascus
KAC	382	Delhi	07:55	QTR 1080 Doha	18:45	FDB	054	Dubai	07:40	CLX 785 Luxembourg
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:00	KAC 774 Riyadh	18:55	KAC	511	Mashhad	08:30	SVA 511 Riyadh
KAC	352	Kochi	08:25	KAC 166 Paris/Rome	19:25	QTR	1087	Doha	08:30	GFA 216 Bahrain
KAC	344	Chennai	08:30	GFA 217 Bahrain	19:30	BAW	156	London	08:30	JZR 184 Dubai
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	08:30	KAC 618 Doha	19:30	OMA	642	Muscat	08:40	MSR 615 Cairo
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	KAC 154 Istanbul	19:35	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:45	JZR 124 Bahrain
KAC	362	Colombo	08:40	KAC 674 Dubai	19:45	ABY	126	Sharjah	08:55	ETD 919 MXP/Abu Dhabi
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50	KAC 102 New York/London	19:45	UAE	856	Dubai	09:25	FDB 064 Dubai
ABY	125	Sharjah	08:50	ETD 919 Abu Dhabi	19:55	KAC	117	New York	09:40	ABY 124 Sharjah
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	KAC 792 Madinah	19:55	KAC	541	Cairo	09:55	UAE 876 Dubai
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:10	KNE 480 Taif	20:10	KAC	561	Amman	09:55	GFA 218 Bahrain
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	JZR 482 Istanbul	20:20	KAC	511	Mashhad	10:00	KAC 283 Dhaka
FDB	055	Dubai	09:25	FDB 061 Dubai	20:20	QTR	1087	Doha	10:00	KAC 361 Colombo
GFA	213	Bahrain	09:40	OMA 647 Muscat	20:20	KAC	671	Dubai	10:00	QTR 1081 Doha
IRA	665	Shiraz	10:40	MSR 606 Luxor	20:45	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:05	KAC 351 Kochi
IAW	157	Al Najaf	10:50	FDB 5053 Dubai	20:50	KAC	501	Beirut	10:25	KAC 343 Chennai
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	JAI 572 Mumbai	20:55	KAC	175	Frankfurt/Geneva	10:30	KNE 461 Riyadh
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:15	DLH 634 Frankfurt	20:55	FDB	056	Dubai	10:30	KAC 331 Trivandrum
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	QTR 1088 Doha	21:00	KAC	153	Istanbul	10:30	OMA 648 Muscat
IRC	6511	ABD	11:35	MEA 402 Beirut	21:20	QTR	1071	Doha	10:35	FDB 062 Dubai
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	ETD 307 Abu Dhabi	21:20	GFA	214	Bahrain	10:40	MSR 619 Alexandria
SAW	701	Damascus	12:20	ALK 229 Colombo	21:25	IRA	664	Shiraz	11:00	DLH 634 Doha
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	UAE 859 Dubai	21:40	IAW	158	Al Najaf	11:25	FDB 5054 Dubai
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	GFA 219 Bahrain	21:40	AXB	890	Mangalore	11:40	DHX 171 Bahrain
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	JZR 125 Bahrain	21:45	JZR	776	Jeddah	11:50	JAI 571 Mumbai
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	QTR 1082 Doha	22:00	KAC	103	London	12:15	QTR 1089 Doha
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC 540 Sharm el-Sheikh	22:00	UAE	874	Dubai	12:20	KAC 381 Delhi
CLX	792	Luxembourg	13:15	KAC 564 Amman	22:20	ME	405	Beirut	12:25	JZR 502 Luxor
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50	ETD 309 Abu Dhabi	22:25	KAC	785	Jeddah	12:25	ETD 308 Abu Dhabi
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	13:55	AIC 975 Chennai/Goa	22:25	FDB	076	Dubai	12:30	KAC 301 Mumbai
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	FDB 059 Dubai	22:40	JZR	786	Riyadh	12:35	KAC 203 Lahore
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10	BBC 043 Dhaka	22:40	MSC	402	Alexandria	12:55	MEA 403 Beirut
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30	JZR 239 Amman	23:05	SAW	702	Damascus	13:10	ALK 230 Colombo
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40	JZR 185 Dubai	23:15	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10	GFA 220 Bahrain
KAC	672	Dubai	14:45	JZR 555 Alexandria	23:25	ETH	3713	LGG	13:10	ETD 920 Dubai
KAC	546	Alexandria	14:50	FDB 071 Dubai	23:45	MSR	611	Cairo	13:30	UAE 860 Dubai
				THY 764 Istanbul	23:50	UAE	872	Dubai	13:35	KAC 345 Ahmedabad
				JAI 574 Mumbai	23:55	CLX	792	Hanoi	13:45	QTR 1083 Doha
									14:00	KAC 205 Islamabad
									14:15	ETD 310 Abu Dhabi
									14:30	FDB 060 Dubai
										KAC 415 Kuala Lumpur/Jakarta

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1204



ACROSS

1. Of a light yellowish-brown color n 1.
4. Someone who tries to bring peace.
12. Apparent power to perceive things that are not present to the senses.
15. Goddess of criminal rashness and its punishment.
16. The time for eating a meal.
17. A United States unit of weight equivalent to 100 pounds.
18. Wet spongy ground of decomposing vegetation.
19. An insane person.
20. Goddess of dawn.
22. A medicinal drug used to evoke vomiting (especially in cases of drug overdose or poisoning).
24. A spitz-type dog having a shaggy grayish coat and tightly curled tail originating in Holland.
26. Painted beauty and red admiral.
29. Towards the side away from the wind.
30. A Russian river.
32. Strike with disgust or revulsion.
34. Type genus of the Amidae.
38. The acetylated derivative of salicylic acid.
41. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
42. A training program to prepare college students to be commissioned officers.
43. Fill with high spirits.
44. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
45. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
46. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet.
47. The residue that remains when something is burned.
48. A wad of something chewable as tobacco.
50. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
52. An epigrammatic Japanese verse form of three short lines.
55. An inclined surface or roadway that moves traffic from one level to another.
57. The lean flesh of a fish similar to cod.
58. Enter drop by drop, as of medication into an eye.
60. Small genus of dioecious tropical aquatic plants.
62. Turn pale, as if in fear.
64. An ugly evil-looking old woman.
66. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
67. Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
68. Sour-tasting liquid produced usually by oxidation of the alcohol in wine or cider and used as a condiment or food preservative.
72. The basic unit of electric current adopted under the System International d'Unites.
74. A deceptive maneuver (especially to avoid capture).
78. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
79. Support resembling the rib of an animal.
80. Tropical trees having one-seeded fruit.
81. A recurring sleep state during which dreaming occurs.
82. Any of several small ungulate mammals of Africa and Asia with rodent-like incisors and feet with hooflike toes.
83. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
84. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.

DOWN

1. A sock with a separation for the big toe.
2. On, to, or at the top.
3. A desert in southern Israel.
4. The capital and largest city of Jordan.
5. The state prevailing during the absence of war.
6. A number of sheets of paper fastened together along one edge.
7. Any of various trees of the genus Ulmus.
8. A member of an Indian people formerly living along the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
9. Ratio of the opposite side to the hypotenuse.
10. The square of a body of any size of type.
11. Use again after processing.
12. The persistence of a sound after its source has stopped.
13. Stately heavy-bodied aquatic bird with very long neck and usually white plumage as adult v 1.
14. An anxiety disorder associated with serious traumatic events and characterized by such symptoms as guilt about surviving or reliving the trauma in dreams or numbness and lack of involvement with reality or recurrent thoughts and images.
21. (physics) A deformation of an object in which parallel planes remain parallel but are shifted in a direction parallel to themselves.
23. A military trainee (as at a military academy).
25. An extension at the end and at right angles to the main building.
27. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
28. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
31. Strong lightweight wood of the balsa tree used especially for floats.
33. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
35. A muzzle-loading high-angle gun with short barrel that fires shells at high elevations for a short range.
36. A Greek island west of Greece.
37. Absence of the pupil in an eye.
39. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
40. A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
49. A raised mark on the skin (as produced by the blow of a whip).
51. The subject matter of a conversation or discussion.
53. The basic unit of money in Papua New Guinea.
54. Release from a clasp.
56. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
59. A member of the Himalayan people living in Nepal and Tibet who are famous for their skill as mountaineers.
61. God of wisdom or prophecy.
63. (folklore) A corpse that rises at night to drink the blood of the living.
65. Being eight more than fifty.
69. Cassava with long tuberous edible roots and soft brittle stems.
70. In bed.
71. Avatar of Vishnu.
73. A solution containing a phosphate buffer.
75. A prominent rock or pile of rocks on a hill.
76. A hotel providing overnight lodging for travelers.
77. A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.

Yesterday's Solution

B	B	S		G	L	A	S	S	F	U	L		B	N	S			
L	A	C		H	I	R	O	H	I	T	O		R	O	C			
E	T	A		Z	A	G	R	E	B		A	G	A	M	A			
B	A	B	A		R	U	T	A			F	U	G	A	L			
				N	I	F				F	O	R	E	L	A	D	Y	
B	U	C	K	L	E	Y	A				E	R	A					
A	N	A	L	O	G			L	A	M	A		G	R	O	T		
R	A	L	E			G		C	Z	A	R			A	R	A		
A	G	A				S	E	A	T	S			D	A	I	L	Y	
K	E	B	A	B						E	O	R	A	P	T	O	R	
A	D	A	D			C				A	C	N	E		P	A	P	A
						L	A	M	I	A					A	N	A	
S	I	N	U	S						C	A	L	L		L	A	V	A
S	C	A	M			B	A	H	R	A	I	N			G	A	B	
P	E	R	I			P	L	E	I	O	N	E			R	I	B	
E	D	D	A			H	A	N	D	S	E	T			A	N	E	

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You often forget to toot your own horn. You like to be thorough in your job, always fine-tuning, polishing and maintaining your honest, rational and practical touch. Some situation may have you tossing around to decide on letting your knowledge be known. Your inner voice will guide you-you will want to act soon. Many of your endeavors succeed, including this one. Have faith in yourself and devote yourself to the opportunity that promises the best chance for success. You will be pleasantly pleased at the career advancements this year-whether you remember to shout about it from the rooftops or not! No matter how trivial the conversation, being with others this evening is a great way to show your love.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may have a mad desire to do nothing but communicate and exchange ideas today. You could shoot the breeze with someone for hours, if given the opportunity. There could be a temptation, however, to play devil's advocate or analyze things to death. Just enjoy the exchanges and give the other guy a chance. Many stalled activities finally get back on track. Remember those plans and decisions you postponed now is the time to begin implementing them. Pay attention to the little details-otherwise they will come back to haunt you. Brainstorming with others will get your mind buzzing and your juices flowing. Tensions in the family can be put to good use if you look at the situation from a creative perspective.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Courage and confidence reign. Others will follow your lead in any group effort. You keep a positive spin on everything you do. A smile attracts other smiles-frowns can close doors. Who could have guessed that last week's frowning introvert would be metamorphosed into a winner of a conversationalist so quickly passion is high-perfect for getting some exercise or chopping that cord of wood. Just make sure any new projects are short-term. Problems with relatives today can be ongoing unless you do something nice to calm the frustrations. You may be unable to get the support you require, so the choice to lighten the problems will be on your shoulders. You will be able to handle this successfully after planning and thinking through things.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

So, you just found out you cannot help or solve everyone's problems. You may feel a little sad, but do not worry. Aren't you glad you do not have everyone's problems put some effort into stress relief and make it a habit to continue along this path, every day. You should be able to accomplish quite a lot just now. However, you must be very cautious about giving quick responses, especially today. You could find that you are appreciated for your ability to act and get things done. Gathering and exchanging information becomes a more important part of your life. . . . A very educational experience. Neighbors or siblings have a big impact on your goals and make a big impression. This is a mentally and socially active growth period.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

A friend can influence your move up the ladder at work today. Changing chaos into order may be the ticket for successful workdays. If you have your resume updated you might find an area in your profession that you would have new job opportunities. This could be within your own workplace. This should be one of those days when you just feel good. You feel good about your friends and your love relationship or if there is none, you may feel good about finding one. The only things you do not feel good about are work and self-discipline-so watch the finances! You may as well go on feeling good about everything else! Your popularity is growing. The most unusual people are attracted to you. Show the world you have character and good taste.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Today your sensitivity to others and your desire to help are strong. This should be a great day to work in a service-oriented position. Everything points to you taking the initiative. You could feel great support from those around you for any decisions or actions you feel are important. Communicating and getting your message across to others are at a high. Your timing should be perfect and those around you should find you most talkative. In order to make your cash work for you, perhaps this would be a good time to gain some information for study and planning. Advice is important but your study and planning will make the difference. When you have a purpose or goal to fulfill, you begin living life with gusto. Name your profession.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may well be reminded of your various responsibilities today. This is a good time to get down to the nitty-gritty and take care of the business problems that had previously been shoved aside. Obligations may come to your attention now. A meeting with someone older or someone in authority may create some nervous moments but this will keep you on your toes, so to speak. You are at your most practical when it comes to dealing and working with others and you know just what to do. You have a lot of zest and plenty of discipline to complete whatever project you begin now. A sense of ambition and practicality takes hold now. A little overtime would not be unusual just now. This evening is for relaxing-friends may have to wait.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

A great career trend throughout this year may be the knowledge you need in order to make that push for a particular job that you have been wanting. There are rewards for your efforts. You have a grasp for the necessary steps it takes to make things work and improve production, sales or business in some way. Others are interested in what you have to say as well as your response to their questions. Today, your sensitivity to the needs of others is so acute and your desire to help is so strong, that this should be one super day to work with people. If you are a salesperson, you should sell twice your quota! This afternoon a friend may encourage you to become involved in some sort of child protective service. You have a sincere interest in helping children.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Between the phone calls and chatty fellow employees, you wonder how you will ever get to all the paperwork. Remember to take things one step at a time and keep asking yourself if you want to stay after work to finish your allotment of work. Since the answers to life's mysteries do not seem to be coming forth, you may wish to seek help from disciplines that dig a little deeper into people and phenomena, such as psychology, astrology, the occult, or perhaps zen or yoga. Try to keep an open mind, no matter what happens. If your mind becomes totally preoccupied with one particular thought, try to shake it away by visiting with friends. Friends will appreciate your listening ear and they will provide a great distraction.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Do not expect much leeway in assignments for now, excuses might not be accepted. Cooperation and compromise can bring you close to success. Self-assurance can become rather low at times, so use your spare time to meditate and recuperate-perhaps a health drink and a fun magazine during your break. This afternoon a brainstorming session may shed light on a hidden matter. Pay special attention to jointly held properties and accounts, which could hold a few surprises. Attention to diet and exercise seems only natural, but you probably will not neglect the inner self, either. Books about positive thinking and career advancement should be your first choice of serious reading material. You enjoy solving problems-a positive day.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

It may be time to hire more people in the workplace, especially if the higher-ups look to only a few employees to carry a heavy load. Be accommodating, up to a point! Someone could demand a bit too much from you. Don't give in to any martyr role. Bear in mind, any intense feelings today are just short range, although they could symbolize some significant emotion in the long haul. Beware of any obsessive ideas plugging up your mind, particularly in relationship with loved ones. Remember, there is only one thing you can change and that is some part of yourself. If you have questions that are emotional, it may be good to ask a disinterested party for his or her impression. A hunch about a family member turns out to be true-the outcome is positive.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Changes are in the air and you are prepared to make them. This is one of your better days for money. Circumstances may seem to conspire to irritate you or cause you to become emotional but you are good at thinking first before speaking. You are particularly clear in thinking and speech and the difficult person may regret having approached you with a negative subject. You may even have an opportunity to teach others how to reverse a difficult situation. It is all about truth and respect. Health and work goals are important to you and this afternoon is a most positive time to make any changes in your diet routine or choice of foods. Lots of comfortable feelings are present with loved ones tonight. There may be a fun game challenge this evening.

WORD SEARCH

Beatles Songs 1

Find and circle all of the songs by The Beatles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of an additional Beatles song.

W D H E Y B U L L D O G E T B A C K A
A R E T T E B G N I T T E G S H E P S
I E Y A D H T R I B B N O R E N P L Y K
T C D A R W O P O L Y T H E N E P A M
S A M I O P D H A S Y N O P A G I D E
E E T O R N R C D R U L I S N F T H W
X G F I E O K U C A A N E R E I O U H
Y U N E R B T Y D D R P K Y G X Y R Y
S E H I I Y B T Y E L L B I S I B E Y
A T F R H A L M E E N D I E N N G P H
D H I D B T A E A K O C U N L G I P W
I H E Y L D E S V O C L E L G A R I E
E T R Y O Y E M G O B I E H E H R R M
T C B N J M M O O R L F T A T O O T L
A H N U E U L N E S I I W I L N Y L
X A L R O L D Y I F L Y I N G E A A E
M I C H E L L E I P Y E N O H O E D T
A M W H I N Y A D R E T S E Y D L O W
N L R I G R E H T O N A E N I M E M I

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| ANOTHER GIRL | FLYING | IN MY LIFE | SOMETHING |
| ASK ME WHY | GET BACK | JULIA | SUN KING |
| BIRTHDAY | GETTING BETTER | LADY MADONNA | TAXMAN |
| BLACKBIRD | HELLO GOODBYE | LOVELY RITA | TELL ME WHY |
| CRY BABY CRY | HEY BULLDOG | MICHELLE | THE END |
| DAY TRIPPER | HEY JUDE | NO REPLY | TICKET TO RIDE |
| DEAR PRUDENCE | HONEY PIE | OH DARLING | TWO OF US |
| DIG A PONY | I ME MINE | PLEASE PLEASE ME | WAIT |
| ELEANOR RIGBY | I WILL | POLYTHENE PAM | YER BLUES |
| FIXING A HOLE | IF I FELL | SEXY SADIE | YESTERDAY |

Yesterday Solution

Astronomy

T H T F A R C E C A P S P F E L F A I R S
O R B I T S R T S P M E M I E V R E S O
N T O D S P S A A E A R I G O O T I C H R
S R O F I E A U N O T I T H L N O R O U E
A L E R M E O E P Y L E L A Y B O N A G I
S A C E O S E N E O P R T L L W N O P I
L R L T N H T A S U C N A E I S A X S A
U W I S O U R R S T E S F N O T M Y P N
P I P A R T T A H E C E R E L I M B A E T
O N G E P T T O N A G A L A X Y W B T U E
A D E O S L A M A W S R L L Y E S E R D A
L R D G A E I L D R S A E A T T O O N L
U B T T E E X A E A Y I L N L T I R Y C I
E A A R I A T A T M O S P H E R E C A S E
N R P E H U C L O H K C A L B O K N R O
R C S W O M M U N I V E R S E S O T A G
A N D R O M E D A G A L A X Y R O N P G

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------|------------------|---------------|
| ANDROMEDA GALAXY | DEEP SPACE | MOON | SOLAR SYSTEM |
| APOGEE | ECLIPSE | NEBULA | SOLAR WIND |
| ASTEROID | EQUINOX | ORBIT | SPACE SHUTTLE |
| ASTRONOMER | GALAXIES | PARSEC | SPACECRAFT |
| ATMOSPHERE | GALILEO | PERIGEE | STARS |
| AURORA | GRAVITY | POLARIS | SUN |
| BINARY STAR | HUBBLE | PROXIMA CENTAURI | SUPERNOVA |
| BLACK HOLE | KEPLER | PULSARS | TELESCOPE |
| CONSTELLATION | LIGHT YEAR | QUASARS | TIDES |
| CORONA | METEOR | RED GIANT | UNIVERSE |
| CRATER | MILKY WAY | SATELLITE | WHITE DWARF |

Hidden sentence: THE FIRST PERSON TO SET FOOT ON THE MOON WAS NEIL ARMSTRONG

Daily SuDoku

	9			3				
7			4	8				9
			9	2		1	5	
		5	8					
		3				2		
					3	7		
	1	2		7	6			
9			2	3				6
		4					7	

Yesterday's Solution

4	8	5	7	6	3	9	2	1
2	6	1	4	5	9	7	8	3
3	9	7	1	2	8	6	4	5
7	2	9	3	1	4	5	6	8
6	1	8	5	9	7	4	3	2
5	4	3	2	8	6	1	9	7
9	5	2	8	4	1	3	7	6
8	3	6	9	7	5	2	1	4
1	7	4	6	3	2	8	5	9

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
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



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	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	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630 Fax: (+965) 24348714 www.met.gov.kw

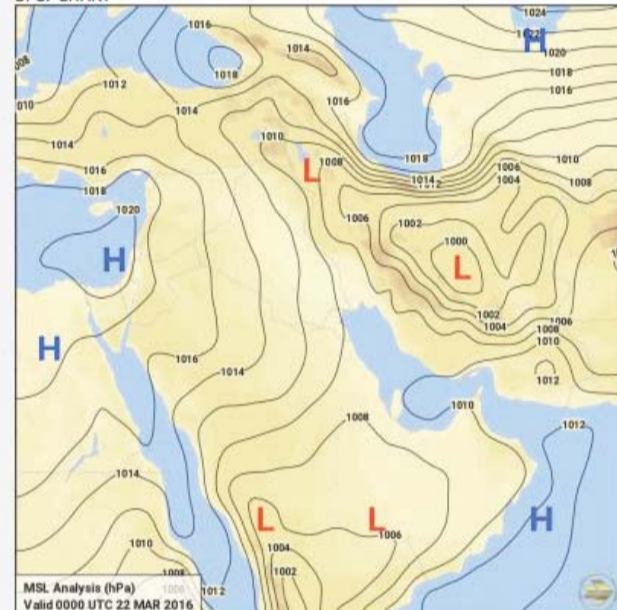
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 22/03/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 29 °C

By Day : Sunny with light to moderate freshening gradually north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h
By Night : Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Expected Weather				
Min Temp °C	18	18	19	20
Max Temp °C	28	30	31	33
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	12 - 35	10 - 30	08 - 30	15 - 40

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	REC	Max °C	EXP
KUWAIT CITY	21		27	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	20		29	
ABDALY	16		30	
BUBYAN	18		25	
JAHRA	20		36	
FAILAKA ISLAND	20		26	
SALMIYAH	21		24	
AHMADI	22		25	
JAL ALIYAH	16		30	
QAROH ISLAND	20		24	
UMM AL-MARADEM	21		24	
NUWAISIB	21		32	
WAFRA	19		30	
MANAGISH	18		31	
SALMY	15		31	
MUTRIBA	16		30	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	36
Min Temp (°C)	21
Max Rel Hum (%)	64
Min Rel Hum (%)	15
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	60 S
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm
Sunrise	05:49
Sunset	18:00

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:30
Sunrise	05:49
Zuhr	11:55
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:00
Isha	19:17



PRIVATE CLINICS

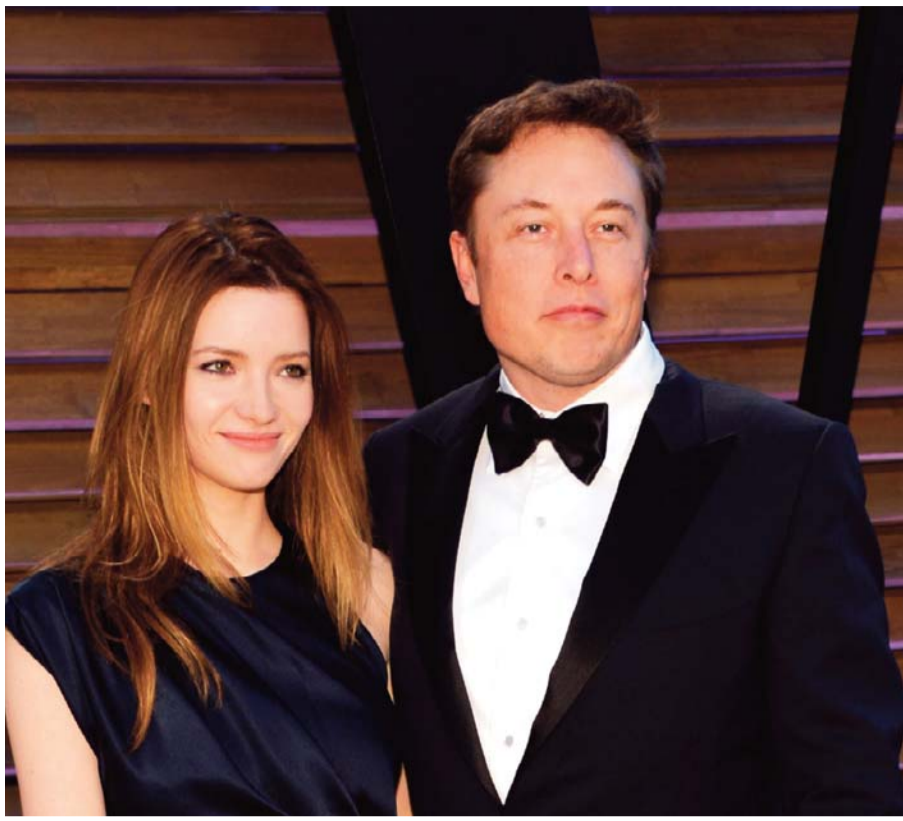
Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah 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 Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	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. Abdallateef 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
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123

Gossip



Musk's wife files to divorce billionaire

Billionaire Elon Musk and actress Talulah Riley are making another attempt to end their second marriage. Riley filed to divorce Musk on Monday in Los Angeles Superior Court. Musk filed for divorce on New Year's Eve in 2014 but withdrew the petition seven months later. The divorce is amicable, and the pair agreed that Riley would file the petition to end their latest marriage after roughly 21/2 years. According to the statement, the Musk and Riley have been living separately for the past six months and plan to remain friends. Riley's filing

mentions irreconcilable differences and makes no mention of a prenuptial agreement. She is seeking spousal support from Musk. Musk co-founded Paypal and has gone on to help start the electric car company Tesla Motors and the private space firm SpaceX. He is also a champion of building a hyperloop that would transport people and cargo at the speed of sound. Riley appeared in "Pride & Prejudice" and "Inception" and wrote and directed her first feature film, "Scottish Mussel," in 2014. The pair first married in 2010 and divorced in 2012. They re-married

18 months later. Riley sat in the front row at September's unveiling of the Tesla's Model X sport utility vehicle. Musk is scheduled to unveil the newest version of Tesla's electric car, the lower-cost Model 3, at an event later this month. Musk and Riley do not have any children together, although he has five sons from a previous marriage.

Ratajkowski is new face of Jacquie Aiche's spring collection



Emily Ratajkowski is the new face of Jacquie Aiche's Spring 2016 collection. The 24-year-old model-actress - who made her breakthrough starring in Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams' controversial 'Blurred Lines' music video - has partnered with the brand for their latest fine jewellery campaign, which sees the 'Gone Girl' actress expose her toned frame and tease a glimpse of her breasts in a variety of shots showcasing the ethereal accessories. Jacquie's high-end designs have a Native American influence and feature turquoise relics and precious gemstones combined with hammered gold and

amulets. Speaking about the Los Angeles-based designer and their collaboration, Emily said: "I love how each piece from JA is a little treasure and can be worn as such, or that you can pile on more and more. There is so much room for personal style in Jacquie's jewelry." In one promo shot, Emily has shared on her Instagram account, the 'Gone Girl' star sports tussled hair, a variety of rings and a choker necklace as she is dressed in white underwear and a woolen cardigan.



MJ's kids at risk of losing their millions

The late singer's kids, Prince, 19, Paris, 17, and Blanket, 14, were due to inherit their windfall when they turn 30 but tax authorities are said to be seeking £555 million from the 'Thriller' hitmaker's estate. And Michael - who died of acute Propofol intoxication in June 2009 - is believed to have died with over £300 million in other debts. A source told The Sun newspaper: "On paper the kids are billionaires thanks to these massive sums. But the truth is those sums will barely be in their accounts for any time as they have this huge tax bill to settle. "The IRS (Internal Revenue Service) had been public about their demand asking for as much as £555 million, with more charges coming for late payments." The tax figure has just increased by around £70 million after Michael's state in Sony/ATV Music Publishing was recently sold for £526 million. The source added: "The estate has challenged that enormous figure, but the Sony deal simply ups the

amount they owe." It was recently revealed the King of Pop's children are missing something else from their inheritance as his treasured 'Gone With the Wind' Oscar has disappeared. The 'Bad' singer bought the 1940 Best Picture statuette for \$1.54 million - considerably more than its \$300,000 worth - at an auction in 1999, but executors of his estate are now unable to find the trophy. Lawyer Howard Weitzman said: "The estate does not know where the 'Gone With the Wind' statuette is. "We would like to have that Oscar because it belongs to Michael's children. I'm hopeful it will turn up at some point." It is unclear whether the 'Billie Jean' hitmaker kept the Oscar - which was awarded to legendary producer David O. Selznick - at his Neverland estate in California, the Los Angeles home he shared with his children when he died, or even at a storage facility.



Kim to appear on new game show

Kim Kardashian West is to appear on new game show 'Big Fan'. The 35-year-old star will be the focus of a forthcoming episode of the ABC series, which will see three of the 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians' star's biggest fans go up against each other in a test to see who knows more about her life and the winner will get the chance to have a unique experience with their idol. Kim - who is married to Kanye West - took to her Twitter account to announce the news to her 42.1 million followers and urge them to apply to be on the show. She tweeted: "I am going to be on a new ABC game

show and I need some of my biggest fans to play with! Go to bigfan.castingcrane.com to apply (sic)" 'Big Fan' is based on the 'Who Knows' segment of 'Jimmy Kimmel Live!' and the chat show host will lead the production with Andy Richter set to present. Applications for contestants will close on April 1, and applicants must explain why Kim, or another celebrity, is their ultimate idol, when they first became a fan, what memorabilia they own of the star and answer other questions.



Bieber thanks West for gig

Justin Bieber has thanked his "inspiration" Kanye West for attending his show last night. The 'Sorry' hitmaker was delighted to see the US rapper and his wife Kim Kardashian West enjoy a date night at Los Angeles' Staples Center to take in part of his 'Purpose World Tour', and admitted he put on a big performance for the 38-year-old star. He tweeted: "Shout out to one of my inspirations @kanyewest for coming to the show tonight. Had to go big. #PurposeTourLosAngeles night 2 (sic)" Kanye - who recently admitted Justin's hit 'What Do You Mean' was his favourite song of 2015 - took his wife Kim along to the gig and appeared to enjoy himself as the reality TV star posted a video of her significant other dancing along to his tunes on her Snapchat account. She also shared a selfie of the pair looking every inch a loved up couple at the show. Justin's thanks to Kanye comes just a few days after he mocked the rapper following his Staples Center gig on Sunday. The pop star grabbed the microphone at the 1 OAK nightclub in LA after another of his successful shows, but before giving the crowd some advice he joked: "I'm not gonna give like a 30-minute speech. I'm not Kanye West. I love Kanye. I only got a little bit to give though." He then said: "All I'm gonna say is let's have a good night, let's enjoy ourselves. Let's be ourselves. I think the thing the world struggles with most is just being ourselves. I think people hate on people that just are themselves."

Goulding wants to get back with Poynter

Ellie Goulding's relationship with Dougie Poynter is an "unfinished story". The 'Burn' hitmaker recently split from the McFly bassist after two years of dating but she is hoping they can get back together in the future because they have a "special" connection. Asked if they can work things out, she said: "Maybe. I hope so. We have something I know is special and I think other people see it - my friends see it, my family see it..." "But I think some things are just kind of unfinished, an unfinished story. I hope so - he's a real gem and he's doing so well and he's keeping busy, as am I. "I hope so, he's a great guy." And it wasn't just Ellie, 29, who was upset by the break-up. She told heat magazine: "My

nana was, like, really sad." While the blonde beauty is planning a break from music when her current tour ends later this year, she will still keep busy writing songs, though she doesn't know yet whether she'll be writing about her heartbreak. She said: "Everyone knows I write about things that have happened in my life, but it's too early to say. "It's very new and very different and I think people forget me breaking up with someone is no different to them breaking up with someone - it's not good. "But if I do write about him, it will probably be nice stuff."



Perry is calling Bloom her boyfriend

Orlando Bloom is "officially" Katy Perry's boyfriend. The 'E.T.' hitmaker - who was first romantically linked with the 'Lord of the Rings' star during this year's Golden Globes - has reportedly confided in pals that she and the British actor are in a relationship following a string of dates. A source close to the source said: "They seem to be getting serious and are an official couple. She calls him her boyfriend. "Katy likes how down to earth Orlando is." The couple were spotted kissing and cosying up whilst the

sun set during their holiday at the San Ysidro Ranch in Santa Barbara, California, on Sunday (20.03.16). Speaking exclusively to E! News a source said: "They looked very loved up and were paying more attention to each other than the view." The official title to their relationship comes as no surprise following recent news that Katy, 31, and 39-year-old Orlando - who has five-year-old son Flynn with ex-wife Miranda Kerr - have keys to one another's homes. A source said: "They've barely been apart for weeks, so

Orlando figured he should officially give Katy a key to his apartment so she can come over whenever. "She was thrilled and offered him one to her place on the other side of LA too. "They spend most nights at his place and practically live together but the holiday cemented things between them. Now she's happier than ever."



Baker Martha Rabello works on making coffee cookies in the kitchen of Fanwood Presbyterian Church in Fanwood, NJ. — AP photos

Effort to legalize home-baked goods stuck on cutting board

Grace DeStefano has been fighting for the past seven years for her right to sell a homemade cake. DeStefano is among a group of home bakers who have been battling since 2009 for New Jersey to catch up to almost every other state in having a cottage food law that would allow for them to join in a tradition that supporters say is as American as the apple pie they're not legally allowed to sell.

New Jersey and Wisconsin are the only two states that effectively ban the sale of home-baked goods. Opponents cite public health concerns and unfair competition against established businesses. "A lot of people that I talk to want a small business and don't want to have to go and buy a storefront and get a factory," said DeStefano, 46, of Bedminster Township. "We just want something where we can put our foot in the door, do something on the side to make some extra income. We don't see it as direct competition."

The measure has passed in New Jersey's lower house twice, but Senate health and human services Chairman Sen. Joe Vitale has refused to bring up the measure for a vote.

Vitale said that's unlikely to change anytime soon. He said that it's admirable that the home bakers want to "make some extra money and do the right thing, it's just there are public safety and public health concerns."

He also said it would be unfair to small mom-and-pop bake shops that now have to pay rent, insurance and employees. "They're concerned at some level of being undermined by these home-baked products," Vitale said. "If the cap is \$50,000, that's potentially \$50,000 or some portion that's out of the bottom line of a small baker."

Republican Sen. Christopher "Kip" Bateman, who introduced the measure, said that the businesses are working on such a small level and would be restricted in what they could sell - nothing that needs to be refrigerated, for instance - that he doesn't see them as competition. "New Jersey is expensive enough. To give people an opportunity to supplement their income or pay their taxes, why not do it?" Bateman said. "I'm sure it's being done. Why not legalize it?"

Martha Rabello, 36, of Cranford, rents out space at commercial kitchens. She said that a cottage food law would

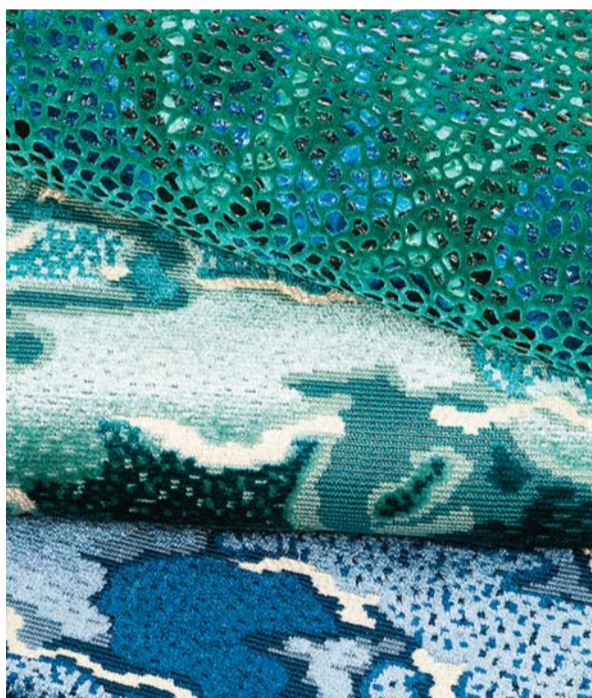
help people get started out without having to either spend \$15,000 or more to build a commercial kitchen or find a rental space, which she said costs about \$20 per hour.

"That's a big investment; you don't have that leeway to try things," Rabello said. "This is a business that has a high failure rate. If you invest all that money and what you decided (to make) doesn't sell, you lose a lot more than if you had the ability to start at home." The Institute for Justice filed a lawsuit against Wisconsin's rules in January and successfully fought restrictive cottage food laws in Minnesota. It recently has begun talking with the New Jersey group.

"All these home bakers want to be able to do is sell their goods at community events, farmers markets and directly to consumers," said Erica Smith, an attorney with the institute. "This is something that people have been doing in this country for hundreds of years. It's just an American tradition to sell to your neighbors." — AP



Baker Martha Rabello poses with coffee cookies she baked.



In this photo provided by Beacon Hill, the company's new Abstract Velvets collection plays with animal prints and floral motifs, in rich jeweled hues. — AP photos



In this photo provided by Boston Interiors, a comfortable chair upholstered in an Impressionist watercolor blue print hits all the style points for spring 2016.

'Spring cleaning' is a chance to update decor; some trends

For some people, spring cleaning entails not much more than a good shake of the carpets. For others, it's an excuse to update room decor. Here's a sampling of this season's new palettes, patterns and styles:

Colors

Neither boring nor drab, new neutrals are about bringing home a sense of calm and comfort. Some pastels are chalkier, like sorbet that's been given a whisk of cream. Then there are the organic hues of earth, sky and water. We see neutrals most often in minimalist decor, like an unglazed, branch-shaped pitcher at CB2 the color of a stormy sea, or Ikea's trim Mostorp media unit in a soft, rosy hue. Even Le Creuset is offering its signature cast ironware in pale pink and lemon.

Los Angeles designer Joy Cho's new collection at Target is filled with fun, frothy pieces like an acrylic side table covered in polka dots, animal figurines in little party hats, and printed throw pillows and wall art saying, "You're okay." Warm neutrals - peach, blush, putty, mint and charcoal - contribute to the airy, feel-good vibe.

West Elm has partnered with Roar + Rabbit design studio on a home collection that includes a sexy, midcentury-modern swivel chair dressed in shades called lichen, nickel or dusky blush velvet. The energy shifts with several bold hues that ride the current retro wave. Turquoise, acid yellow, emerald, pink and red are showing up, mostly in accessories and textiles.

Kirstin Hoffman, merchandising director for online decor retailer Dot & Bo, says hot pinks are trending: "Whether they're incorporated in an accent chair or a planter, the look instantly adds energy to a room." A range of new baking items and dish towels at Crate & Barrel come in a yellow as cheery as a sunny-side-up egg.

And you'll be seeing lots of lush, green, tropical motifs for spring and summer. Beautiful blues - sapphire, navy and a variety of turquoises, teals and pale blues - are strong players on the spring palette. Wisteria has a settee in a rich jewel tone, while Ikea's got new loveseat covers in deep and delicate blues. Boston Interiors' Conrad chair is upholstered in a watercolor-blue abstract, while Farrow & Ball has added some lush hues, including Vardo, a teal, and Inchyra Blue, a dramatic blue-gray.

White - which Benjamin Moore named color of the year - is also trending. The timing's perfect, says Kimberly Winthrop of Laurel & Wolf: "Bright white is spring cleaning in its truest sense. There'll be a lot of focus this year on incorporating whites with natural elements and textures into one's space." Consider painting an existing piece of furniture, bringing in side tables or lighting, or

changing window coverings to white.

On the surface

Surfaces are the focus in distressed rugs, textured throw pillows, and relief-patterned and pin-tucked textiles and wall coverings. Printed, dyed velvets with flora or fauna-inspired patterns are luxe and painterly; Kevin O'Brien and Beacon Hill have collections. Some furniture designs play with layers and lines. West Elm has a mirror named Tree Ring that fuses mirrored glass with a slice of Vietnamese hardwood. An Indian pouf at the retailer is crafted from chunks of jute and cotton like a 3-D rag rug.

Cork has popped up in lots of new decor. Accessories in particular lend themselves to the sustainable material's pleasant feel, but it's in furniture now, too. Ikea's new Sinnerli collection from London designer Ilse Crawford includes stools and benches with cork seats, as well as coffee and dining tables. Cork lampshades at AllModern and Luxe Decor throw a warm light. And check out 1stDibs, Chairish and eBay for '70s-era vintage cork table lamps.

Metallics aren't going away, says Chicago interior designer Mikel Welch. But warmer versions are overtaking the chillier chromes and silvers. "This spring, we'll begin to see a twist added," he says. "From warm, rich, metallic upholstery and galvanized wallpaper to shimmering coffee tables, luxurious metallic finishes in pewter, gold and bronze will command attention." Look for



This image provided by courtesy of Target, shows the Oh Joy acrylic table.

brushed copper, soft rose-gold accents, and painted metallics on throw pillows and wall art.

Mod and modern

On the heels of the midcentury revival, some retailers are banking on the 1980s Italian postmodernist style known as Memphis to be the next big thing. Characterized by bold geometric designs and often clashing colors, it's not for the faint of heart. Musician Lenny Kravitz has collaborated with CB2 on a furniture collection inspired by '70s-era New York club culture and the California music scene. A white lacquered media cabinet with brushed steel doors and a round, walnut-topped, white coffee table with concealed storage are standout pieces.

Neon-hued acrylic fits the era's vibe; Land of Nod has flamingo and palm-tree nightlights, while Los Angeles designer Alexandra von Furstenberg displayed a suite of sleek, neon acrylic serveware at the recent NY Now show. Crate & Barrel has launched ARTWORKS, a limited-edition collection of Modernist canvas prints.

Bo

Free-spirited, colorful and often pattern-happy, bohemian style is easy to embrace. Its influences are global: India, Africa, Latin America. But the eclecticism often comes from a mashup of decorative styles and layered elements. At NY Now, New York designer John Robshaw showed a collection of softly hued wood-block-printed textiles inspired by the gardens, crafts and clothing seen on his travels in Northern India. Hudson & Vine stocks a whimsical collection of animals crafted from reclaimed oil drums. Urban Outfitters has African mudcloth-printed bedding from Deny Designs; medallion-printed tapestries, rugs and pillow covers; and a selection of eclectic headboards made from macramé, reclaimed wood, rattan and iron. Homegoods has some carved and painted African objets d'art, trays and vases as well as kuba cloth poufs.

One of Hoffman's favorite trends this spring is a combination of boho and minimalism. Designs are pared down to core elements - color, pattern and texture. She suggests getting this eclectic style by using neutrals and accenting furniture with hints of deep indigo. — AP

Looted artefacts stashed by British art thief restored to Italy

Italian and Swiss police have recovered priceless archaeological artefacts stolen from Italy and stored by a notorious British antiquities dealer, the culture ministry said yesterday. The haul, worth nine million euros (\$10 million), was discovered in 2014 in a storage unit at the Geneva Freeport rented by Britain's disgraced Robin Symes, a giant in the illegal antiquities trade with ties to Italian tomb raiders. "Forty-five crates containing tens of thousands of archaeological relics of

extraordinary quality" were returned to Rome in January, said Italy's Culture Minister Dario Franceschini, as they were unveiled to the press for the first time.

The booty included Etruscan painted sarcophaguses representing human figures, a Roman sarcophagus, marble statues of animals and pieces of the floor and walls of a temple, all dating to between the 7th century BC and 2nd century AD. "They were stolen from digs in Sicily, Puglia, Campania and

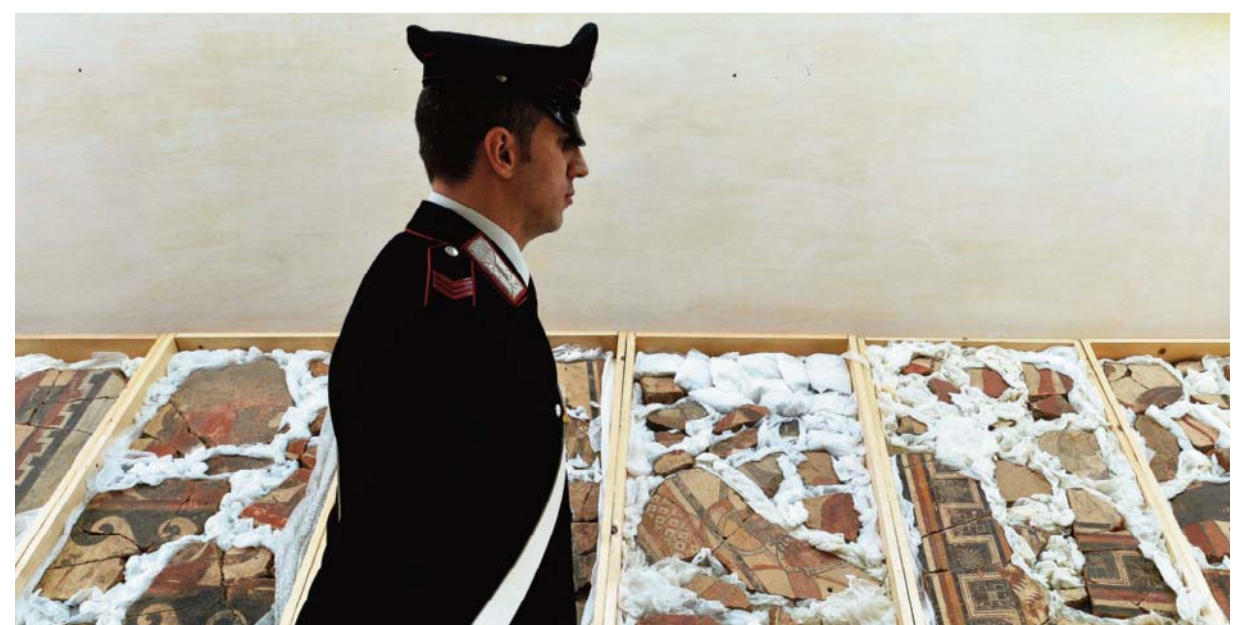
Calabria in the 1970s and 80s," said prosecutor Giancarlo Capaldo, adding that the loot had been smuggled into the Freeport decades ago, where it lay hidden.

Italian sleuths tracked the artefacts after seizing incriminating papers from an art smuggler, and they were discovered during a joint sting with Swiss police on Symes's storage unit. Capaldo said the plot had been to restore the statues, tiles and sarcophaguses and sell them on to clients in Japan,

Germany and other countries under false papers. "This is one of the most important recoveries of the last few decades," Franceschini said, adding that the antiquities would be restored and returned to the regions across southern Italy from which they were stolen. — AFP



A carabinieri stands next to recovered archaeological artifacts in Rome, yesterday. — AFP photos





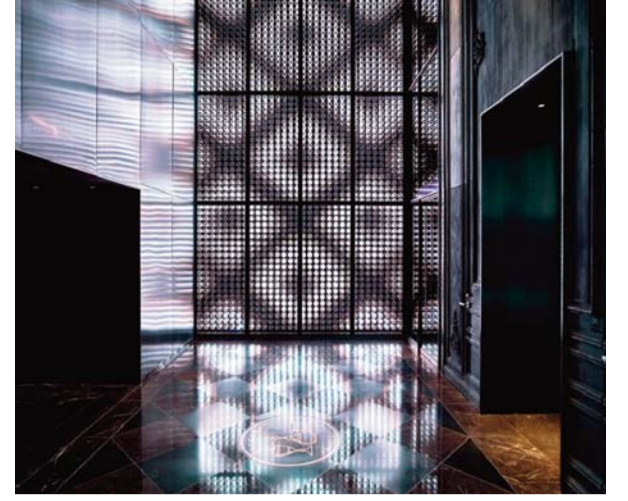
This undated image provided by Loews Hotels shows the Pop Art Suite at Loews Regency New York in Manhattan. — AP photos



This undated image provided by Loews Hotels shows a guest room at Loews Miami Beach Hotel in Miami Beach, Fla.



This undated photo provided by Baccarat Hotel & Residences New York shows the grand salon at the Baccarat Hotel & Residences in New York.



This undated photo provided by Baccarat Hotel & Residences New York shows the Harcourt Wall at the Baccarat Hotel & Residences in New York.

What hotels can teach us about home design

You know that feeling you get when you walk into a hotel room and you just want to fall on that big white bedspread with the fluffy pillows? Here are some tips from three hotel brands - Renaissance, Baccarat and Loews - on how to create that same serene and inviting atmosphere at home. Marriott opens the Renaissance NY Midtown hotel this spring in Manhattan. Its design concept involves creating moments of "surprise and delight" in public spaces like the lobby and dining areas, as well as in guest rooms. For example, open a closet door and inside you'll find bold graphics living up a space that's usually unadorned.

Toni Stoeckl, vice president of Marriott's Lifestyle Brands, offers these tips for a similar approach in home design:

1. Target all the senses, including "what you see, the music, the fragrance," said Stoeckl.
2. Pepper the environment with "moments to love," he said. But remember: "Less is more: If you have too much art, you can't pay attention to any one piece." Good interior design is "more about uncovering beauty and decluttering space."
3. Keep design elements "real and authentic. No fake flowers, no fake candles."
4. Change artwork periodically. "Have a few pieces of art that you rotate," said Stoeckl. Consider using the seasons as a scheduling guide for when to change displays.
5. Showcase objects and art that have layers of interest or meaningful stories. For example, a large, bright red work of abstract art near the hotel's front desk is comprised entirely of buttons, but you can't see the buttons until you get close. The button art was inspired by the hotel's neighborhood: It's in Manhattan's Garment District, and many of its design elements are connected to the apparel and fashion industries, from little ceramic sewing machine decorations in guest rooms, to quotes from famous designers placed on coffee tables in the club lounge. Another large artwork displaying a quote from Diane von Furstenberg - "Attitude is everything" - is made from tiny pushpins. "We want you to look at the space, but there is another layer, and we want you to look again," said Stoeckl.

Painting with light

Baccarat is not just a famous brand of French crystal. There's also the Baccarat Hotel & Residences New York, across from the Museum of Modern Art in Manhattan. Chandeliers, glassware



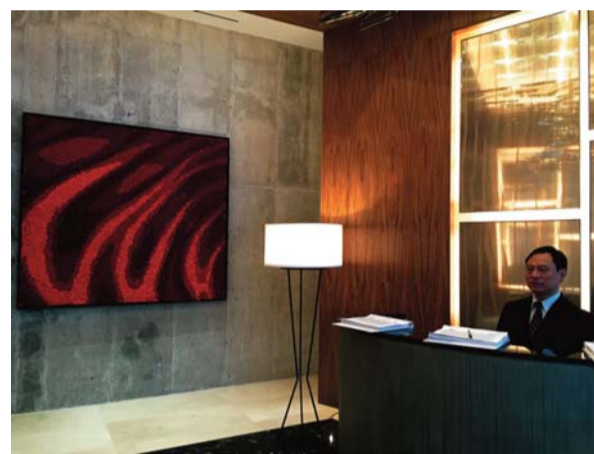
A close-up view of red buttons used to make an abstract work of art that hangs in a lobby area of the Renaissance Hotel in Manhattan.

and artwork made from Baccarat crystal are hallmarks of the hotel decor, but so is lighting. "The idea of illumination is one of the central reasons why we created the hotel," said Kemper Hyers, head of design for Starwood Capital Group, which created the hotel.

Yet lighting is sometimes overlooked in home design. Lighting your home isn't just about finding the perfect lamp, Hyers said. It's also about "painting with light. How do I bring this room to light?"

Some tips

1. Experiment with tape embedded with LED lights. It's inexpensive, easy to apply and remove, and widely available. The tape is not only handy for illuminating a shelf or dark corner, but it can also light a wall behind a piece of furniture or spotlight a work of art.
2. When you buy LED bulbs, "don't go any cooler than 2700 warm white," said Hyers, referring to the numerical scale used to measure bulb color. The higher the number, the whiter and cooler the light.
3. Bulb design improves every few months, so look for the latest options and "play with a mix of bulbs." You can even buy LED bulbs shaped like classic "Edison bulbs with the



An abstract work of art comprised entirely of red buttons hanging in a lobby area of the Renaissance Hotel in Manhattan.

long filament, perfectly done," Hyers said.

Clean and cozy

Loews Hotels launched a "Loews Knows" campaign in December offering short videos at with "hints and hacks" from housekeeping managers and other staff. Topics range from cleaning to entertaining to creating the right ambience.

Some tips

For "insanely fluffy bed pillows," toss pillows in a dryer with a tennis ball.

1. To dust "like a pro," use a microfiber cloth (avoid terry cloth). Spritz cleaning solution on the cloth (not on the surface you're dusting) and wipe in a circular motion from high to low.
2. To create a cozy ambience for a relaxing bath, light a candle, add essential oils and Epsom salts to the water, and provide accessories, both functional and decorative: sponges, stones, body wash and handmade soap. Place a drink and book tubside, with a fluffy robe and slippers.
3. To make a guest room welcoming, fold down covers, stand pillows up, put a bottle of water on one side and a glass of milk with cookies and sliced fruit on the other, close the



Photo shows a table in a public area at the Renaissance Hotel in Manhattan.

shades and leave one light on by the bed.

4. To remove crayon from walls, spray WD-40 and scrub vigorously with a rag or paper towel. To remove coffee stains from fabric, blot with light beer, club soda, white vinegar or baby wipes, then scrub with a toothbrush. To remove a red wine stain, soak a cloth in white wine and blot gently. A second round of "Loews Knows" tips is expected this spring. — AP



These photos provided by PPG show PPG Paints' 2016 color of the year, Paradise Found. Green is a trending color this spring as people respond to wellness trends and the need for calmness in a hectic world.

Right at home: Green's a go for spring decor

When we start thinking "spring," one color comes to mind. Tender pea shoots, that soft fuzziness on budding trees, a new lawn - there's a palette of greens that herald nature's shift to the warm seasons. And there are many fresh ways to bring green indoors with paint and furnishings. "Green is Mother Nature's favorite color. It's so abundant in the world around us that we're accustomed to seeing it as a background color," says Lee Eisman, head of the Eisman Center for Color Information and Training near Seattle.

She also points out the "good-for-you" connotations of green - eating fruits and vegetables, juicing and so on - and the generally calming nature of the hue. "We're looking for that restful shade to bring the outside in, and provide balance in our lives," she says. Dee Schlotter, the spokesperson for PPG Brands, design and color marketers and makers of PPG Paints, says, "Green is restorative, rejuvenating and fresh. Being in nature brings an ease or a relaxation that's almost immediate. Recreating that feeling in the home is very popular right now."

The company has chosen Paradise Found as their 2016 color of the year. It's a soothing gray-green with a hint of blue. Greens like this play well with others. Combining gray-green with matte black modernizes a traditional space. Paired with white, the color becomes more mineral and organic. Farrow & Ball has a new, leafy, verdant hue with historic provenance to help commemorate the paint maker's 70th anniversary.

Least risky

"Yeabridge Green was originally found in an 18th century Georgian farmhouse in the (United Kingdom) county of Somerset," creative director Charlie Cosby recalls. During renovation, an original gun cupboard was removed, revealing the paint color. Rich and earthy, it's a green in the family of avocado, olive and evergreen. Crate & Barrel's Marin collection of artisan-made stoneware comes in a relaxed yet sophisticated lemongrass shade. There's a soft wool rug named Baxter in the hue as well. If you're trying green for the first time, Eisman advises looking at the blue-greens. "They're the most

universally pleasant and least risky," she says. "Particularly teals and deep turquoise." West Elm has a little midcentury-style desk and wooden counter stools in a gentle blue-green they're calling "oregano."

CB2 has a sleek, low-profile dresser done in high-gloss mint lacquer. They also have a mint, powder-coated steel filing cabinet, and an array of minty trays, vases and napery. Saturated shades like chartreuse, citron and lime give a "pop" to walls and home accessories. At All Modern, find bold, zigzag-printed throws and slipper chairs from Amity Home, Deny Designs and Handy Living. Kitchenaid's mixers and tools come in a fresh apple green. Looking for other colors with which to pair green? "Reach across the color wheel and choose the complementary colors," Eisman says. "It's the rose tones, wines and warm purples that are very effective with shades of green." — AP





A screenshot shows digital graffiti made by visitors at the Giotto's bell tower of Santa Maria del Fiore cathedral and archived on the website 'Autography'.

Itching to graffiti? Do it digitally on Florence treasures

The days of scribbling "I was here" on Florence's historic monuments are gone: from now on would-be vandals will be able to graffiti via app instead, with their messages kept for posterity. "Welcome to Giotto's Campanile!" reads a message on a digital tablet for visitors scaling the Gothic white, green and pink marble tower by the famed Italian architect, which stands at one corner of the Cathedral in the Tuscan city. "We have been protecting masterpieces for centuries: starting from today we are going to remove graffiti from the Campanile's walls. But if you-virtually-leave us a message, we will preserve it: just like a masterpiece," it says.

The walls of the 14th-century bell tower, which is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, have been defiled down the ages by millions of messages left by people climbing the 400 steps to enjoy spectacular views of red-tiled rooftops. "Three months ago, when we began cleaning the walls, which had never been done before, we asked ourselves how we could avoid all the work going to waste in a short time," said Alice Filippini, social media manager for Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, a not-for-profit organization tasked with preserving many of Florence's monuments.

Architect Beatrice Agostini, who heads up the organization's restoration arm, said the bell tower "was in an incredibly degraded and dirty condition," with all elements-marble, stone, wood and brick-damaged by graffiti. Filippini said she had "an idea for an app which would allow the visitor to choose the surface (marble or wood for example), the colour and the instrument they want to use (felt pen, paintbrush, aerosol) to leave a virtual message or drawing".

'Pietro was here'

The application, which is named "Autography" and



Alice Filippini, from the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, writes a digital graffiti reading "Do not write on walls" on a tablet screen.

launched last week, is "a first," she told AFP, saying she hoped to sell it to other sites plagued by heritage hoodlums. Three digital tablets have been installed on the 1st, 3rd and 4th floors of the tower and the messages are stored online. Over 700 personalized scrawls were collected in the first week. Just like on the tower's walls, where statues of kings and sibyls once stood, the messages range from declarations of adoration, despair over unrequited love and appeals for peace, to the simple "Pietro was here".

They will be printed out each year and filed away in the Cathedral's archives, alongside historic documents such as the deed appointing Renaissance designer Brunelleschi to build the Duomo's dome, and the birth certificate of Lisa Gherardini, widely considered to have been the model for Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. "The idea was to raise awareness among

visitors about vandalism, but also give them the chance to leave behind a record, an everlasting sign of their passing through, without damaging the monument," the Opera said in a statement.

From smiley faces to hearts and doodled names, graffiti is the bane of restorers' lives and is laborious to remove. While the cleaning job on the tower's walls has managed to wipe off most of the pen or paint scribbles, words etched into the stone are still visible despite all efforts. Undeterred, conservators will turn their scrubbing brushes next year to the Cathedral's dome-the largest such structure in brick ever constructed-and install tablets with the Autography app there as well. — AFP



A picture shows the Santa Maria del Fiore cathedral in Florence. — AFP photos



A picture shows the Santa Maria del Fiore cathedral.

Florence toasts Guggenheim eye for 20th century masterpieces

From Kandinsky to Pollock, the extraordinary impact collectors Peggy and Solomon Guggenheim had on 20th century art is celebrated by an exhibition of over 100 masterpieces that opens in Florence on Saturday. Subtitled "The Art of the Guggenheim Collections", the exhibition, which will run in the Tuscan city's Palazzo Strozzi until July 24, explores how bohemian socialite Peggy, her uncle Solomon and the celebrated New York museum he established influenced European and American art from the 1920s to the 1960s.

Curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, it features paintings, sculptures, photographs and engravings borrowed from the Guggenheim museums in New York and Venice and a small number of other museums and private collections. "Peggy Guggenheim (1898-1979) did not just buy works, she bet on young artists and supported them thanks to an incredible artistic instinct and curiosity," Barbero said. "She was so sure of her own taste, she never compromised."

The fruit of those instincts was the acquisition of works by an extraordinary list of artists: Wassily Kandinsky, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst (to whom Peggy was married from 1941-46), Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock and Alexander Calder, to name just a selection. As a result, the Florence exhibition is

able to offer a rare opportunity to view some seminal works of pre-WWII modern art, including pieces by Max Ernst, Man Ray and Pablo Picasso, alongside illustrations of the divergent post-war trends on either side of the Atlantic.

It also tells the story of Peggy Guggenheim's arrival in Europe in 1921, her return to the United States during World War II and her decision to finally base herself and her collection in Venice from 1949. "Peggy wanted to understand the artistic effervescence of Europe at the time so she simply moved here," Barbero said. In the Paris of the roaring 20s she mixed with poets, writers, painters and sculptors, serving both as patron and as muse.

A Bacon in her bedroom

Important purchases during the inter-war period included Italian sculptor Giacometti's "Woman Walking" and Picasso's "The Dream and Lie of Franco." With the outbreak of war in 1939, Guggenheim was transformed from socialite collector to a mother figure desperately trying to protect her artists in the face of the Nazi threat. She was forced to flee Europe herself in 1941 and Pollock, who has 18 works in the exhibition, was one of the major beneficiaries of the time she spent back in the United States.

In 1943 she gave him a contract that enabled him to give up his work as a maintenance man and devote himself full-time to his art. The exhibition opens with works by Kandinsky, Duchamp and Ernst and then goes on to explore postwar developments on both sides of the Atlantic, contrasting the work of Europe's Informalist school including Alberto Burri and Lucio Fontana with the abstract expressionism of Pollock and Rothko and the later development of Pop Art led by Roy Lichtenstein.

Palazzo Strozzi has been chosen as the venue because it was here that Peggy first showed the collection that was later to find a permanent home in Venice, shortly after her return to Europe. Twenty-five works from that original exhibition are back in Florence for this one. Highlights include Kandinsky's "Dominant Curve" (1936), which Peggy owned but sold in what she later counted as one of the "seven tragedies in her life as a collector," and Francis Bacon's "Study for Chimpanzee" (1957). Rarely shown outside Venice, the collector was so fond of Bacon's work she generally had it hanging in her bedroom. — AFP



Visitors look at the painting 'Dominant curve' by Russian painter Vasily Kandinsky.



A visitor looks at the 'Enchanted forest' by US painter Jackson Pollock.



Visitors look at the 'Spatial concept, Hell' and 'Spatial concept, Paradise' by Italian painter Lucio Fontana during a press preview of the exhibition 'From Kandinsky to Pollock, the art of the Guggenheim collections', at the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence. — AFP photos



Visitors look at the painting 'Preparedness' by artist Roy Lichtenstein.



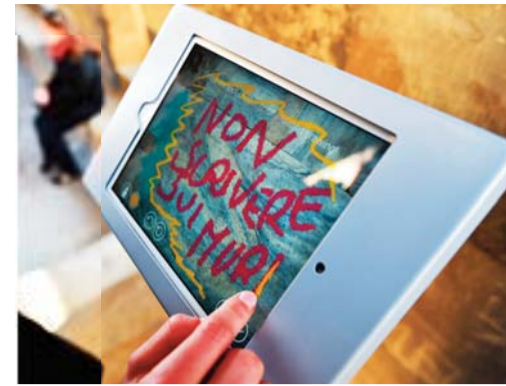
A woman visits the exhibition 'From Kandinsky to Pollock, the art of the Guggenheim collections'.

Lifestyle

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Visitors stand by an aquarium at the Scientific Center in Kuwait City. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Employees working outside the Saudi Cultural Center.



The Saudi film festival director Ahmed Al-Mulla (center) talks with his assistants in front of a screen at the Saudi Cultural Center in Dammam, some 400 km eastern of the capital Riyadh, two days before the opening of the film festival. — AFP photos



Employees working at the main hall of the Saudi Cultural Center in Dammam.

Mosque attack drama headlines modest Saudi Film Fest



The Saudi film festival director Ahmed Al-Mulla poses in front of a screen.

A drama about an attack on a mosque is headlining the third Saudi Film Festival, which opens Thursday amid hopes the conservative kingdom may finally allow public cinemas. The modest festival, which will feature 70 productions in competition, is a far cry from the glitz and glamour of Western counterparts. The austere version of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia bans cinemas and other entertainment venues. But organizers hope the event, which will see screenings take place at an arts and cultural center in the Gulf coast city of Dammam, will help develop the country's nascent film industry.

"We try to raise the standards, to make it better," festival director Ahmed Al-Mulla told AFP. The festival will culminate on Monday night with winners of the juried competition receiving its Golden Palm Tree awards. It is the second consecutive annual festival after the event resumed last year following an absence of seven years. Al-Mulla said this year's festival has more entries than in 2015, and of a higher quality. They will be shown on a bigger screen with an improved sound system.

Rakan Al-Harbi's four-minute drama "Their Stained Hearts" will be one of three short films shown to hundreds of guests expected at the red-carpet opening gala. The film tells the story of a museum for "terrorists" where a visitor engages in a conversation with the attacker of a mosque.

Saudi Arabia has suffered a series of shootings and bombings of mosques belonging to the country's Shiite minority which have killed some 40 people since late 2014. The Islamic State group claimed many of the attacks. Al-Mulla said the films in competition address a range of topics, from extremism and war to health, human rights and social issues. Some of the films provide a forum for the kingdom's youth who "raise their voice about how they are living," he said.

A 'thirst' for cinema

The festival, which could not have gone ahead without government endorsement, has helped raise hopes that official attitudes to cinema might be changing. Al-Mulla said. One indicator came in an agreement to allow seven short films from the 2015 festival to be shown on the final day of the Riyadh International Book Fair last weekend. Interest in filmmaking has continued to grow, with the 70 productions chosen for this year's festival coming from 112 entries in the drama, documentary and student categories.

Last year 66 productions were in competition from 104 entries. Many of the films will be shown for the first time and all the competitors are Saudi. Fifty-five scripts not yet in production will also be judged, up from 34 last time. Festival winners receive grants to help them pursue their

cinematic passions. Workshops on production, cinematography and acting, to be conducted in conjunction with the festival, were deluged with applicants.

"In six hours we had more than 600 registered," Al-Mulla said. The non-profit festival is organized by the kingdom's Society for Culture and Arts. While cinemas are banned, Saudis are voracious viewers of online videos and rank among the highest watchers of YouTube in the world. Saudi films have also been shown in major international festivals and in 2013 Haifaa Al-Mansour's "Wadjda" became the kingdom's first film to be listed as a candidate for a foreign-language Oscar. It told the story of a rebellious girl who dreams of owning a bicycle in a country where women's rights are severely restricted. Despite resistance from conservatives, the public has a "thirst" for cinema, as shown by the number of Saudis visiting theatres in neighboring Gulf countries, newspaper columnist Samar Al-Muqrin wrote recently. "We are eagerly waiting for the day when people in the kingdom would be able to go to the cinema," she said in a January column, saying she believed "it would not take long" for a decision to be made. — AFP



This image released by Sam Rudy Media Relations shows puppeteer Veronica J Kuehn, left, with Lucy from the 'Avenue Q' production.

World Puppetry Day kicks off from Times Square to Iowa

Times Square will get even more crowded- and filled with even more fuzzy creatures - for World Puppetry Day, part of a national celebration for those who give life to animated objects. Professional and amateur puppeteers and their puppets are invited for the celebration, joined by puppets from other Broadway and Off-Broadway shows past and present, including the profane monsters from "Avenue Q." A huge photo will be taken to mark the event.

Puppet parties are scheduled across the country, including at the Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta, a 12-hour puppet building party in Seattle and a performance of "Peter and the Wolf" in West Liberty, Iowa. World Puppetry Day was first celebrated in 2003 and was begun by Iranian puppeteer Javad Zolfaghari. — AP



David Bizzaro and his puppet Bayr meet a worm puppet during a gathering of puppeteers in Times Square in New York, yesterday. — AP photos