

Expat oil workers strike over unpaid salaries



Emotional return as first US cruise reaches Cuba



Egypt killings deepen mystery over death of Italian student



Leicester striker Vardy gets top award



FREEDOMS MAKE AUSTERITY CAMPAIGN TRICKY FOR GOVT

PARLIAMENT, PUBLIC STAUNCHLY AGAINST WELFARE CUTS



Min 21°
Max 41°
High Tide 07:55 & 19:44
Low Tide 00:52 & 13:46

CHAMPIONS LEICESTER TURN TABLES ON ELITE

LONDON: Leicester City's against-the-odds Premier League title success is a story of belief, dogged graft and inspirational leadership prevailing against the money-inflated complacency of England's leading clubs. Exploiting the frailties of the presumed title favorites, the 5,000-1 outsiders surged to the summit and then held their nerve over four long, giddy months to complete one of the most improbable upsets in sporting history. In the words of the club's genial Italian manager Claudio Ranieri, it was a triumph of "players who were considered too small or too slow for other big clubs". "It gives hope to all the young players out there who have

SEE PAGE 20

been told they are not good enough," Ranieri said. Kasper Schmeichel left Manchester City aged 22 and spent five seasons rattling around in the second and third tiers before Leicester enabled him to emulate his father, the Manchester United great Peter, by keeping goal in a title-winning side.

Right-back Danny Simpson and central midfielder Danny Drinkwater were released by Manchester United, but both have been Leicester mainstays this season, the latter earning a first England cap in March. German centre-back Robert Huth spent four years as a bit-part player at Chelsea.

Continued on Page 13



LEICESTER: Leicester City fans celebrate their team becoming the English Premier League champions in central Leicester in eastern England yesterday after Chelsea held Tottenham Hotspur to a 2-2 draw. — AFP

KUWAIT: A three-day strike by oil workers in Kuwait last month over pay reforms shows the government faces considerable opposition as it prepares to push through painful and controversial cuts to longstanding welfare benefits. Oil-exporting states around the Gulf are reducing subsidies for fuel, public utilities and food, and freezing or slowing the growth of public sector wages, as they try to curb big budget deficits caused by low oil prices.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain have all taken such steps in the past six months. But Kuwait has been slower to act; reforms were still being discussed in parliament last week and no timetable has been set. In mid-March, Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh said the cabinet had approved in principle a "re-pricing" of some commodities and public services, but he gave no details and did not mention a date for the changes. One reason for the delay is that Kuwait has more of a history of industrial action than the rest of the Gulf, where unions are banned or tightly controlled.

In recent years, brief work stoppages over pay and conditions have also hit Kuwait's national airline and the customs administration. More broadly, Kuwait's political environment is freer - in contrast to the other wealthy Gulf states, members of its rambunctious parliament routinely criticize government policy, and citizens are not shy about complaining on social media.

In 2012, thousands of Kuwaitis demonstrated repeatedly against a new electoral law which they said disadvantaged the opposition. Such protests are almost unheard of in the other Gulf states. The result is that Kuwait's government is having a harder time imposing austerity policies than its counterparts, and the extent of those policies is still uncertain.

Continued on Page 13

News

in Brief

New e-passport system to be launched by Sept



Sheikh Mazen

KUWAIT: A new electronic passport system is expected to be launched in mid-September, Ministry of Interior (MoI) Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passport Affairs Gen Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah announced yesterday. In a speech at the 31st meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Director Generals of Passport

Authorities, which runs until tomorrow, Sheikh Mazen said that the new system would take precedence over all other issues to be discussed at the meeting. Director General of Public Relations and Security Information at the MoI Adel Al-Hashash revealed that the new electronic passport system will contain the passport holder's complete details, making any form of forgery unfeasible.

GCC may apply VAT law in 2018-2019

KUWAIT: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states are most likely to apply the value-added tax law between 2018 and 2019, an accounting expert said yesterday. Kuwait, for example, issued a ministerial decree in 2015 obliging financial companies and institutions to comply with the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) which enforces Americans including those living outside the US to file yearly reports on their non-US financial accounts to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FINCEN), Sharif Shawqi, a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers/Al-Shatti Co told a VAT conference. Banks, financial institutions and investment firms which are subject to FATCA are required to file their reports in the current quarter, or the second quarter at most, he said.

Saudi women get copy of marriage contracts

RIYADH: Saudi women tying the knot will now get a copy of their marriage contracts, a privilege that has been exclusive to men in the ultra-conservative kingdom, justice ministry said yesterday. According to a directorate issued by Justice Minister Walid Al-Samaani, clerics who register marriage contracts in the Muslim kingdom will now have to hand a copy to the bride "to ensure her awareness of her rights and the terms of the contract". The decision aims to "protect the rights of the woman and facilitate procedures for her," the ministry said in a statement carried by SPA state news agency. It said the decision took into consideration that a woman would need a copy of her marriage contract in case of a dispute with her husband and in court. Women need the permission of their male guardians to get married in Saudi Arabia, which applies a strict interpretation of Islam. They also need that permission to travel and work, in a country where they are not allowed to drive and have to cover from head to toe when in public.

BINLADIN GROUP LAYS OFF 77,000 WORKERS

IRAN CRITICIZES US PRESENCE IN GULF

TEHRAN: Iran's Supreme Leader criticized the US presence in the Arabian Gulf region yesterday, saying American forces should go back to the Bay of Pigs, state media reported. Ayatollah



TEHRAN: Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei addresses a group of teachers yesterday. — AP

Ali Khamenei told a group of teachers yesterday that American military drills in the region were proof of US arrogance. "They sit together, scheme and

say that Iran must not hold war games in the...Gulf. What a foolish remark! They come here from the other side of the globe and stage war games. What are you doing here? Go back to the Bay of Pigs. Go and hold exercises there. What are you doing in the...Gulf? The...Gulf is our home," said Khamenei. State TV broadcast part of his speech. His remarks were an apparent reference to the 1961 failed invasion of Cuba by 1,500 CIA-trained exiles. Muslims also view pigs as unclean animals as the Holy Quran prohibits followers of Islam from eating pork.

Khamenei also urged education officials to add other languages to their foreign language programs, saying limiting the curricula to English was a mistake. "The language of science is not English alone. Insisting on promotion of English alone is unhealthy," said Khamenei. "Other languages like Spanish, French, German and Eastern languages are the languages of science, too."

Continued on Page 13

RIYADH: One of Saudi Arabia's most powerful firms, the Saudi Binladin Group, has laid off 77,000 foreign workers and plans to cut thousands of jobs held by Saudi nationals, a Saudi daily reported yesterday, citing an anonymous company official. Saudi Binladin Group confirmed to AFP that some staff have been let go, but gave no numbers. The unnamed company official cited by Al-Watan said that as of Sunday, 77,000 Binladin Group workers had received exit visas. He added that they were among 200,000 expatriates employed by the company, one of the largest builders in the world.

In addition, 12,000 out of the 17,000 Saudis working for the firm as engineers, administrators and inspectors were expected to be let go, the source said. While Saudi construction companies regularly cut or expand their foreign staff in response to changing demand in the industry, they rarely lay off large numbers of Saudis, partly because it is legally difficult and expensive.

The report in the Al-Watan newspaper is the latest alleging tens of thousands of layoffs, unpaid salaries and unrest by employees of the firm which built some of the Gulf country's landmarks. Sources in March told AFP that delayed receipts from the government, whose oil revenues collapsed over the past two years, have left employees of the kingdom's

construction giants struggling to survive while they await their salaries. However, Saudi Binladin Group was also sanctioned by the government after a deadly crane accident in Makkah last September. "The size of our workforce is always appropriate to the nature and size of projects and the timeframe they are to be carried out by the group," Yaseen Alattas, a Saudi Binladin Group spokesman, told AFP.



He said workforce changes would be normal "especially when some projects have ended or are about to end". Most of the jobs eliminated "are on specified term contracts" for particular projects, Alattas said in an email. "We understand that the reduction of the workforce isn't easy on everyone. But the Group will continue to implement its obligations towards everyone including the employees it has let go of. They have received their full dues" under the law, said Alattas.

Continued on Page 13

SCIENTISTS DISCOVER 'HABITABLE' PLANETS

PARIS: An international team of scientists said yesterday they had discovered a trio of Earth-like planets that are the best bet so far for finding life outside our solar system. The three orbit an ultracool dwarf star a mere 39 light years away, and are likely comparable in size and temperature to Earth and Venus, they reported in a study, published in Nature. "This is the first opportunity to find chemical traces of life outside our solar system," said lead author Michael Gillon, an astrophysicist at the University of Liege in Belgium.

All three planets had the "winning combination" of being similar in size to Earth, "potentially habitable" and close enough so their atmospheres can be analyzed with current technology, he told AFP. The find opens up a whole new "hunting ground" for habitable planets, he added. Gillon and colleagues calibrated a 60-centimetre (23.5-inch) telescope in Chile, known as TRAPPIST, to track several dozen dwarf stars neither big nor hot enough to be visible with optical telescopes.

They zeroed in on a particularly promising one - now known as TRAPPIST-1 - about one eighth the size of the Sun, and significantly cooler. Observing it for months, the astronomers noticed that its infrared signal faded slightly at regular intervals, evidence of objects in orbit. Further analysis confirmed they were

Continued on Page 13



The artist's impression shows an imagined view from the surface one of the three planets orbiting an ultracool dwarf star just 40 light-years from earth that were discovered using the TRAPPIST telescope at ESO's La Silla Observatory. — AP

AUSTRALIAN CRAIG WRIGHT SAYS HE CREATED BITCOIN

LONDON: Australian entrepreneur Craig Wright yesterday identified himself as the creator of Bitcoin following years of speculation about who invented the pioneering digital currency. Wright was named by three media outlets - the BBC, The Economist and GQ magazine - and posted a blog on his website.



Craig Wright

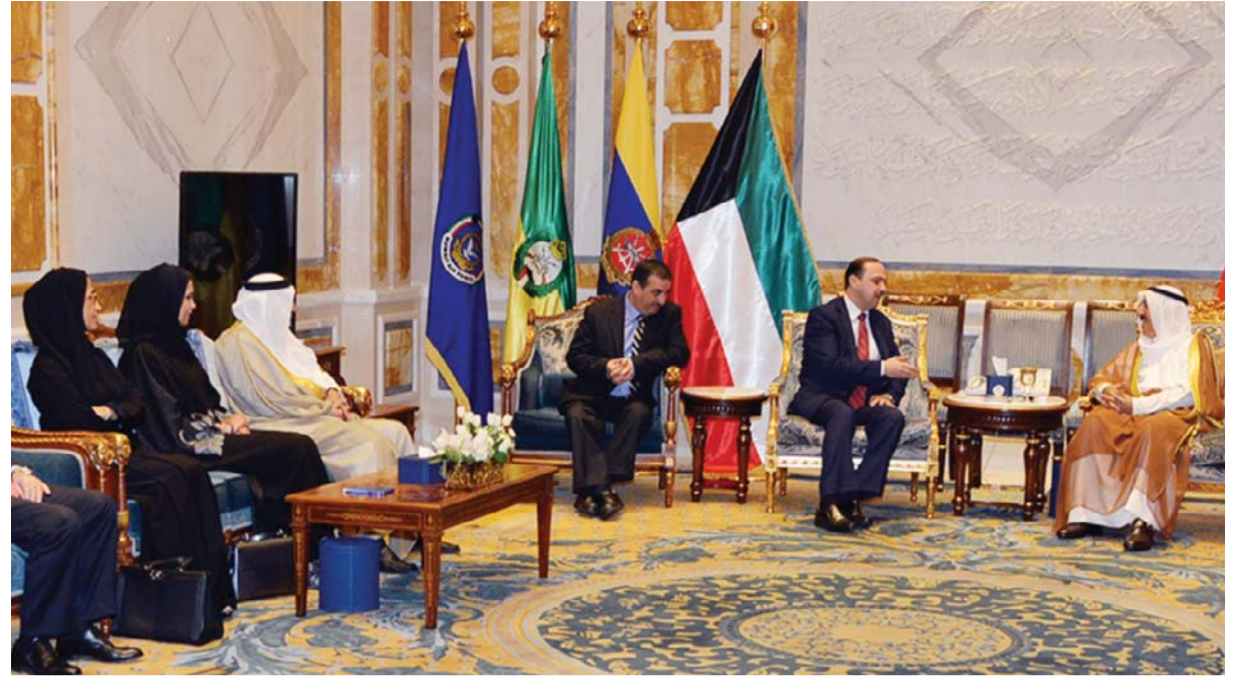
However, in a defiant interview with the BBC, the 45-year-old insisted that he would have preferred his identity to remain secret, adding he was not seeking cash or honors. "I don't want money, I don't want fame, I don't want adoration, I just want to be left alone," Wright told the British broadcaster. If anyone puts me up for awards or anything like that, I will never, ever accept a cent. Ever."

He added that he had not taken the decision to identify himself, saying: "I had people decide this matter for me." Some raised questions about his claim, suggesting more work should be done to verify it.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Armenia's Justice Minister Arpine Hovhannisyian.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with members of the 13th edition of the Arab Media Forum. — Amiri Diwan photos

AMIR RECEIVES ARMENIAN JUSTICE MINISTER, OFFICIALS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday the visiting Armenia's Justice Minister Arpine Hovhannisyian and her accompanying delegation. Minister of Justice, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane and Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah attended the meeting. The visiting Armenian minister also met separately with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad

Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, accompanied by members of the 13th edition of the Arab Media Forum which kicked off Sunday in Kuwait.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Amir received President of the Supreme Judicial Council, President of the Constitutional Court and Head of the Cassation Court Justice

Yousef Jaseem Al-Mutawa'a. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Chief of the National Security Bureau (NSB) Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. In the meantime, His Highness the Prime Minister received Chairperson and members of Kuwait Airways' board of directors, along with the Chairman and members of Kuwait Trade Union Federation's (KTUF) board of directors. His Highness the Prime Minister also received Chairman and members of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (KCCI) board of directors. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with President of the Supreme Judicial Council, President of the Constitutional Court and Head of the Cassation Court Justice Yousef Jaseem Al-Mutawa'a.



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Albania's new Ambassador to Kuwait.

FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS OFFICIALS, AMBASSADOR

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Sudan's Minister of International Cooperation Dr Kamal el-Din Hassan Ali yesterday, in a meeting that reviewed exceptional ties between Kuwait and the Northeastern African nation.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's office affairs Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant

Foreign Minister for Arab Affairs Ambassador Aziz Al-Daihani, Khartoum's Ambassador to Kuwait Mohi el-deen Salem Ahmad Ibrahim, along with senior foreign ministry officials. Meanwhile, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met with Albania's new Ambassador to Kuwait, wishing the ambassador success as he starts his tenure. The meeting was attended by Jarallah, Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocols Ambassador Dhari Al-Ajran and senior foreign ministry officials. — KUNA



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Sudan's Minister of International Cooperation Dr. Kamal el-Din Hassan Ali. — KUNA

AUSTRALIA GOVERNOR-GENERAL LEAVES KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Australian Governor-General Peter Cosgrove left Kuwait yesterday, concluding a four-day visit in which he held official talks with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Cosgrove was seen off at the airport by His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime

Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. He was also seen off by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Oil Anas Al-Saleh,

as well as a number of senior state officials.

Prior to his departure, Australia's Governor-General and his spouse visited Al-Qurain Martyrs Museum and toured through its various sections. He also visited the Australian College of Kuwait in West Mishref. Furthermore, he met in Bayan Palace with CEO of the Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC) Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Naser Al-Sabah. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sees off Australian Governor-General Peter Cosgrove at the Amiri Terminal yesterday.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah bids farewell to Australian Governor-General Peter Cosgrove. — Amiri Diwan photos



Australian Governor-General Peter Cosgrove tours the Al-Qurain Martyrs Museum prior to his departure from Kuwait yesterday.



Australian Governor-General Peter Cosgrove is seen during his visit to the Al-Qurain Martyrs Museum.



KUWAIT: Christian Nakhle, French Ambassador to Kuwait (center) attends a press conference at Campus France Kuwait in Jabriya yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

FRENCH ENVOY WOOS KUWAITI STUDENTS

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Although France has over 300,000 international students, very few of them are from Kuwait, rued Christian Nakhle, French Ambassador to Kuwait. He was speaking at a press conference yesterday at Campus France Kuwait in Jabriya, inviting more Kuwaitis to consider education opportunities available to international students. "Studying in France is a huge step academically - we have excellent universities and colleges recognized by countries throughout the world. France is very attractive for both the quality of its teaching and facilities," he said. "There is no discrimination in France. Both French and international students pay the same fees and they have social security. France

believes that education should be for everyone," he added. In 2016, significant efforts have been made by French Embassy in Kuwait as 30 Kuwaiti students from Kuwait University obtained conditional admission in various French universities depending on their command of French. "If you want to pursue higher education, please consider France. In 2015, we issued 57 student visas to Kuwaiti students. We want the number to double or even more. If you want to learn English, learn it in a French-speaking environment; you will not only learn English but also you'll master the French language," Nakhle said. In France, 42 percent of international students are working on their PhDs. "It means a lot to us, because the number shows how international students trust us on the doctorate level," he said.

Francoise Fradal, Embassy Attache for University and Scientific Cooperation, said Paris has been recognized as the best city in the world for students, while nine out of ten students recommend France as the best place for students. Campus France Agency, which is operated under the supervision and support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Higher Education and Research, relies on its global network of some 200 Campus France offices in 115 countries. The French Embassy in Kuwait though Campus France Kuwait also assists Kuwaiti students to compete application forms, find suitable housing and apply for visas. In March last year, Campus France opened its digital platform 'France Alumni', enabling students to keep in touch with each other.



Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah attends the meeting.



KUWAIT: IICO Chairman Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq speaks during the donors' meeting. — KUNA

IICO URGES WORLD TO FIND SOLUTION TO SYRIAN CRISIS

KUWAIT: International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) Chairman and UN Secretary-General's Humanitarian Envoy Dr Abdullah Al-Maatouq said yesterday the international community should seek to find genuine political solutions to the Syrian crisis.

In a keynote speech at a meeting of major donors for supporting Syrian people, Maatouq, who is also Advisor at the Amir Diwan, said humanitarian efforts could not be deemed an alternative to political ones. Calling for a fast-track political settlement to the over-five-year crisis in Syria, Maatouq emphasized that all legal means should be used to stop uncontrollable bloodshed in this Arab country. He also called for protecting civilians, ensuring relief aid access to thousands of besieged people, noting that there are 13.5 million homeless people in Syria and 9.8 million Syrians are locked in sharp food shortage. He regretted that around 60 percent of public hospitals and clinics are not fully operating while roughly 11 million people are in dire need of medical help.

Maatouq pointed out that nearly 25 percent of Syrian schools are out of service as at least 5,000 schools have been either destroyed or used as shelters, lamenting that the dossier of basic services poses a major challenge owing to deliberately planned attacks on infrastructure utilities.

Aleppo bombardment

The IICO chief deplored recent barrel bomb attacks by governmental forces on hospitals, marketplaces and houses in Aleppo. However, he vowed that his organization, together with other humanitarian agencies, would never give up calls for putting an end to the tragic humanitarian situation in Syria, including killing, displacement and bombing, estimating that over 300,000 people have been killed since the outbreak of the crisis. On the donors meeting, he said it mainly aimed at looking into the humanitarian situation in Syria and putting humanitarian response plans in place in an effective and immediate manner. The meeting is held under the aegis of First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Filippo Grandi and UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Partnerships with the Middle East and Central Asia Rashid Khalikov.

Critical point

Meanwhile, Jarallah said that the Syrian

major donor's conference Kuwait is hosting on Monday comes amid critical conditions and accelerating developments worldwide. He added that the world is experiencing unprecedented humanitarian disasters in terms of long time span and numbers of victims, which aggravated challenges and made international cooperation inevitable to seek solutions as well as preventive measures to avoid future happenings.

Over the past five years, the world has witnessed back-to-back conflicts and civil wars that drove up to 60 million people out of their homes, or countries, Jarallah said. Unfortunately, the Middle East has had the lion's share of extremism and terrorism that emerged over the past years, and the Syrian people were the most harmed, as their humanitarian crisis entered the sixth year.

The Syrian conflict has killed 260,000 people and created five million refugees and 13.5 million in desperate need for humanitarian aid inside Syria, the Deputy Foreign Minister said. The repercussions of the conflict have come to hit Europe, posing a threat to international security and stability, he added.

Ethical responsibility

Jarallah noted that he is following up with "deep worry" developments in the aftermath of the Syrian regime's brutal attacks that recently hit Aleppo and targeted schools and hospitals, killing and injuring hundreds of innocent people, among them women and children. This latest events have doubled the ethical and humanitarian responsibility on the international community to end the bloody conflict that has been destroying all aspects of life in the country, as all parties do not hesitate to use all types of weapons, even internationally prohibited, against the unarmed civilians, he said.

Kuwait has generously responded to the implications of the Syrian humanitarian disaster and hosted the First, Second and Third International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria Donors over the past three years, at the behest of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Donations announced during the three events hit \$7 billion, which helped pave the way for long-term international humanitarian support to the Syrian people. Kuwait has also taken part in the first conference on Syria in London last February. Kuwait's contributions in the four events hit \$1.6 billion. — KUNA

MEDIA KEY TO PEOPLE'S LIVES: INFO MINISTER

KUWAIT: The Arab Media Forum is a venue to discuss how media were affecting people's lives, Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah said Sunday. Kuwait's media strategy aimed at addressing citizens' issues and allowing nationals to express themselves in a manner that highlight their identity, citizenship, tolerance and unity, said Sheikh Salman, also Minister of State for Youth.



KUWAIT: Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah speaks during the Arab Media Forum on Sunday. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Sheikh Salman, representing His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, who was sponsoring the forum, warned against dangers facing "our youth and their nation by spreading the culture of violence and extremism." He called on Arab countries to join hands to address these dangers, urging participants in the forum to explore ideas that would promote media action against extremism.

Jordanian Information Minister Dr Mohammad Al-Moumni said the forum was an excellent venue to highlight Jordan's media experience. He said the Arab countries should confront the media which aimed at undermining security and stability of people and communities.

Moumni said every Arab country should have a group of specialists to determine what kind of messages the media should convey. Moumni, shedding light on media laws in Jordan, said his country was the first Arab country that gave the journalist the right to get information from all officials

regardless of their ranks. He said media means have a great role to play against terrorists and extremists. Jordan, he added, was highlighting the true image of Islam which was open to civilizations and cultures. He meanwhile said Kuwait and Jordan were coordinating over a host of political issues including the importance of strengthening security and stability of the region. Kuwait and Jordan, said Moumni, shared the views over the peace process in the Middle East, ending the Israeli-Arab conflict and condemning Israeli measures in Al-Aqsa Mosque. The two countries are bound by over 25 cooperation agreements and protocols, he said, and thanked Kuwait for its contributions to development in Jordan, and assistance to the Syrian refugees. Secretary General of the Arab Media Forum Madhi Al-Khamees said media were seeking unity of people rather than disunity. — KUNA

IRANIAN EMBASSY DENIES INTERFERING IN TALKS

KUWAIT: The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Kuwait strongly denied reports claiming that it interfered in the Yemeni peace talks currently taking place in Kuwait. Accordingly, the embassy issued the following statement to the local press:

"The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Kuwait categorically denies a news report published by Al-Watan news website on April 30, 2016, claiming that the embassy sent a special delegation to assist those that the website describes as the 'pro-cooperation' taking part in the Yemeni peace talks in progress. The embassy denies the report's claims that a number of Iranian advisors are present close to where these talks are taking place, considering this as mere media fabrication originating in the aforementioned reporter's imagination. The embassy emphasizes the necessity to scrutinize news before publishing them because what the website mentioned are mere old forgotten allegations."

PRIME MINISTER STARTS ASIAN TRIP TODAY

VISIT INCLUDES BANGLADESH, JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, VIETNAM

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah is set to travel today to Bangladesh, the first leg on an Asian tour that will also take him to Japan, South Korea and Vietnam. Kuwait and these four Asian nations maintain close ties in all fields thanks to the frequent visit exchanges on all levels. In its quest for sustainable economic development, the State of Kuwait seeks to benefit from the successful experiences of highly developed economies in Southeast Asia.

The agenda of His Highness the Prime Minister's official visit to Bangladesh includes political, economic, investment and educational issues. The bilateral relations, based on reciprocity and mutual support, have grown steadily since the two countries established diplomatic ties in early 1970s.

Bangladesh stood by Kuwait during the latter's liberation war from the Iraqi invasion in 1991 and contributed a military unit to the international campaign Operation Desert Shield. In May, 1991, then prime minister of Bangladesh Khaleda Zia paid an official visit to Kuwait to show solidarity with the country following its liberation.

Bangladesh also contributed peace-keeping forces to the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) deployed along the borderlines between the two countries after the war. The defense cooperation between Kuwait and Bangladesh also made great strides after the two countries signed several deals in this field. A considerable number of Bangladeshi troops work for the Kuwaiti army in several logistic and other domains.

Economic cooperation

Similarly, the economic and commercial cooperation gained momentum based on the complementary resources of both economies and the shared desire to tap into the potentials of investment and trade relations. In 1995 the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) of Bangladesh held its first trade fair in Kuwait which gathered 15 Bangladeshi companies.

In 2011 the two countries signed a trade agreement which replaced the agreement of 1979. The bilateral trade volume grew from just \$25 million before the Iraqi invasion of

Kuwait to nearly \$520 million in 2010, tilting generally in favor of Kuwait. While Bangladesh's exports of tea, vegetables, fruits, fish, clothes and leather were estimated at \$5.8 million in 2010, its oil imports from Kuwait hit \$513.6 million.



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

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) plays a growing role in financing the development projects in Bangladesh and other friendly countries; it has signed recently an agreement to offer a \$15 million loan for the Bangladeshi government to fund the Sikalbaha Gas Power Plant in the southeast coastal region of Chittagong which has a design capacity of 225 megawatts. In 2012 KFAED and Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, signed a loan agreement worth \$14 million for financing the Lebukhali Bridge.

Regarding the cultural ties, the ministries of Awqaf and Islamic of both countries signed MoU to exchange experience. In 2015 Kuwait House of National Works inked a deal with the Bangladeshi government to organize joint exhibitions in both countries.

Special importance

Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bangladesh Adel Mohammad Hayat commented on His Highness the Prime Minister's visit to Bangladesh, saying that it is of special importance, thanks to the deep-rooted ties

between the two nations.

He added that this visit comes upon an official invitation from the Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wazed. The two top officials will tackle during the visit issues of common interest and means of boosting bilateral cooperation in various fields, he added.

His Highness the Prime Minister will also be meeting Bangladeshi President Mohammad Abdul Hamid, and Prime Minister Wazed. Both sides will sign a number of cooperation agreements, he said. He will also visit the National Martyrs' Memorial in Savar and Museum of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, he said.

Bangladeshi-Kuwaiti relations witnessed remarkable developments since the establishment of Bangladesh in 1971 as Kuwait was one of the first nations which recognized the new state, he mentioned.

Remarkable position

Bangladesh has a remarkable position in condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait back in 1990, and its national forces took part along with the international coalition to liberate Kuwait, he said. Bangladesh also has a firm stance in voting in favor of all the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions supporting Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion, when it had a membership in the Security Council in 2001-2002, he added. The Bangladeshi soldiers also participated in the demining operations following Kuwait's Liberation, he said.

Kuwait is a distinguished trade partner with Bangladesh as the latter imports large quantities of Kuwaiti oil, while a total of 200,000 Bangladeshis work in Kuwait, besides 4,000 Bangladeshi personnel work in the Kuwaiti Army as a back-up force.

Kuwait contributes to the development of Bangladesh and construction of the state's infrastructure through the loans offered by Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED). One the other hand, Kuwaiti Joint Relief Committee (KJRC), and social and technological support institution are offering relief and humanitarian aid to poor people in Bangladesh, besides constructing mosques, schools, and orphanages.—KUNA



KUWAIT: UNHCR chief Filippo Grandi (left) and KFAED Director General Abdelwahad Al-Bader attend a press conference to announce signing a memorandum of understanding between the two sides. — KUNA

UNHCR LAUDS AMIR'S HUMANITARIAN ROLE

UNHCR, KFAED SIGN LANDMARK AGREEMENT

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) yesterday. The landmark cooperation between the two agencies was signed between UNHCR chief Filippo Grandi and KFAED Director General Abdelwahad Al-Bader, which took place at Kuwait's UN Headquarters in Mishref.

The framework agreement, according to Grandi, was a 'new and additional page' in the chapter of already growing cooperation between Kuwait and the UNHCR. "This framework agreement was promoted by HH the Amir of Kuwait and by his government and within the agreement we are sure that we are going to start important projects together," he said.

Strategic partnership

Grandi said he chose Kuwait as the first country to visit as new UNHCR chief among other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states to show the importance of their strategic partnership, especially as Kuwait is known as a leader in humanitarian issues as

well as the strategic partnership between UN agencies, particularly the refugee agency, and Kuwait. "I wanted to use this opportunity to personally thank HH the Amir for his commitment as a global humanitarian leader. Through him and to the government and people of Kuwait, and the support given by Kuwait, especially over the last years wherein serious problems of refugees were witnessed by everyone, the role of Kuwait has been exemplary," he said.

Grandi noted the support of Kuwait is especially important nowadays because the numbers of refugees are alarmingly growing. "Refugees and displaced people are growing rapidly. Right now we have over 70 million people being dealt with. Unless a political solution is found, especially in conflict areas, refugee numbers will grow further. What we see in Syria as we speak is very dangerous," he said. "The world is talking about refugees with fear now. But we will have more if we do not find a solution by the soonest," he said, referring to a spike in violence in Syria in the past few days. He also thanked the Amir for hosting three international humanitarian pledging conferences for Syria, noting that he will attend a conference in Kuwait today to discuss the commitment of the donors to the aid

pledges made in the fourth "Supporting Syria and the Region" conference in London in February this year.

Yemeni talks

He also spoke highly of Kuwait for hosting the intra-Yemeni peace talks, adding that UNHCR's aid workers are trying desperately to reach the millions of Yemenis trapped in the conflict but to no avail due to the raging fighting. Grandi added that, besides the Syrian and Yemeni crises, he discussed with Kuwaiti leaders the suffering of internally-displaced people in Iraq, which is exacerbating under the prolonged political conflict.

Meanwhile, Bader said the document signed yesterday will enable both agencies to scale up aid for needy people in conflict-hit areas. KFAED's director general appreciated as "honorable" the leading role of UNHCR in humanitarian action over the last 60 years around the globe. He added that the fund has been representing the government of Kuwait in humanitarian action, besides its principal role in backing development projects worldwide. He voiced hope that the MoU will enable UNHCR to take advantage of some of the fund's resources in launching joint aid projects in several areas.



EXPAT OIL WORKERS PROTEST UNPAID ALLOWANCES



By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: A number of expatriate laborers working for a company that has a contract with Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) in Rawdatin yesterday went on strike in protest over not receiving salaries that have been delayed because of some problems related to the company's contract with KOC. Security forces were present at the worksite in case of any contingency while the protesters sat on the ground dressed in their uniforms.

Municipal Council holds session

During its weekly meeting, the Municipal Council yesterday agreed to allocate new lands to build 3,600 housing units to the south of Abdullah Al-Mubarak. The council also demanded removing military camps from Jahra and agreed to allocate housing units for citizens who had sold their own houses. Discussing the council's KD 400,000 budget, member Hassan Kamal

stressed that the municipal council was not burdening the state budget and that it was the lowest budget a government body gets.

Commenting on the Sabah Al-Ahmed Marine City (Khairan chalets), member Ahmed Al-Fadhlah stressed that the site was ideal for residences, but he noted that many bachelors live in it.

Member Osama Al-Otaibi called for activating recycling projects that had been delayed since 2013 because of some paperwork and stressed that in view of the accumulating wastes, solid ones should be recycled to make use of them.

The council also discussed the collapse of an under-construction mosque in Sabah Al-Ahmed, killing and injuring some workers. Member Abdullah Al-Kandary urged the housing authority to force the contracting company to report on the collapse. The council also discussed a proposal to remove NGOs out of Shuwaikh residential area and relocate them in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.



A fireman inspects the scene after a blaze was tackled at a Jabriya building.

FIREFIGHTERS FREE CAMEL TRAPPED IN RAHAYA DESERT

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Firefighters freed a camel that was trapped in a hole in Rahaya desert. A Jahra occupational rescue team headed to the scene after the incident was reported, dug around the camel's stuck leg, then pulled it out of the hole. The animal was freed unharmed.

Jabriya fire

Fire in a nine-storey building in Jabriya prompted Hawally Fire Center, supported by Salmiya Fire Center to respond. The fire was in an 8th floor apartment. Residents were evacuated, and the flames were contained to keep them from spreading to oth-

er apartments. An elderly woman had a slight smoke inhalation and was treated onsite by paramedics. The fire was put out within 30 minutes.

No injuries

A vehicle went in flames on Sixth Ring Road near Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. Firemen rushed to the scene and fought the fire. No injuries were reported. Meanwhile, a fire broke out in an Abdallah Al-Mubarak house, prompting Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh's Fire Station to respond. The fire was in a room full of clothes. It was extinguished and no injuries were reported. Separately, a transformer in Hasawi caught fire, so Jleeb firemen rushed to the scene and tackled the blaze.



A vehicle engulfed in flames on Sixth Ring Road near Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

QUESTIONS HIGHLIGHT CONTROVERSY OVER AIRPORT EXPANSION PROJECT

MP PROPOSES TAXES ON EXPATS' MONEY TRANSFER

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Askar Al-Enezi yesterday sent a series of questions to Minister of Public Works Ali Al-Omar over the controversial KD 1.32 billion contract for the expansion project of Kuwait International Airport.

The lawmaker said that the ministry is insisting on signing the contract with the winner Kuwaiti-Turkish consortium despite key objections by the Audit Bureau and to do that it has sent the project to the council of ministers to take a decision on the issue. The project was initially offered in a public tender and won by the Kuwaiti-Turkish consortium for about KD 1.38 billion, over KD 380 million above the ministry estimates.

Based on recommendations by the State Audit Bureau, the tender was canceled by the public works ministry and it was recommended that the winner consortium be disqualified because their offer is technically and financially defect, the lawmaker said. It was again re-tendered but only among the four consortia who came first in the scrapped tender including the winners whom the Audit Bureau recommended to disqualify.

Estimates

The re-tendering was carried out after the ministry asked its advisers to restudy the cost estimates who accordingly increased the estimates from KD 1 billion to KD 1.25 billion, he said. This raise came although some key components of the project were cancelled.

The State Audit Bureau again rejected the contract because of suspected financial and technical violations in the tender, Enezi said. But the public works ministry finally took the issue to the cabinet to decide on it.

The lawmaker asked Omar if his ministry called for changing the Audit Bureau team that rejected the project twice. He said if the answer is positive, what is the legal justification for it and to where the request was submitted. He demanded official documents to support the answer.

He also asked if the ministry asked the cabinet to resolve the dispute and why it did so without resolving the technical and financial shortcomings demanded by the Audit Bureau.

Enezi said the main objection of the Audit Bureau was that its cost was highly inflated and should be lowered without impacting its compo-

nents in addition to rectifying some technical issues. He asked the minister why the ministry has failed to deal with such shortcomings.

Remittances

In another development, MP Faisal Al-Kundari yesterday proposed that the government should tax the overseas money transfers of expatriates working in the country.

Kundari proposed a 2 percent tax for transfers of up to KD 100, 4 percent for transfers of between KD 100 and 499 and five percent for transfers above KD500. The lawmaker did not propose any similar taxes on transfers by citizens.

MPs in the past made similar proposals to tax money transfers by expats to support the budget and reduce the amounts of money leaving the country. Meanwhile, MP Youssef Al-Zalzalah yesterday praised the assembly legal and legislative committee for approving his proposal to amend the nationality law so to naturalize children of Kuwaiti women married to foreigners.

Under the amendment, children of Kuwaiti women from foreign spouses will be treated as Kuwaitis until they become adults and then given the Kuwaiti citizenship.

12,000 GOVT CONTRACT WORKERS TRANSFERRED TO 250 COMPANIES

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The total number of government contract workers who benefited from allowing visa transfers over the past six months was around 12,000 persons working for over 250 companies that have contracts with the government, an official said yesterday. Moussa stressed that employers hailed the decision of allowing laborers to transfer their residency visas for a fee instead of having to leave the country, said Ahmad Al-Moussa, Acting Director of the Manpower Public Authority.

"Following several meetings with them, the manpower authority was keen on fulfilling the needs of employers with government projects' contracts," he underlined, noting that many of the employers' demands were met and that had been granted many facilities such as changing job descriptions, authorizing the government contracts department to contact relevant authorities to get security approvals, authorizing labor inspection departments to issue salary certificates valid for three months and addressing

the civil aviation department over airlines flying contracted laborers in.

2016-2017 budget

In other news, the parliament's budgets and final statement committee yesterday met Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih to discuss the manpower authority's 2016-2017 budget. Committee chairman MP Adnan Abdulsamad commended the minister's efforts in putting the recommendations made by the committee into practice. "Remarks on the budget do not deny the presence of efforts to fix financial and administrative malfunctions," he underlined, pointing out that remarks on the authority included not following specific systems in assessing employers' needs of workers and remarks on the company responsible for automating the process.

Responding to the remarks, Subaih stressed that ownership of the database was transferred from that company to the authority in order to prevent unauthorized staff from accessing the

system. She added that residency detectives had also shown great cooperation in arresting work permit forgers, illusionary companies and loose marginal labor.

National unity law

The constitutional court is scheduled to pass a ruling on May 11, 2016 in a case contesting the constitutionality of the national unity law number 19/2012 because it had been issued by a decree of necessity and violated article 71 of the constitution.

KPTC suspends Failaka trips

Kuwait Public Transport Company (KPTC) CEO Essa Abdullah Al-Hubail said that the company had temporarily suspended its ferry trips from Ras Al-Ardh to Failaka island from last Sunday because of accumulation of sand on the seabed towards Failaka harbor entrance, which could block marine traffic and jeopardize navigation safety. Hubail explained that in collaboration with the Ministry of Communications, KPTC is working on dredging the sand and rehabilitating the port to receive the company's ferries.



KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFS) conducted an exercise at the Radisson Blu hotel yesterday. The scenario of the exercise mimicked a fire in a hall used for celebrations. Firemen from the South Salmiya Fire Center participated in the drill. They practiced evacuating the hotel, freeing trapped people inside and tackling flames. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL'S NEW HQ COSTS KD 18 MILLION

KUWAIT: The total cost of the new headquarters of the Municipal Council is around KD 18 million, Kuwait Municipality's Construction Department said yesterday.

A large part of the building has been accomplished with the support of the executive branch, the department's manager Engineer Sharifa Al-Delaimi said, noting the project will be handed over at the end of 2017.

The total land area is 11,300 square meters and consists of two buildings; one is 10 floors for administrative use of Municipality council including an auditorium, Engineer Delaimi said. She added the other building is a multi-storey car parking that includes a civil defense Center and general services for the building. — KUNA



In Brief

KUWAIT, UK DISCUSS MEANS OF COMBATING TERRORISM

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah discussed means of combating terrorism with visiting UK Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport and Parliamentary (Minister for Countering Extremism) Lord Ahmad. The meeting also touched on bilateral ties and tackled the recent regional and international developments. UK Ambassador to Kuwait Matthew Lodge attended the meeting. — KUNA



KUWAIT, LEBANON DISCUSS ISSUES

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah discussed with Lebanese Military Intelligence director General Kamil Daher issues of common interest. The meeting also tackled promoting military ties, General Directorate of moral guidance said in a statement yesterday. The meeting was attended by head of Kuwait security and intelligence body Major General Abdulrahman Al-Hadhood. — KUNA



OFFICIAL HIGHLIGHTS KING'S VISION

JEDDAH: Director and Chairman of the Environment Public Authority (EPA) Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah yesterday underlined the momentousness of implementing Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud's vision for bolstering GCC action in environmental work. The King's vision comprises major topics such as preservation of the marine environment and coastal areas, combating desertification, caring for ground water and facing climate change, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said in Jeddah, where he leads Kuwait's delegation to the 37th meeting of the GCC Undersecretaries of Environmental Affairs. — KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A student creates a pottery work at the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity's (SACGC) 'Fab Lab'. The SACGC, which is affiliated to the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, provides sponsorship and support to talented students around Kuwait. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT PETROLEUM INT'L OPENS NEW WORLD CLASS BLENDED PLANT IN BELGIUM

BRUSSELS: Q8 Oils, affiliate of Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI), officially opened its multi-million dollar state of the art blending plant in the port city of Antwerp in Belgium yesterday. President of KPI, Bakheet Al-Rashidi, in his speech at the opening ceremony said "today marks the new beginning of an old monument within Kuwait petroleum international. Today we officially reopen Kuwait blending plant in Antwerp. It is a world class finished lubricant manufacturing plant."

"We look with great pride at the work Q8 Oils has done in the Benelux region, especially in Belgium. Their growth in retail and direct businesses perfectly demonstrates the ambitious expansion program that Q8 is pursuing in Europe," he noted.

The KPI chief said "we are very pleased to be so significantly invested in the European lubricants market, especially our \$100 million investment in the plant and Q8 Oils' success in completing it in 24 months and within budget." "We now plan to fully utilize our new state-of-the-art blending plant as we continue to implement our growth strategy in European markets and elsewhere," he added.

Vice Mayor of Antwerp, Philip Heylen the Board of KPI, Q8 Oils' key customers members of the Belgian Petroleum Federation, the ambassador of the Gulf Cooperation Council to the EU and Belgium, Amal Al Hamad, diplomats from the Kuwait embassy in Brussels attended the opening ceremony of the new plant.

Long history

"Q8 and the city of Antwerp indeed share long history," Heylen said in his welcome speech. "I would like to thank Q8 for staying with us so long and above all for making this huge investment in the new blending plant. This is a big upgrade for the entire area." "Today On behalf of the city of Antwerp I can only give our deepest congratulations to the Q8 management and to the entire staff. Now together we will build a new future," he added.

Kuwait Petroleum Vice President - Europe, Khaled Al-Mushaileh said "The new high capacity, modern and sophisticated blending plant at Antwerp with superbly enhanced facilities and capabilities is going to play a pivotal role in writing new growth and success stories for our Q8Oils' lubricants business in Europe and worldwide." Kuwait Petroleum Global Business Managing Director, Fadel Al-Faraj noted that The Antwerp blending plant was originally built in 1891 as storage for fuel and lubricant imports from the US. Q8 bought it in 1983, and in the past thirty-three years, the plant and its 131 employees have played a vital role in our success in the global lubricants market.

Master plan

"What you see here today began as a master plan. This was developed to achieve our shareholders' growth ambitions. Now, we are proud to be operating a state-of-the-art, environmentally responsible blending plant with a current capacity of 125 million liters of lubricants, fully scalable up to 250 million liters per annum," he

added. Q8 Oils' state-of-the-art blending plant in Antwerp, 55 kms from Brussels, is one of the largest and most technically advanced lubricant production facilities in Europe. The plant has a blending capacity which is scalable up to 250 million liters per annum. It enjoys excellent access to the UK and mainland Europe by highway, rail and sea. Q8 Oils is owned and operated by Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI), which is the International downstream entity of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), the national oil company of the State of Kuwait. Today, Q8 Oils' lubricants are used by customers in more than 80 countries around the world. — KUNA



BRUSSELS: President of KPI Bakheet Al-Rashidi and other guests tour the blending plant of Q8 in Antwerp. —KUNA

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القبلي

Al-Anbaa

BLIGHT OF ALL TIMES

By Saleh Al-Shayegi

I sadly wonder the amount of hateful racism that has been infiltrating into the souls of many people and turned into grudges and black spots filling their hearts. It is alright for someone to feel proud of himself, his people, his country, his tribe, his religion, his doctrine and of whatever he belongs to, provided such pride should be objective, reasonable and humane.

I should be as proud of myself as I am of others; I should be as proud of my affiliations as I am of others' affiliations. It is totally rejected to consider myself, my religion, my doctrine, my country or my race superior to those of others or that I belong to the 'masters' and he belongs to 'slaves'. It is hence that racism begins and prevails as a vehicle for grudges, hate and wars.

When the former US secretary of state Collin Powell described Europe as the 'Old Continent', he might have been right, but his description was full of racism and hateful arrogance that should have not been used by

It is hence that racism begins and prevails as a vehicle for grudges, hate and wars.

the secretary of state of the world's greatest nations, because he would only create hard feelings with the Europeans even if what he said was correct. However, looking down upon others is inhumane. However, despite Powell's slip of tongue, this kind of racism is still acceptable compared to the one that has led to bloodshed and claiming lives.

I can also detect too much racism when many of our Sunni brothers show a gear deal of support to IS and its brutal crimes that are indicted by all religions and norms. A young IS affiliate blows himself up, and in a tweet he posts that his father cheers his son's 'martyrdom', claims that he would go to paradise and wishes he would be his intercessor before Allah. What was even stranger was the comments the father got from people, highly commending the murderous son and congratulating his father.

This is sheer doctrinal racism because as long as the suicide bomber was a Sunni, we would support him, be him a killer or killed; the oppressed or the oppressor. At the same time, we see many of our Shiite brothers support Iran all the way and see whatever it does as good, right and just, though Iran's crimes are not less terrible than those of IS and despite the bad hostile intentions it has towards our country.

It is absolute racism that makes some people prioritize the interests of their enemies to those of their own country!
— Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Anbaa

GOVT POSTPONES ISSUING SOVEREIGN SUKUK

KUWAIT: The government postponed issuing bonds or sovereign Sukook to help offset the budget deficit at the present time after the price of the Kuwaiti oil barrel reached \$41 per barrel, rising by 100 percent compared to \$19 per barrel recorded in February, sources said. The sources mentioned four reasons for postponing the government debt tools:

- * Varying opinions on determining the returns on the bonds the government plans to issue.
- * Banks prefer to finance mega government projects,

especially in the oil sector.

- * Invest in government debt tools with probable low returns, especially that expectations are that US interest will be raised.

- * Fear of possible drop of Kuwait credit ranking, which means the government will concentrate on local issue because international ones will be more costly.

Regarding how the government plans to finance the current deficit of KD 12.2 billion, sources said it is being financed from the general reserve.

Crime

Report

Man mugged by friends

KUWAIT: A citizen with six of his friends beat another friend in Salwa and robbed him of his belongings. The victim lodged a complaint at Salwa police station and told them he received a phone call from a friend to go to a diwaniya, but he discovered that he was taken to a dark place where six others were waiting. They dragged him out of the car and beat him badly, then robbed him. Detectives are investigating.

Ex-convict caught for theft

Mubarak Al-Kabeer detectives arrested an ex-convict who robbed expats in parking lots. The arrest was made following several complaints about the robberies, especially from Asians, so detectives investigated and arrested him in the area.

Imprisonment

A citizen sought the help of police, claiming she was locked in a Salmiya apartment, but when the apartment owner was called, he denied her claim. He said he knows her well and she is totally free to leave the apartment. Both were taken to the police station, where the woman lodged a complaint and legal procedures are being taken.

Cross-dresser arrested

A male cross-dresser was caught by police in Salmiya with possession of women's belongings and illicit tablets. He was sent to the Drug Control General Department (DCGD).

Harassment

A Moroccan woman complained about a person who kept harassing her when she ignored him, and lodged a complaint against him at Salmiya police station. She gave police his phone number and copies of the messages, and detectives are working on the case. — Al-Rai

News

In Brief

Bangladeshi male domestic workers' recruitment allowed

KUWAIT: Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passport Affairs Major General Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah issued a circular to immigration departments in Kuwait's six governorates allowing citizens to bring Bangladeshi domestic helpers. The decision covers male workers only, and according to certain conditions, informed security sources said. The conditions include that the citizen can bring one helper only, and must not already have one from the same nationality. The conditions also include that the citizen must have a house ownership deed and must not have a large number of workers registered to his name. The sources said the circular became effective yesterday. — Al-Jarida

MEW Advisor collected KD 1 million in bribes

KUWAIT: The public prosecution sent a Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) advisor (Egyptian) to the central prison after he confessed to charges that he accepted bribes from companies contracted with the ministry. A security source said detectives discovered a secret account for the suspect, Egyptian, among several accounts he has in his home country, and found out that he also transfer KD 400,000 in addition to the KD 620,000 discovered earlier. They said the transfers took place in one year. — Al-Jarida

Kuwait arranges for 15,000 Iraqi pilgrims to pass through Req'ee

KUWAIT: Upon instructions from the Cabinet, nine governmental bodies, including the foreign ministry, MoI, MoH, MEW, MoC, the municipality, Awqaf ministry, the customs department and the state property department are currently arranging to facilitate the crossing of around 15,000 Iraqi pilgrims through Req'ee border exit en route to Saudi Arabia to perform hajj. Informed sources said that the aforementioned bodies were currently setting the needed plans to submit them to the Cabinet soon. — Al-Anbaa

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY PASSPORTS HINDERS RECRUITING TEACHERS

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior (MOI) recently sent the Ministry of Education (MOE) a memo rejecting the latter's request to issue residency visas for Palestinian teachers it intends to recruit for the next school year, because they held passports issued by the Palestinian Authority.

The memo explained that those teachers would not be able to issue dependent and visit visas like other Arab countries' passport holders unless this was approved by the cabinet. "The only exception was made upon the approval of Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister to grant residency visa to the Palestinian ambassador to Kuwait and his family," said the memo.

Further, security sources explained that in case the cabinet approves recruiting Palestinian teachers, their passports must be at least valid for two years, they should be approved by security forces prior to bringing them to Kuwait in order to avoid hiring deportees or banned ones, have a clear criminal record and undergo standard medical tests. Notably, Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa had announced his intention to visit Palestine in order to hire teachers to work in Kuwaiti public schools starting from next year. — Al-Rai



KFH PARTICIPATES IN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in several environmental awareness campaigns and events in collaboration with the concerned authorities such as the Environmental Mabarrah and Kuwait Diving National Team. This comes as part of KFH's social responsibility and efforts to increase the awareness of the importance of keeping the

environment safe, healthy and clean.

The campaign achieved its objectives in reinforcing the principles of cleanliness and interest for the environment among the participants. It also inspires KFH to continue supporting such programs that serve the community and spread awareness among people.

KFH organized many events for children in collaboration with schools and the Ministry of Education to raise their awareness of the importance of the environment. The bank attaches great importance to the environmental issues in Kuwait, and calls for boosting the synergy among all respective authorities to keep Kuwait clean and pollution free.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) sponsored a ceremony organized by Jahra Governorate to honor distinguished firemen. Jahra Governor Fahad Al-Amir attended the ceremony.

NON-PARTICIPANTS IN OIL WORKERS' STRIKE REWARDED

KUWAIT: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) plans to reward Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti workers who did not take part in a recent labor strike and continued to operate oil sector facilities by paying them half a one month salary. This comes in appreciation for the efforts they exerted beyond

official and unofficial job tasks during times of distress as planned by KPC and its subsidiary companies for contingencies, sources said. The reward covers all those who had exceptionally contributed to keeping the work going as per relative job of each of them during the strike, which

greatly contributed to reducing losses, the sources added.

Further, the sources said that KPC asked Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC) and the Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC)

last week to provide lists of names of the workers who continued working during the strike. Notably, Kuwait had suffered considerable losses during the three-day strike carried out by oil workers in protest for the government's rationalization and austerity plans. — Al-Rai

WORKERS MANDATED TO RESPECT CONTRACT, NOTICE DURATION

KUWAIT: For the sake of regulating employer-worker relation on quitting a job or resignation, the Manpower Public Authority recently issued a directive pertaining with the conditions to be followed in those cases before departing the country, Public Relations Director Dr Madloul Al-Thafeeri said.

According to the directive, workers should fully respect a three-month notice prior to actual resignation date in open contracts, which means a worker would have to either keep on

working during the notice period or financially pay for it. The directive also indicates that employees working according to limited contracts would have to either complete the contract's duration or pay for the remaining period.

"An employer can deduct the value of the notice or the contract period from a worker's leaving indemnity and if the employer refuses payment, a worker will have to prove and document this with the labor relation department," he underlined. — Al-Anbaa

ACCIDENT DEATHS DROP IN APRIL

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's General Traffic Department carried out a series of traffic campaigns during April in order to safeguard the safety of motorists, and deter reckless drivers. The campaigns that were supervised by Assistant Director General for Traffic Organization and Licensing Major General Fahad Al-Shuwai, has resulted in a drop in the number of deaths to 26 registered in 8,400 accidents during the entire month of April, a security source said.

In comparison, deaths from accidents registered in March reached 48 cases. The source said 161,000 various traffic violations were regis-

tered, 7,371 vehicles were impounded and 274 motorists detained. He said that 24 expatriates were sent for deportation because they were driving without a driver's license, while 142 juveniles were caught driving recklessly.

Separately, a security source said a recent decision by Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah to impound the vehicle of those who commit several traffic violations for two months has helped 'restore discipline' on the streets. The violations include reckless driving, lack of attention, jumping the red light, among others. — Al-Qabas



Kerry launches desperate push to save Syria truce

CRUZ FACES MAKE-OR-BREAK MOMENT TO STOP TRUMP



HAVANA: The first US-to-Cuba cruise ship to arrive in the island nation in decades remains docked at the port of Havana yesterday. — AFP

FIRST US CRUISE IN DECADES ARRIVES IN HAVANA

CUBANS GIVE AN ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME TO SHIP

HAVANA: The first US cruise ship to travel to Cuba in half a century docked in Havana yesterday, marking a new milestone in the rapprochement between the old Cold War foes. A crowd of onlookers waved Cuban and American flags and filmed with their cell phones as the Adonia, a Carnival cruise liner, sailed into port in Havana after setting off Sunday from Miami, the heart of the Cuban diaspora in the United States. The ship had 700 passengers on board, some of them Cuban-Americans returning to the communist island for the first time in decades.

Yaney Cajigal, a 32-year-old dancer, could barely contain her excitement as she waited for her niece to disembark. "This is incredible for me, this is very exciting," she told AFP. "We're welcoming them with the flags of Cuba and the United States so everything will be unity, peace and tranquility." The voyage is the first of what Carnival says will become weeklong cruises to Cuba twice a month, with the goal of promoting cultural exchange between the two countries following a warming of ties that began in December 2014 and led to the restoration of full diplomatic relations last year.

The "cultural exchange" aspect is key, since ordinary tourism to Cuba is still banned under a US trade embargo, which

remains in force despite the diplomatic thaw. For the time being, Americans can travel to Cuba only for cultural, academic, sports-related or religious events. Carnival is the first cruise line company to win permission from both governments to offer trips, which ended after the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

The Adonia has scheduled cultural activities in its ports of call in Havana, Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba, including meetings with artists, musicians and business owners, as well as dance classes and guided tours. The cruise "offers a truly historic opportunity for travel to Cuba: A chance to help build new bridges to a rich and vibrant culture that, until now, most US travelers have only seen in photographs," the cruise ship's web page says.

Uncertainty over whether the cruise would take place cleared up only last week, when Cuban President Raul Castro's government lifted restrictions for seaborne visits of Cubans to and from the United States, opening a door for Cuban-Americans born on the island to board the ships.

Carnival initially refused to accept reservations from Cuban-born customers because of restrictions first imposed when Havana feared landings by anti-Castro militants. The cruise line's policy prompted charges of discrimina-

tion amid a firestorm of criticism. Carnival, the world's leading tour ship operator, eventually relented and began allowing reservations from Cuban-born customers.

But its conditions to start the visits were for Cuba to allow its citizens to sail freely. Cuba ultimately backed down after intense negotiations as part of the normalization process, which culminated in President Barack Obama's visit to Cuba in March.

'Always Wanted to Visit'

One of the Cuban-born passengers is Isabel Buznego, 61, who left the island when she was five and was returning for the first time. "My dad wanted to come because he had never been able to come, but he passed away," she said. "So I'm coming in his name. That is why I have so many different emotions, but I am mostly happy." Another passenger, Regina Patterson, 58, from Delaware, said she wanted to take the cruise because it was historic.

"And it is a place I always wanted to visit," she said. "I want to see how they live, the music, what they eat, and shopping, shopping, shopping!" The cost of a ticket on the cruise ranges from \$1,800 to \$7,000 per person. Regular flights from the United States to Cuba are expected to begin later this year. — AFP

PRISONERS REVOLT IN SYRIA'S HAMA JAIL

BEIRUT: Syrian government troops surrounded Hama prison in the west of the country yesterday and fired tear gas after inmates revolted, seizing several guards, a monitoring group reported.

The Syrian Observatory for Human

Rights said inmates were protesting against a planned transfer of prisoners from Hama to Sednaya military prison north of Damascus. Those held in the Hama jail include political and Islamist prisoners, it said. An insurgent group operating near Hama, located 210 km

(130 miles) from Damascus, said it was ready to shell government militias in towns nearby in response to mistreatment of the inmates, who it said were demanding "basic rights" including trial, the British-based Observatory reported.

The Ajnad Al-Sham group said prisoners had urged the armed opposition to "break the siege" by government forces. Insurgents later shelled Maharda, one of the towns Ajnad al-Sham threatened to attack, the Observatory reported. It was not immediately clear if the shelling was linked. An interior ministry official denied "reports from some media about Hama central prison", state news agency SANA said, without elaborating. In August last year hundreds of inmates at the prison rioted in protest against conditions and harsh sentences. International rights groups say thousands of detainees are held in Syrian government prisons without charge and many of them are subjected to torture, a claim denied by the authorities. The Syrian conflict began in 2011 with popular protests against President Bashar al-Assad and spiralled into civil war after a crackdown by security forces. — Reuters



A young girl holding dolls poses on the railroad tracks near a makeshift camp for migrants and refugees near the village of Idomeni, not far from the Greek-Macedonian border, yesterday. — AFP (See Page 10)

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KERRY LAUNCHES DESPERATE PUSH TO SAVE SYRIA TRUCE

GENEVA: US Secretary of State John Kerry launched a desperate push on Monday to salvage a ceasefire in Syria, as the country's second city of Aleppo reeled from a week of fighting that killed hundreds of civilians. With the two-month old truce brokered by the United States and Russia under severe threat, Kerry said Washington and Moscow had made progress in trying to contain the bloodshed, but warned it was premature to promise success.

The top US diplomat gave some of his most downbeat comments yet after meeting the United Nations Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura in Geneva, saying the conflict was "in many ways out of control and deeply disturbing to everybody in the world, I hope." The US and Russia have agreed to bolster the number of Geneva-based ceasefire monitors, Kerry told reporters, pledging to work "in the next hours" to rein in violence on the ground.

In and around Aleppo, a week of fighting has killed more than 250 people. Kerry accused President Bashar al-Assad's regime of deliberately targeting three clinics and a major hospital last week. "The attack on this hospital is unconscionable," he said. "And it has to stop."

There was a relative lull in the unrest laster yesterday, allowing some residents to

venture out into the streets, AFP's correspondents in Aleppo said, with some even opening up shops.

Diplomatic push

Kerry said a bolstered group of ceasefire monitors will track violations "24 hours a day, seven days a week." A senior US diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the US, Russia and the UN have moved forward on a new ceasefire mechanism for Aleppo, but a deal was not complete. Kerry stressed that the goal was to re-enforce a broad truce capable of withstanding further tests.

He said he would call Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov later yesterday. "We're trying to press this as fast as possible but I don't want to make any promises that can't be kept," he told reporters after meeting de Mistura and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir-whose government has influence with key rebel groups. De Mistura was due to fly to Moscow for talks with Lavrov today.

Aleppo violence

While agreeing in theory to support a ceasefire, Russia has done little to rein in Assad's forces around Aleppo, which were in action again early yesterday. Several neighborhoods, including the heavily-pop-



GENEVA: US Secretary of State John Kerry (L) arrives with UN Syria envoy Staffan de Mistura to a press briefing following a meeting yesterday in Geneva. —AFP

ulated Bustan Al-Qasr district, were hit, according to AFP's correspondent in the northern city.

Despite the early-morning raids, there was relative quiet in Aleppo's rebel-held east. Kerry said Washington would press moderate rebels to separate themselves from the Al-Nusra Front's jihadists in Aleppo. Russia and Assad's regime have used the presence of Al-Nusra, which was

province of Latakia and Eastern Ghouta, near Damascus. State television reported a Syrian army announcement yesterday that the freeze has been extended for another 48 hours in Eastern Ghouta, until 1:00 am Wednesday (2200 GMT Tuesday). The same "freeze" is set to hold until 1:00 am Tuesday in Latakia, a regime stronghold.

Peace talks?

Syria's conflict erupted in 2011 after the brutal repression of anti-government protests and has since escalated into a complex, multi-faceted war, which has killed more than 270,000 people. The renewed bloodshed has dampened hopes that the ceasefire could finally lay the groundwork for an end to the conflict. Last month's peace talks in Geneva failed to make headway, although de Mistura has voiced hope they can resume next month.

The UN envoy has however made clear that before restarting talks he wants to see a reduction in violence and a meeting convened of the international group supporting Syria, known as the ISSG, to strengthen the peace drive. French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault said Paris supported an ISSG meeting was "totally mobilized" in pushing for the peace process to resume. —AFP

WITH FIVE-YEAR DELAY, CIA 'LIVE-TWEETS' BIN LADEN RAID

WASHINGTON: The CIA has marked the anniversary of the killing of Osama bin Laden by live-tweeting with a five-year delay — the raid by US special forces on the Al-Qaeda founder's compound in Pakistan. Using the hashtag #UBLRaid, the CIA blasted out updates of the May 2011 strike as if it was unfolding in real time in a highly unusual move for the secretive spy agency.

"To mark the 5th anniversary of the Usama Bin Ladin operation in Abbottabad we will tweet the raid as if it were happening today. #UBLRaid," @CIA said in announcing its social media blitz. Tweets included the now famous picture of President Barack Obama and other high-ranking US officials watching matters unfold from the White House's Situation Room. "1:51 pm EDT - Helicopters depart from Afghanistan for compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan #UBLRaid," read one tweet.

"3:30 pm EDT - 2 helicopters descend on compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. 1 crashes, but assault continues without delay or injury #UBLRaid," read another. That was followed just minutes later by: "3:39 pm EDT - Usama Bin Ladin found on third floor and killed #UBLRaid." The CIA's Twitter move got quite a bit of attention, with not everyone enthused. "@CIA Are we tweeting Hiroshima on August 6th too? Or is THAT in bad taste?" tweeted one user, Kris Knight.

Another who identifies as Amber V tweeted: "Don't you have better things to do, like catch living and breathing bad guys, or secretly invade our privacy, or something?"

@CIA#UBLRaid" But others reacted positively. "Watching the @CIA relive on Twitter the #UBLRaid today reminds me of how proud I am of the men and women who do what they do. Thank you," tweeted Toby Knapp.

CIA focus on al-Baghdadi

With 1.33 million Twitter followers, the Central Intelligence Agency has sent 1,662 tweets since it joined the social media service in February 2014. "We are the Nation's first line of defense. We accomplish what others cannot accomplish and go where others cannot go," reads the Twitter bio.

Previous @CIA tweets in recent days have featured a video about the Chernobyl nuclear accident in Ukraine and a counterfeit Nazi stamp. Amid the tweetstorm, CIA chief John Brennan said Sunday that taking out the head of the Islamic State group would have a "great impact." He also warned that Al-Qaeda remained a threat, and that IS was not just an organization but a phenomenon. "We have destroyed a large part of Al-Qaeda. It's not completely eliminated. So we have to stay focused on what it can do," Brennan told NBC's "Meet the Press" talk show. "Now, with the new phenomenon of (IS), this is going to challenge us for years to come," he added. Asked if removing IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi from action was as important as the Bin Laden get, Brennan, who does not often do interviews, was direct. "If we got Baghdadi, I think it would have a great impact on the organization. And it will be felt by them," he said. —AFP

BAGHDAD CAR BOMB AGAINST SHIITE PILGRIMS KILLS 14

BAGHDAD: A car bomb targeting Shiite pilgrims killed at least 14 people in southern Baghdad yesterday, security and medical sources said. An Iraqi security command said a suicide bomber detonated the explosives-rigged vehicle, while other officials said it was a car bomb.

At least 14 people were killed and at least 41 others wounded, security and medical officials said. They said several women and children were among the victims. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the explosion, but such attacks are usually carried out by the Islamic State jihadist group. IS perpetrated a similar attack against pilgrims on the

outskirts of Baghdad on Saturday, killing at least 23 people.

Many of the main thoroughfares in the city are closed in the days leading up to the annual commemoration of Imam Musa Kadhim's death, an important date in the Shiite Muslim calendar. Kadhim, the seventh of 12 imams revered in Shiite Islam, died in 799 AD.

The pilgrimage to his shrine in northern Baghdad has in recent years turned into a huge event that brings the capital to a standstill for days. The main commemoration at the shrine in Baghdad's Kadhimiya neighborhood will take place today. —AFP



TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani yesterday reviewing the honor guard with South Korean President Park Geun-hye (C-R) during a ceremony at the presidential palace in the capital Tehran. —AFP

IRAN URGES NUKE-FREE KOREAN PENINSULA

TEHRAN: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani yesterday pushed for a Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons, the official IRNA news agency reported. Rouhani met with visiting South Korean President Park Geun-hye and said Iran seeks a world free of weapons of mass destruction, "especially nuclear" weapons.

"Our demand is a world free of weapons of mass destruction, especially freeing the Korean peninsula and the Middle East from destructive weapons," he said. Park said she has asked for Iran's help in implementing UN Security Council resolutions calling for the nuclear disarmament of the Korean peninsula. The remarks were

aimed at North Korea, which has been hit with tough UN sanctions over its nuclear weapons program. North Korea has conducted four nuclear bomb tests and tested a long-range rocket earlier this year. Park arrived in Tehran on Sunday for the first visit by a South Korean president to Iran since 1962.

Rouhani said both sides agreed to increase their bilateral trade from the current \$6 billion per year to \$18 billion in the coming years. They also signed a number of agreements in the fields of oil and gas, railroads, tourism, and technology, and agreed to re-establish direct flights between Tehran and Seoul Iran has

been seeking to reintegrate into the global economic system since nuclear-related sanctions were lifted in January under a landmark deal with world powers.

Energy-hungry South Korea, the world's fifth largest importer of crude oil, used to be one of the biggest buyers of Iranian oil before the sanctions were imposed. Iran said it has raised its oil and gas condensate exports to South Korea to 400,000 barrels per day, a fourfold increase since the nuclear deal was implemented. South Korea and Iran established diplomatic ties in 1962 but their heads of states have never held bi-lateral talks. — Agencies

IRAQ IN POLITICAL LIMBO AFTER GREEN ZONE STORMING

BAGHDAD: Iraq's political reform process was in limbo yesterday after protesters demanding a change of government reacted to weeks of stalling by storming parliament. Security concerns were also high due to the presence in Baghdad of thousands of Shiite pilgrims, who were targeted for the second time in three days with a suicide bombing that killed at least 14 people.

Demonstrators pulled out of the Green Zone, where parliament is located, on Sunday evening, a day after breaching the walls of the fortified government district. But the protesters, most of whom are followers of outspoken cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr, also warned they would be back on the streets of Baghdad on Friday if their demands were not met.

Sadr supports Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's efforts to form a new cabinet of technocrats to replace the current government of party-affiliated ministers, accused of graft and sectarianism.

There was no clear plan of action emerging Monday from any of the main players and several sources said Sadr himself flew to neighboring Iran, the main foreign broker among Shiite political blocs in Iraq. "The leader of the Sadrist movement left at 11:00 am from Najaf airport to the Imam Khomeini airport" southwest of Tehran, a Najaf airport official told AFP. "Sadr took two other clerics with him," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. A political source in Baghdad had the same information but there was no confirmation from either his office or Tehran.

Iraq's lawmakers looked unlikely to hold another session this week however, with the main parliament building requiring a massive cleanup following Saturday's events.

Thousands of mostly Sadrist protesters pulled down blast walls around the Green Zone and stormed the chamber after MPs again failed to agree on reforms.

Some MPs were roughed up on Saturday and their vehicles vandalised, and lawmakers appeared wary of exposing themselves to another attack. "It was decided to hold a parliamentary session next week in another place because the (parliament) hall

was damaged," MP Abbas al-Bayati told AFP. There was no official statement from the speaker on the issue however.

IS claims fresh bombing

Abadi called for those who committed violent acts on Saturday to be arrested, but his grip on Iraq's top job looked more tenuous than ever. A senior official in the Dawaa party, of which Abadi is a member, said there was discussion within the party of the premier's resignation.

"We are in a debate inside the party for the first time (on) the demand for Abadi to resign," the official said. A Sunni MP, Ahmed al-Masari, said his bloc was demanding the restructuring of the political process through... meetings in the coming days."

Another lawmaker said Kurdish MPs in the federal parliament were weighing their participation altogether. Since coming to power in September 2014, Abadi has faced tough opposition from his predecessor and fellow party member Nuri al-Maliki. Abadi nonetheless enjoys the support of Western powers, who have warned that continued political deadlock risks hampering Iraq's fight against the Islamic State group, which seized control of large parts of the country in mid-2014. Backed by a US-led coalition, Iraqi security forces have made significant gains in retaking territory from IS in recent months, but still face huge challenges in rooting out jihadist fighters from the western province of Anbar and the country's second city of Mosul. —AFP



HOMS, Syria: An aid truck of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) drives past destroyed buildings in the rebel-held village of Teir Maalah, on its way to Talbisseh, on the northern outskirts of Homs in central Syria yesterday. —AFP

TURKEY SAYS GAZIANTEP ATTACKER LINKED TO IS

ANKARA: The perpetrator of a deadly car bombing that hit the Turkish city of Gaziantep near the Syrian border at the weekend is linked to the Islamic State (IS) extremist group, Turkey's interior minister said yesterday.

The perpetrator "is a member of a terrorist organisation linked to Daesh," Interior Minister Efkân Ala said in televised remarks, using an alternative name for the jihadist group. One policeman was killed when the car bomb went off outside the police headquarters in Gaziantep Sunday morning. Another police officer later died of his wounds. Ala said nearly 50 suspects had been detained in connection with the attack. His announcement will intensify concerns about the risk of jihadist attacks

in Turkey, which has already seen tourism fall sharply since the start of the year. Turkey remains on high security alert after a series of attacks on its soil blamed on Kurdish militants and IS jihadists, who still control territory in Syria right up to the Turkish border.

Government spokesman and Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus told reporters after the weekly cabinet meeting the authorities had thwarted 49 suicide bombings in Turkey so far this year. A radical Kurdish militant group, Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK), on Sunday claimed a suicide bombing in Turkey's former Ottoman capital of Bursa last week, saying the female assailant had failed to reach her intended target. —AFP



NAJAF: Iraqi mourners attend the funeral of a soldier who was killed during a military operation to recapture the town of Bashir yesterday in the holy city of Najaf. —AFP

CRUZ FACES MAKE-OR-BREAK MOMENT TO STOP TRUMP

LA PORTE, Indiana: Facing a make-or-break moment for his slumping campaign, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz was blitzing through Indiana yesterday in a desperate bid to overtake Donald Trump in the state's primary and keep his own White House hopes alive.

A victory for Trump in Indiana on Tuesday would be a dispiriting blow for Cruz and other forces trying to stop the front-runner, leaving them with few opportunities to block his path. Trump is the only candidate in the race who can reach the 1,237 delegates needed for the GOP nomination through regular voting, though Cruz is trying to push the race toward a contested convention.

"This whole long, wild ride of an election has all culminated with the entire country with its eyes fixed on the state of Indiana," Cruz said Sunday at a late night rally. "The people of this great state, I

believe the country is depending on you to pull us back from the brink."

Several hundred people came to see him Monday at Bravo Cafe in Osceola, where he predicted a close finish in the primary and said: "We need every single vote." "You're the perfect man for the job," a man told him as diners consumed coffee and eggs. "God bless you," Cruz said, gripping his hand. Cruz was holding five events across Indiana on Monday. Trump was holding a pair of rallies in the state, though he was already confidently looking past Cruz and setting his sights on Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton.

Trump made clear Monday that he would keep up his accusation that Clinton is playing gender politics: "We're making a list of the many, many times where it's all about her being a woman."

"I haven't started on Hillary yet," he told CNN, although actually he's been trashing

her record for quite some time. For her part, Clinton told thousands at an NAACP dinner in Detroit on Sunday that President Barack Obama's legacy can't be allowed to "fall into Donald Trump's hands" and be consumed by "these voices of hatred." She cited Trump's "insidious" part in the birther movement that questioned Obama's citizenship.

Clinton's campaign announced yesterday that she had raised \$26 million in April. Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders has vowed to stay in the Democratic race, though he acknowledged Sunday that he faces an "uphill climb." His only path rests on a long-shot strategy of winning over superdelegates, the elected officials, lobbyists and other party insiders who are free to back either candidate.

Trump can't win enough delegates today to clinch the Republican nomination. But after his wins in five states last

week, Trump no longer needs to win a majority of the remaining delegates in coming races to lock up the GOP nomination. The importance of Indiana for Cruz became evident even before he and fellow underdog John Kasich formed an alliance of sorts, with the Ohio governor agreeing to pull his advertising money from Indiana in exchange for Cruz doing the same in Oregon and New Mexico.

But that strategy, which appeared to unravel even as it was announced, can't help either man with the tens of thousands of Indiana voters who had already cast ballots: Early voting began in Indiana three weeks before they hatched their plan.

It also risks alienating those who have yet to vote, said veteran Indiana Republican pollster Christine Matthews. She said she believes many have continued to vote for Kasich in Indianapolis and in the wealthy suburbs north of the city.

"Indiana voters don't like the idea of a political pact, or being told how to vote," Matthews said.

Trump went after Cruz on Sunday, suggesting evangelical conservatives have "fallen out of love with him" and mocked his decision to announce former GOP presidential candidate Carly Fiorina as his running mate.

"They're like hanging by their fingertips," he said, mimicking Cruz and Kasich: "Don't let me fall! Don't let me fall!"

Trump let on that he's eager to move on to a likely general election race against Clinton. He said the end game of the primary battle with Cruz is "wasting time" that he could be spending raising money for Republicans running for the Senate. "It would be nice to have the Republican Party come together," Trump told supporters in Fort Wayne. "With that being said, I think I'll win anyway." — AP



CARACAS: Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro greets supporters during a march to mark International Workers' Day, in Caracas on May 1, 2016. — AFP

MADURO CALLS FOR 'REBELLION' IF OPPOSITION RECALL SUCCEEDS

CARACAS: A defiant Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro urged supporters to launch a general strike and "rebellion" if the opposition succeeds in ousting him from office in a referendum.

Maduro's fiery May Day speech came as Venezuela's emboldened opposition prepared today to present more than 10 million of the roughly 200,000 signatures needed to begin organizing a referendum to remove the unpopular president, blamed by many for the country's deep economic crisis.

Maduro vowed to fight for his job, despite a deep crisis in the country that has seen riots and looting in the second city over four-hour daily blackouts introduced to save energy. "If the oligarchy some day does something against me and manages to take this palace, I order you to declare yourselves in rebellion and decree an indefinite general strike," he told supporters massed outside the presidential palace on Sunday. Maduro told them the referendum "is an option, not an obligation. Here the only obligation is the presidential election and that will be in 2018." A recent poll found that more than two-thirds of Venezuelans want Maduro, elected president by a razor-thin margin in 2013, to leave office.

Once-booming Venezuela, which has the world's largest proven oil reserves, has plunged into economic chaos as global crude prices have collapsed. It has been in recession since 2013. The import-dependent country faces acute shortages of food and basic goods like toilet paper due to a lack of currency, more than 96 percent of which it gets from oil sales.

Maduro has vowed to press on with the socialist "revolution" launched in 1999 by

his predecessor, the late Hugo Chavez, which has given Venezuela a government-led economy.

Recall vote this year?

If the electoral board accepts the signatures collected by the opposition as valid far from a sure bet, since opponents say the board is stacked with Maduro cronies—the opposition will then have to collect four million more for the board to organize the vote. Opponents are racing to hold the referendum before the end of the year. According to Venezuela's constitution, after January 2017 a successful recall vote would transfer power to Maduro's vice president rather than trigger new elections. Jesus Torrealba, spokesman for the MUD opposition coalition that controls Venezuela's legislature, said the signatures-collected "record time" will be delivered to the electoral board today. However board official Tania D'amelio suggested on Twitter that the board might not start verifying the signatures until late May.

More sleep, save energy

Venezuelans lost half an hour of sleep Sunday as their clocks were set forward on the president's orders in a move to save power. At 2:30am local time Sunday, Venezuela shifted its time ahead by 30 minutes to four hours behind Greenwich Mean Time. The move, announced in mid-April, is part of a package of measures the embattled socialist president is pursuing to cope with a crippling electricity shortage. Hugo Chavez implemented the unusual half-hour time shift back in December 2007, saying he didn't want children to have to walk to school in the dark. — AFP

VIRGINIA GOP LAWMAKERS TO SUE OVER FELONS' VOTING

MCAULIFFE DENIES MOVE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED

RICHMOND, Va: Republican lawmakers in Virginia will file a lawsuit challenging Democratic Gov Terry McAuliffe's decision to allow more than 200,000 convicted felons to vote in November, GOP leaders said yesterday.

Republicans argue the governor has overstepped his constitutional authority with a clear political ploy designed to help the campaign of his friend and Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton in the important swing state this fall. "Gov. McAuliffe's flagrant disregard for the Constitution of Virginia and the rule of law must not go unchecked," Senate Republican Leader Thomas Norment said in a statement. He added that McAuliffe's predecessors and previous attorneys general examined this issue and concluded Virginia's governor can't issue blanket restorations. Republicans have hired Charles J. Cooper, a Washington, DC, attorney known for defending California's ban on gay marriage before the US Supreme Court in 2013. GOP leaders did not say when they will file the lawsuit. They said it would not be paid for using taxpayer dollars. The pending legal fight highlights the important role

Virginia will likely play in this year's presidential contest. Clinton could benefit from a surge of new minority voters, who typically vote Democratic. Although even if all the 200,000 ex-felons signed up, they would represent less than 1 percent of total registered voters in the state. McAuliffe said the move was not politically motivated. A lawyer for former Democratic Gov. Tim Kaine said in 2010 that the restoration of rights must be done on a case-by-case basis. A blanket order restoring voting rights would be a "rewrite of the law," Mark Rubin, a counselor to Kaine, said in a letter at the time.

A spokesman for McAuliffe said Republicans have yet to express any specific constitutional objections to the executive order. "The governor is disappointed that Republicans would go to such lengths to continue locking people who have served their time out of their democracy," Brian Coy said in a statement. "These Virginians are qualified to vote and they deserve a voice, not more partisan schemes to disenfranchise them." Virginia, Iowa, Kentucky and Florida are the only states that strip all felons of their voting

rights for life unless a state official restores them, according to the Washington D.C.-based Sentencing Project. Such policies make black Americans of voting age four times more likely to lose their voting rights than the rest of the adult population, the group says.

McAuliffe says people who have served their time should be given a second chance to exercise their civic duties. He has also said he's certain he has such authority after consulting with legal and constitutional experts, including Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring, who is also a Democrat.

The governor's order enables every Virginia felon to vote, run for public office, serve on a jury and become a notary public if they have completed their sentence and finished any supervised release, parole or probation requirements as of April 22.

The administration estimates this population to include about 206,000 people. In the future, the governor will act month by month to restore the rights of felons who complete all these requirements. — AP

DO COLOMBIA'S FARC REBELS HAVE A HIDDEN FORTUNE?



BOGOTA: Picture by the Colombian Defense Ministry of Peruvian drug trafficker Gerson Galvez, aka Caracol (R), as he is escorted by the narcotics police at the Bogota airport on Sunday. — AFP

BOGOTA: Do Colombia's FARC guerrillas have a multi-billion-dollar fortune from kidnapping and drug trafficking stashed in foreign bank accounts? That question has triggered an explosive debate in Colombia just as it tries to turn the page on the half-century conflict between the government and the Marxist rebel group. The FARC's ill-gotten gains have long been a subject of scrutiny, but the issue was blown wide open again recently when The Economist magazine put a number on the guerrillas' alleged fortune.

The British weekly reported the FARC had assets worth \$10.5 billion in 2012, citing an unpublished study by government analysts. The article opened a new rift between the FARC and the government even as negotiators from both sides work to hammer out the final details of a peace accord at long-running talks in Havana.

"What a joke that Economist story. They should check their sources and not believe stories about the insurgency's imaginary fortune," the FARC's chief peace negotiator, Ivan Marquez, wrote on Twitter. "No human being takes up arms against an unjust regime to get rich."

President Juan Manuel Santos had a very different take. "I don't have the slightest doubt... (that the FARC) probably have money somewhere," he said.

At the height of its strength in the 1990s and 2000s, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) made huge amounts of cash kidnapping wealthy citizens for ransom, operating illegal mines in territory under its control, and running a large chunk of the drugs trade in the world's largest cocaine-producing country.

But it is hard to pin down exactly how much. "Estimating the FARC's resources will always be a matter of speculation," said Gustavo Duncan, a Colombian academic who researches the guerrillas' involvement in drug trafficking.

Several experts on the conflict and sources close to the rebels dismissed the estimate published by the Economist as exaggerated. But beyond the matter of the exact amount, "what's important is the availability of those resources as part of the peace negotiations," said Duncan.

"That money should serve to pay reparations to victims of the conflict and not to fatten personal fortunes." — AFP

FIVE SEATTLE POLICE INJURED, NINE ARRESTED AFTER MAY DAY MARCHES

WASHINGTON: Five Seattle police officers were injured and at least nine people arrested on Sunday night, after unruly demonstrators hurled projectiles and Molotov cocktails and broke windows, authorities said. Protesters gather every year on May 1 to focus attention on labor and immigration issues, but demonstrators in cities across the United States also used the occasion to rally against police violence.

Mayor Ed Murray blamed the "senseless violence" in Seattle on a "different crowd" from those who had attended an earlier peaceful May Day immigration march, however. It was "deeply regrettable that in a city that goes to incredible lengths to respect First Amendment rights, there are some who disregard our values and engage in senseless acts of violence and property destruction," he said later, referring to free speech protected by the US Constitution.

In posts on social media website Twitter, the Seattle police department said one officer had suffered a cut to the head as protesters hurled Molotov cocktails, another was hit by a rock, and a third officer was bitten, apparently by a protester. Injuries suffered by two more officers were not detailed.

"Nobody has been seriously injured," police chief Kathleen O'Toole said after the unrest subsided, adding, "Once assaults started and property damage started, we took action. It's that simple."

Police said they made arrests in several places and restrained one group in a parking lot, before allowing some groups to disperse, but would maintain a presence in the area. They charged three people with assault, one with destruction of property and five with obstruction of justice. Eight men ranging in age from about 20 to 32 were charged, along with a teen-aged girl. Police used "blast balls" to disperse a crowd throwing rocks and bottles and breaking windows in a downtown neighborhood, the Seattle Times newspaper reported, after they used pepper spray several times to break up throngs of demonstrators. The unrest mirrored violence at a Seattle May Day march last year, when crowds threw bottles and wrenches at police, who responded with pepper spray and flash grenades. — Reuters

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GERMAN POLITICIANS SLAM AfD OVER ISLAM

BERLIN: German politicians from across the spectrum criticized the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) yesterday after the party declared Islam incompatible with the constitution.

The AfD, which has surged onto the political scene since its launch three years ago, backed a manifesto pledge at a congress on Sunday to ban on minarets and the burqa, the full face and body-covering gown worn by some Muslim women. With concerns about Europe's migrant crisis fuelling the AfD's rise, Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative Christian Democrats led criticism of the party.

"What the AfD has decided on is an attack on almost all religions," Armin Laschet, deputy chair-

man of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), told ARD television.

"They have identified Islam as a foreign body in Germany," he said. "That is divisive, and startling to a Christian Democratic party for which faith has meaning." Greens parliamentary party leader Katrin Göring-Eckardt described the AfD manifesto as "reactionary" and accused the party of dividing society with Islamophobia. Opinion polls give the AfD support of up to 14 percent, presenting a serious challenge to Merkel's conservatives and other established parties ahead of a 2017 federal election. They rule out any coalition with the AfD.

The AfD has no lawmakers in the federal parlia-

ment in Berlin but has members in half of Germany's 16 regional state assemblies. Merkel has said freedom of religion for all is guaranteed by Germany's constitution and that Islam is a part of Germany.

Germany is home to nearly 4 million Muslims, about 5 percent of the total population. Community leaders have called on politicians to ensure that no religious community be disadvantaged and that Islam not be defined as a "foe". Many of the longer established Muslim community came from Turkey to find work. Last year, more than a million, mostly Muslim migrants, arrived in Germany. Most had fled conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Alexander Gauland, who leads the AfD in the eastern state of Brandenburg, said Muslims could still practise their faith in Germany. "A Muslim in Germany can follow his religion without minarets. The AfD has nothing against places of worship," Gauland told Deutschlandfunk radio, insisting his party did not want existing minarets torn down but rather no new ones built.

Aiman Mazyek, head of Germany's Central Council of Muslims who has likened the AfD's attitude towards his community to that of Hitler's Nazis towards Jews, told the Osnabruecker Zeitung the AfD manifesto was "an Islamophobic programme" that "is of no help to solve problems, but rather just divides our country." — Reuters

TURKEY MAKING 'LOT OF EFFORT' FOR VISA DEAL: EU

BRUSSELS: The EU on Monday praised Turkey's efforts to meet the conditions for visa-free travel as part of Ankara's migrant deal with Brussels ahead of a decision on the issue this week. Turkey has demanded its citizens be allowed to enter the European Union's passport-free Schengen zone without visas by June, in exchange for it taking back migrants from Europe.

The European Commission is due to decide tomorrow whether Turkey has met the conditions, but there are still widespread concerns among many of the EU's 28 member states. "As you know the Commission has been working together with Turkey to ensure that the outstanding requirements of the visa liberalisation roadmap are met," Commission spokeswoman Mina Andreeva told reporters.

"Turkey has made a lot of efforts over the past weeks and days to meet the criteria, including for example extending the regulation on access to the labour market to non-Syrian refugees, and progress continued over the weekend," she added. "Obviously the Commission will take stock of the progress in a report that will be

adopted Wednesday so I'd ask for some more patience on that."

Turkey has threatened to pull out of the migrant deal if it does not get the visa scheme.

Germany and France have proposed an emergency brake or "snap back mechanism" under which it could halt visa-free travel if large numbers of Turks stay in the EU illegally or if there are a large number of asylum applications by Turks. The EU struck the deal with Turkey to send back all "irregular" migrants who arrive in Greece after March 20 and fail to win asylum, in a bid to halt mass migration which has created enormous strain in Europe.

In exchange the EU will resettle one Syrian refugee from camps in Turkey for every Syrian that Turkey takes from the Greek islands, the aim being to discourage people from crossing to Greece in the first place. The accord is awash with legal and moral concerns, and critics have accused the EU of sacrificing its values and overlooking Turkey's growing crackdown on free speech in order to secure the deal. — AFP



IDOMENI, Greece: People pass a former border installation at a makeshift camp for migrants and refugees at the Greek-Macedonian border near the village of Idomeni yesterday. — AFP

GERMANY DEMANDS BORDER CONTROLS FOR 6 MORE MONTHS

DENMARK EXTENDS ID CONTROLS ON GERMAN BORDER

BERLIN: Germany and some other EU countries are planning to ask the EU Commission for an extension of border controls within the Schengen passport-free travel zone for another six months because they fear a new wave of migrants. Interior Minister Thomas de Maizere's spokesman says a letter is being sent yesterday asking for an extension of the controls on the German-Austrian border, which were implemented last year when thousands of migrants crossed into Germany daily.

De Maizere has expressed concern before that an increasing number of migrants will try to reach Europe this summer by crossing the Mediterranean Sea from lawless Libya to Italy, then travel north to Austria and Germany. Germany registered nearly 1.1 million new arrivals last year and is keen to bring the numbers down in 2016.

Meanwhile, Denmark yesterday extended random identification checks along the German border until June 2, saying they were needed to deter "an extraordinarily large number of refugees and migrants" from entering the country. "There is still considerable pressure on Europe's borders and... migrants and refugees find alternative routes when the borders are closed," Integration Minister Inger Støjberg said in a statement.

"When asylum seekers without proper ID papers cannot travel to Sweden, there remains a serious risk that many refugees and migrants can become stranded in this country," she added.

The controls had already been extended five times, most recently until May 3. They were introduced on January 4, hours after Sweden began requiring rail, bus and ferry companies to verify the identities of people travelling from Denmark. Last year Denmark largely served as a transit country for migrants travelling to Sweden, which at the time had some of Europe's most generous asylum rules. Denmark received more than 21,000 asylum applications in 2015, a 44 percent jump from 2014, but significantly fewer than Sweden, its northern neighbour, which registered 163,000 asylum applications in the same year.

The number of asylum seekers in Denmark has dropped significantly this year, from 641 in the week after border controls were introduced to just 45 last week, according to police data compiled by the government

Unaccompanied minors

Some 88,300 unaccompanied minors sought asylum in the European Union in 2015, 13 percent of them children younger than 14, crossing continents without their parents to seek a place of safety, EU data showed yesterday.

More than a million people fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East and Africa reached Europe last year. While that was roughly double the 2014 figure, the number of unaccompanied minors quadrupled, statistics agency Eurostat said. Minors

made up about a third of the 1.26 million first-time asylum applications filed in the EU last year. European Union states disagree on how to handle Europe's worst migration crisis since World War Two and anti-immigrant sentiment has grown, even in countries that traditionally have a generous approach to helping people seeking refuge.

Four in 10 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum in Sweden, where some have called for greater checks, suspicious that adults are passing themselves off as children in order to secure protection they might otherwise be denied. Eurostat's figures refer specifically to asylum applicants "considered to be unaccompanied minors", meaning EU states accepted the youngsters' declared age or established it themselves through age assessment procedures.

More than 90 percent of the minors travelling without a parent or guardian were boys and more than half of them were between 16 and 17 years old. Half were Afghans and the second largest group were Syrians, at 16 percent of the total. After Sweden, Germany, Hungary and Austria followed as the main destinations for unaccompanied underage asylum seekers.

Seeking to stem the influx of people, the EU has struck a deal with Turkey to stop people crossing from there into the bloc. Turkey hosts some 2.7 million refugees from the conflict in neighboring Syria. — Agencies



PARIS: A picture taken yesterday shows migrants being evacuated from a makeshift camp under the Stalingrad metro station in Paris. — AFP

MORE THAN 1,000 EVACUATED FROM PARIS MIGRANT CAMP

PARIS: Police evacuated more than one thousand people from a makeshift migrant camp near a Paris metro station yesterday, the third time the camp has been cleared in as many months. Shortly after 6:00 am, people who had been staying in the tightly packed tents under an elevated section of the Stalingrad station in the north of Paris began boarding buses to take them to reception centres.

The evacuation passed off largely without incident, authorities said. Although only around 500 people had been counted at the camp the night before, police said around 1,350 people had gathered there yesterday to be re-located to accommodation centres, suggesting that migrants from other parts of Paris had swelled their numbers. Around 150 police officers were involved in the operation to relocate the migrants, mostly from Sudan and Afghanistan. "We're happy to leave," said Moustafa, a 24-year-old Afghan who had been at the camp for a month.

"There were fights every night at the camp." Another Afghan, Abdullah, said he hoped to stay

in Paris long-term. "That is where the rest of the community is and there is work here."

He said he had given up hope of reaching Britain, the country which many of his compatriots try to reach from France. "It's a good country here," he said. Filmy tents were packed into a small area around the station and the overflowing rubbish bins and piles of mattresses indicated that conditions at the camp had deteriorated in recent weeks. Jean-Francois Carencu, the prefect of the Ile de France area that includes Paris, said he expected the migrants to request asylum.

"Those who do not request asylum or who behave badly will be expelled," he said. "France is not a place for disorder and chaos." Nearly 80,000 people applied for asylum in France in 2015, but it has been affected less than its European neighbors by the mass influx of migrants over the last 18 months. The main migrant camp in France, the so-called "Jungle" in the northern port of Calais, now holds around 5,000 people, according to charity workers, but the government says that figure is vastly inflated. — AFP

UKRAINIAN FIRMS TURN TO COURT OVER CRIMEA LOSSES

AMSTERDAM: Two Ukrainian energy companies have asked a UN arbitrator to award them compensation for investments they lost when Russia seized control of the Crimean peninsula, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) said yesterday.

The case, brought in June but only now made public, involves petrol stations owned by Ukrnafta and Stabil. It is the latest instance of investors asking international courts to compensate them for losses they blame on the Russian government. Last year, Igor Kolomoisky, one of Ukraine's richest businessmen, brought a case before the same court seeking some \$15 million compensation from Russia for the loss of an airport he owned on the Black Sea peninsula.

Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014 after street protests in the Ukrainian capital forced a Moscow-backed president to flee. In

both cases, the plaintiffs alleged that the loss of their assets following Crimea's annexation amounted to a violation of a bilateral investment treaty between Russia and Ukraine.

Russia has declined to contest both cases, saying the court has no jurisdiction over the matter. The court will hold hearings over whether it has jurisdiction in July. In 2014, the PCA awarded a record \$50 billion to former shareholders in oil company Yukos, which went bankrupt after controlling shareholder Mikhail Khodorkovsky ran foul of Russian leader Vladimir Putin and the government began demanding payment of huge sums in back taxes. But a Dutch court last month set aside that ruling, saying the PCA had overstepped its jurisdiction. Both parties have pledged to continue the legal battle, in a sign that even a successful claim can be almost impossible to enforce. — Reuters

FRENCH PM VOWS TO SUPERVISE AUSTRALIAN SUB DEAL HIMSELF

CANBERRA: A mega deal to build Australian submarines was so important, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls said yesterday, that he pledged to personally supervise the project as Paris and Canberra bolster defense ties. French contractor DCNS last week beat off competition from Japan and Germany to seal the 12-submarine Aus\$50 billion (\$39 billion) contract, prompting Valls to make a surprise visit to Canberra.

"I will supervise, myself, the implementation of our commitments with the minister of defense who will be coming shortly to Australia," Valls told a press conference with Australian counterpart Malcolm Turnbull. "It is an industrial and economic partnership. It is also a partnership that binds us for a very long time on other issues, including security and defence," he added.

Valls said it was a "win-win" deal, adding that Paris would fulfill all its commitments including job creation in Australia and the transfer of technology. DCNS plans to build a 4,500-tonne conventionally-powered version of its 4,700-tonne Barracuda, which the company has described as "the most technically complex artefact in Australia".

The DCNS website says the new vessel would be "the recipient of France's most sensitive and protected submarine technology and will be the most lethal conventional submarine ever contemplated". A Japanese government-backed consortium led by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, and German group ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems, were also in the running. But Canberra said DCNS was considered "best to meet all of our unique capability requirements".

The tender process was politically sensitive domestically, with national elections expected in July. Canberra insisted that all the subs be built in Australia amid fears any off-the-shelf purchase could kill off the domestic shipbuilding industry. "We are an island nation and we need to ensure that we have the best defences. Now, that is the primary objective," said Turnbull. — AFP



SEOUL: A relative of a victim complains to Ata Safdar, head of British firm Reckitt Benckiser Korea, right, during a press conference in Seoul yesterday. — AP

FAR-RIGHT CRIMES RISE SHARPLY IN AUSTRIA AMID MIGRANT CRISIS

VIENNA: Austria saw a sharp increase last year in the number of incidents involving xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-semitism, a report showed yesterday, following the arrival of large numbers of mostly Muslim migrants and refugees. Authorities pressed charges in about 1,690 cases related to right-wing extremism in 2015, the highest number to date in a single year and up from 1,200 in 2014, the report by Austria's domestic intelligence service BVT showed.

The number of far-right "extremist acts" reported in 2015 - which range from hurling fireworks at migrant shelters to inciting violence on the internet - totalled 1,150 cases, up from 750 in 2014, the report also showed. Austria received around 90,000 asylum requests in 2015, mostly in the last few months of the year, after large numbers of migrants and refugees, many fleeing conflicts in Syria, Iraq

and Afghanistan, arrived in the staunchly Roman Catholic country of 8.5 million people.

"If we look at these hate crimes more closely, we see ... (they seek) to create tensions and cause splits in civil society," Martin Weiss, head of the BVT department for information gathering and investigations, told reporters.

"The police and judiciary must give more attention to this because this context is a special challenge for the security forces," he said, adding that in the course of 2015 the nature of far-right crimes committed became increasingly physical.

Afghans are the largest national group seeking asylum in Austria. After initially welcoming the migrants last autumn, Austria has said it cannot cope with the numbers and has coordinated border restrictions that have shut down the main Balkans migrant route from Greece to western Europe. — Reuters



KOCHI: In this 22, 2012 file photo, Italian marines Salvatore Gironi (left) and Massimiliano Latorre, arrive at the Ciampino Rome airport from Kochi, India. — AP

HAGUE TRIBUNAL OKS MARINE'S RETURN FROM INDIA, SAYS ITALY

ROME: An international tribunal in The Hague has decided that an Italian marine being held in India in the shooting deaths of two Indian fishermen mistaken for pirates can return home for the duration of arbitration, the Italian foreign ministry said yesterday.

The tribunal's decision, approving an Italian request, was expected to be officially announced in The Hague today. India has accused two marines, Salvatore Gironi and Massimiliano Latorre, of the shootings in 2012 while they were assigned to anti-piracy duties aboard an Italian commercial ship, the Enrica Lexie.

Latorre has been in Italy since 2014 for medical treatment following a stroke suffered while detained in India. The Italian government had insisted that Gironi also be allowed to return to Italy, for the length of the arbitration process, which could take years. Italy contends the incident occurred in international waters. It disputes India's claim to jurisdiction, insisting the case should be handled by the Italians. The Hague tribunal has been asked to rule on the jurisdiction dispute.

India has been bullish in insisting its sovereignty in the case be recognized. Its government didn't immediately issue any official comment yesterday's development, or indicate when Gironi might return. "The conditions of (Gironi's) return will be agreed upon by Italy and India," Italy's foreign ministry said in a statement. The tribunal's decision on Gironi "is good news for the two marines, for their families and for the reasons contended by the (Italian) government and by our lawyers," the ministry said. "The government is counting on a constructive attitude by India."

The Italian government was going to immediately start consultations with India so that the tribunal's decision can be carried out "in brief time," the ministry said. Earlier in the dispute, the two marines were allowed to return home to see their families on holiday, but then were sent back to India under the terms of that arrangement. — AP



MUMBAI: Indian youth stand in the shade of a monument on a hot afternoon at the Arabian Sea coast in Mumbai yesterday. Much of India is reeling under a weeks-long heat wave and severe drought conditions that have decimated crops, killed livestock and left at least 330 million Indians without enough water for their daily needs. — AP

WARY OF CHINA MOVES, US, INDIA DISCUSS ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE

INDIA, US, JAPAN PLAN ANTI-SUB EXERCISES IN JUNE

NEW DELHI/HONG KONG: India and the United States are in talks to help each other track submarines in the Indian Ocean, military officials say, a move that could further tighten defense ties between New Delhi and Washington as China steps up its undersea activities.

Both the United States and India are growing concerned at the reach and ambition of the Chinese navy, which is taking an increasingly assertive stance in the South China Sea and is challenging India's domination in the Indian Ocean. New Delhi, shedding its decades-old reluctance to be drawn into America's embrace, agreed last month to open up its military bases to the United States in exchange for access to weapons technology to help it narrow the gap with China.

The two sides also said their navies will hold talks on anti-submarine warfare (ASW), an area of sensitive military technology and closely held tactics that only allies share. "These types of basic engagements will be the building blocks for an enduring Navy-to-Navy relationship that we hope will grow over time into a shared ASW capability," one US official familiar with India-US military cooperation said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Indian naval officials say Chinese submarines have been sighted on an average four times every three months. Some are seen near India's Andamans and Nicobar islands that lie near the Malacca Straits, the entry to the South China Sea through which more than 80 percent of China's fuel supplies pass.

India and the United States, which already conduct joint naval exercises, both fly the new version of the P-8 aircraft, making information sharing easier on highly sensitive submarine tracking activities. The P-8 is Washington's most advanced submarine hunting weapon, equipped with sensors that can track and identify submarines by sonar and other means.

An Indian naval spokesman declined to comment on the proposed anti-submarine warfare cooperation with the United States. But an Indian naval source, briefed on the discussions, said the focus of the next set of joint exercises to take place in the northern Philippine Sea in June will be on anti-submarine warfare.

Japan, a close US ally whose submarines are believed to track Chinese submarines in the western Pacific, will also be a participant in the exercises.

INTENSE SURVEILLANCE

Two linked factors are driving the co-operation, say regional military attaches and security experts. The prospect of active patrols by nuclear-armed Chinese submarines has sparked intense surveillance activity around the China's southern submarine base on Hainan Island, and nearby waters.

India, meanwhile, is preparing to launch its first locally-built submarine armed with nuclear tipped missiles. So just as US attack submarines are seeking to track the Chinese nuclear armed submarines in the Pacific, the Chinese are expected to send their own attack submarines to the Indian Ocean in greater numbers to scrutinize the Indian patrols.

Collin Koh, a submarine expert at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, said increased US submarine and surveillance activity was being seen across the region. "We will see the Indian Ocean grow in importance, too, particularly around traditional chokeholds, such as the approaches to the Malacca Straits and the Nicobar islands, so an improved US relationship with the major submarine player in the area, India, is very significant," Koh said.

BOLSTERING INDIAN CAPABILITIES

Initially, the United States as the world leader in anti-submarine warfare is likely to be bolstering Indian capabilities in the field. But in time, experts say each country could be covering stretches of the Indian Ocean through which two-thirds of the world's trade moves.

David Brewster, an expert on the strategic rivalry in Indian Ocean at the Australian National University, said anti-submarine warfare collaboration may eventually include Australia, another US ally which just ordered 12 new submarines. "We are likely to ultimately see a division of responsibilities in the Indian Ocean between those three countries, and with the potential to also share facilities." China for its part is seeking to secure its energy and trade transportation links by building ports and other infrastructure for countries such as Sri Lanka that lie along the vital shipping route.

Asked about collaboration between India and the United States on submarine warfare, Hua Chunying, a spokeswoman for China's Foreign Ministry, said China had noted countries in the region engaging in military cooperation. "We hope that the relevant cooperation is normal, and that it can be meaningful to the peace and stability of the region," she said. — Reuters



NEW DELHI: Indian taxi drivers and owners shout slogans as they block a road during a protest in New Delhi yesterday against the banning of diesel cabs from plying the roads of the Indian capital. — AFP

DIESEL CAB DRIVERS PROTEST BAN IN SMOG-CHOKED DELHI

NEW DELHI: Hundreds of taxi drivers protested in New Delhi yesterday against a ban on diesel cabs, the latest initiative aimed at improving air quality in the world's most polluted capital.

India's top court on Saturday ordered taxis run on the dirty fuel off the city's roads, refusing industry requests for more time to switch to greener compressed natural gas (CNG).

Many of Delhi's taxis already run on CNG, but the ban will impact about 30,000 traditional cabs and some working for app-based Uber and Ola services, according to taxi operators.

The Supreme Court has been pressuring authorities to reduce dangerous levels of haze and dust that choke the city, with a string of orders last year including a ban on new, large diesel cars, affecting all road users. Angry taxi drivers blocked key intersections in Delhi and neighbouring satellite city of Gurgaon yesterday morning, bringing peak-hour traffic to a standstill for hours.

"You can't have knee-jerk solutions to long-standing problems," Balwant Singh, who heads a taxi union of 500 members, told AFP at a noisy demonstration in central Delhi. "Why go after commercial passenger vehicles only? Private diesel

cars are running freely on the roads, why not stop them?"

Some drivers said they knew of no available technology to switch from diesel to CNG and would instead be forced to buy new taxis.

"I sold my house to buy the taxi and now I will have to sit at home and twiddle my thumbs. How will my family of five survive you tell me," said driver Tarun Kumar. A 2014 World Health Organization survey of more than 1,600 cities ranked Delhi as the most polluted, partly because of the nearly 10 million vehicles on its roads.

The ban by the court, which was acting on a petition, came just days after the end of another two weeks of "odd-even" that kept about one million cars off Delhi's roads. The government scheme, first tested in January, restricts cars to alternate days according to whether they carry odd or even-numbered licence plates. But Delhi-based research institute TERI said its analysis found the measures had not significantly reduced concentrations of PM 10 and PM 2.5 during the first week. These fine particles measuring less than 2.5 micrometres are linked to higher rates of chronic bronchitis, lung cancer and heart disease. — AFP

Classic Afternoon Tea

Assorted scones served with clotted cream, blood orange marmalade and strawberry jam.

Mini pastries, macarons, fresh fruit and chocolate treats.

Finger sandwiches.

Individual chocolate fondue served with marshmallows, brownies, fresh fruit, lollipops and cookies.

KD 15

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NEPAL, NORTHERN INDIA BATTLE WORST FOREST FIRES IN YEARS

NEW DELHI/KATHMANDU: Nepal and parts of northern India are battling their worst forest fires in years that have devastated thousands of hectares of woodland, killed at least 18 people and sent a pall of smoke across the southern Himalayas that can be seen from space.

In Nepal, 11 people have died while trying to fight fires that have razed 280,000 hectares (692,000 acres) of forest across the country, the worst in six years. "This year we have experienced a longer spell of dry weather and the temperatures have risen significantly, contributing to the disaster," Forest Ministry official Krishna Prasad Acharya told Reuters.

The worst forest fires in four years in India's northern Uttarakhand state have killed at least seven people and disrupted the lives of thousands, an emergency official said yesterday. The Uttarakhand fires have intensified in the past week, torching more than 2,000 hectares (4,900 acres) of forest.

Indian Air Force helicopters have been scooping and dumping water from reservoirs in an attempt to

douse the flames, but operations were hampered by poor visibility. A dozen locations, including in Almora, Pauri Garhwal and Chamoli districts, were badly hit, said Anil Shekhawat, a spokesman at the National Disaster Response Force.

"This can be compared with the worst fire of 2012," Indian Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar said in New Delhi. Four people had been arrested on suspicion of starting forest fires, he added. The number of reported forest fires has jumped to 1,689 so far this year in Uttarakhand, compared to 207 for the whole of 2015, according to data from the Forest Survey of India.

Forests cover about a quarter of India's total area. "The fire is under control and has shown a downward trend in the past two days," said S Ramaswamy, additional chief secretary of Uttarakhand. India typically sees a rise in forest fires as temperatures rise from mid-March until the rainy season begins in June. — Reuters

S KOREA WARNS OF RISK NORTH MAY ABDUCT CITIZENS ABROAD

SEOUL: South Korea said yesterday it was on guard for the possibility North Korea may try to snatch its citizens abroad or conduct "terrorist acts" after the North accused it of abducting North Korean workers from a restaurant in China. "All measures of precaution" were in place for the safety of South Koreans abroad including an order to beef up security at diplomatic missions, said the South's Unification Ministry, which handles issues related to the North.

"We are on alert for the possibility that the North may try to abduct our citizens or conduct terrorist acts abroad," ministry spokesman Jeong Joon-hee told a briefing.

The two Koreas have been fierce rivals since the 1950-53 Korean War and tension on the peninsula has been high since

January when North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test. It followed that with a string of missile tests in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions.

South Korea said in April 13 North Korean workers at a restaurant run by the North in China had defected. North Korea accused the South of a "hideous abduction". North Korea proposed sending family members of the 13 to South Korea for face-to-face meetings but the South rejected the suggestion.

About 29,000 people have left North Korea and arrived in the South since the Korean war, including 1,276 last year, with numbers declining since a 2009 peak. In the first quarter of this year, 342 North Koreans arrived in the South. — Reuters

MILITANTS THREATENED TO SLIT OUR THROATS: INDONESIAN HOSTAGE

JAKARTA: An Indonesian sailor told yesterday how Philippine Islamic militants threatened to slit his throat during a terrifying kidnap ordeal, a day after he and nine other crew members were released.

The sailors were freed Sunday in the strife-torn southern Philippines after more than a month in the hands of Abu Sayyaf militants, and flew back to Jakarta. The Indonesians were among about 20 foreigners abducted in a recent Abu Sayyaf kidnapping spree, and their release came just days after the militants beheaded a Canadian hostage. The sailors, who were taken hostage in late March from a tugboat transporting a coal barge, were reunited with their families yesterday after doctors confirmed they were in good health. Crew member Julian Philip described how they were taken hostage by eight militants disguised in Philippine police uniforms, who boarded the tug from speedboats and tied up the sailors.

The barge was then abandoned, and the Indonesians were taken to an island and divided into two groups. They were moved every few days to avoid the military, which has launched an assault against Abu Sayyaf. "We were all stressed out because they frequently threatened to slit our throats," he told reporters after the 10 were reunited with their families at the foreign ministry. However, Philip added the militants did not harm them and he thought that in reality "they did not want any of us to die as they would not get any money."

Questions over ransom

He said he did not know whether a ran-

som was paid for their release. "We were just put in a car and sent on our way and told to look for the governor's house," he said. The sailors turned up at the house of a local governor on Jolo, a mountainous and jungle-clad island in the far south of the Philippines that is an Abu Sayyaf stronghold. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi said Monday the release had been a "long process as the situation on the ground was very volatile, with a high degree of complexity". But she dodged questions about whether a ransom had been paid. The Abu Sayyaf does not normally free hostages unless ransom demands are met. The militants had demanded \$21 million for the release of Canadian John Ridsdel, whose severed head was found on a street in Jolo.

There were emotional scenes at the ministry as the sailors were reunited with their families, with Youla Lasut, one of the men's wives, giving tearful thanks.

"On behalf of my family I would like to thank the foreign minister and the company for their help in releasing my husbands and his friends," she said.

Authorities say the Abu Sayyaf is still holding at least 11 foreign hostages-four sailors from Indonesia and four others from Malaysia, a Canadian tourist, a Norwegian resort owner and a Dutch birdwatcher.

Abu Sayyaf is a radical offshoot of a Muslim separatist insurgency in the south of the mainly Catholic Philippines. Its leaders have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group, but analysts say they are more focused on kidnappings for ransom than setting up a caliphate. — AFP



MANILA: Protesters display placards during their rally outside the Chinese Consulate at the financial district of Makati city, east of Manila, Philippines to accuse poaching by Chinese fishermen at the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea. — AP

CHINA TRAINS 'FISHING MILITIA' TO SAIL INTO DISPUTED WATERS

BOATS GO INTO DISPUTED SEAS AS FISHING STOCKS GET DEPLETED

BAIMAJING, China: The fishing fleet based in this tiny port town on Hainan island is getting everything from military training and subsidies to even fuel and ice as China creates an increasingly sophisticated fishing militia to sail into the disputed South China Sea. The training and support includes exercises at sea and requests to fishermen to gather information on foreign vessels, provincial government officials, regional diplomats and fishing company executives said in recent interviews.

"The maritime militia is expanding because of the country's need for it, and because of the desire of the fishermen to engage in national service, protecting our country's interests," said an advisor to the Hainan government who did not want to be named. But the fishing militia also raises the risk of conflict with foreign navies in the strategic waterway through which \$5 trillion of trade passes each year, diplomats and naval experts say. The United States has been conducting sea and air patrols near artificial islands China is building in the disputed Spratly archipelago, including by two B-52 strategic bombers in November. Washington said in February it would increase the "freedom of navigation" sail-bys around the disputed sea.

BASIC MILITARY TRAINING

The city-level branches of the People's Armed Forces Department provide basic military training to fishermen, said the Hainan government advisor. The branches are overseen by both the military and local Communist Party authorities in charge of militia operations nationwide.

The training encompasses search and rescue operations, contending with disasters at sea, and "safeguarding Chinese sovereignty," said the advisor who focuses on the South China Sea. The training, which includes exercises at sea, takes place between May and August and the government pays fishermen for participating, he said.

Government subsidies encourage fishermen to use heavier vessels with steel - as opposed to wooden - hulls. The government has also provided Global Positioning Satellite equipment for at least 50,000 vessels, enabling them to contact the Chinese Coast Guard in maritime emergencies, including encounters with foreign ships,

industry executives said. Several Hainan fishermen and diplomats told Reuters some vessels have small arms.

When "a particular mission in safeguarding sovereignty," comes up government authorities will coordinate with the fishing militia, the advisor said, asking them to gather information on the activities of foreign vessels at sea.

ROW WITH INDONESIA

That coordination was evident in March, when Indonesia attempted to detain a Chinese fishing vessel for fishing near its Natuna Islands in the South China Sea. A Chinese coast guard vessel quickly intervened to prevent the Indonesian Navy from towing away the fishing boat, setting off a diplomatic row. Beijing does not claim the Natunas but said the boats were in "traditional Chinese fishing grounds".

China claims almost all of the South China Sea. The Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan and Brunei also have conflicting claims over the islets and atolls that constitute the Spratly Archipelago and its rich fishing grounds. State-controlled fishing companies dominate the fleets that go regularly to the Spratlys and are recipients of much of the militia training and subsidies, industry sources said.

China has by far the world's biggest fish industry, but depleted fishery resources close to China's shores have made fishing in disputed waters an economic necessity, fishermen and industry executives say. State-owned Hainan South China Sea Modern Fishery Group Company says on its website it is "both military and commercial, both soldiers and civilians." One of its aims, the company says, is to let the "Chinese flag fly" over the Spratlys. "Defending sovereignty is primarily the government's concern," said Ye Ning, the company's general manager, in an interview at its office in Haikou. "But of course, regular folks being able to fish in their own countries' waters should be the norm. That goes for us too."

The company provides fishermen who sail to the Spratlys with fuel, water, and ice, and then purchases fish from them when they returned, according to a written introduction to the company's work executives provided to Reuters.

'LOT MORE RISKY'

"It's gotten a lot more risky to do this with all kinds of foreign boats out there," said Huang Jing, a local fisherman in the sleepy port town of Baimajing, where a line of massive steel-hulled fishing trawlers stretches as far as the eye can see. "But China is strong now," he said. "I trust the government to protect us."

Chen Rishen, chairman of Hainan Jianghai Group Co. Ltd, says his private but state subsidised company dispatches large fleets of steel-hulled trawlers weighing hundreds of tonnes to fish near the Spratly Islands. They usually go for months at a time, primarily for commercial reasons, he said. "If some foreign fishing boats infringe on our territory and try to prevent us from fishing there ... Then we're put in the role of safeguarding sovereignty," he said in an interview in Haikou, the provincial capital of Hainan. China does not use its fishing fleet to help establish sovereignty claims in the South China Sea, foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said. "This kind of situation does not exist." China had taken measures to ensure the fishing fleets conduct business legally, he told a ministry press briefing last month.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Chen said his fishermen stop at Woody Island in the Paracel islands, where China recently installed surface-to-air missiles, to refuel and communicate with Chinese Coast Guard vessels. They look forward to using similar facilities China is developing in the Spratly Islands, he said.

China has been pouring sand from the seabed onto seven reefs to create artificial islands in the Spratlys. So far, it has built one airstrip with two more under construction on them, with refuelling and storage facilities. "This all points to the need for establishing agreed protocols for ensuring clear and effective communications between civilian and maritime law enforcement vessels of different countries operating in the area," said Michael Vatikiotis, Asia Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, which is helping claimant states design such confidence building measures. A regional agreement on communications and procedures when rival navies meet at sea applies only to naval ships and other military vessels, he said. — Reuters



JAKARTA: Indonesian sailors arrive for a ceremony to mark the hostages being handed over to their families at the Foreign Ministry office in Jakarta yesterday. — AFP

WEALTH QUESTION OVER FILIPINO MAYOR'S PRESIDENTIAL RUN

MANILA: Allegations that the Philippine presidential election front-runner had a large sum of money in an undeclared bank account were not resolved yesterday, allowing the issue to hang over the final week of the closely fought race. Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV has alleged Mayor Rodrigo Duterte kept more than 200 million pesos (\$4.2 million) in a joint bank account with his daughter that he did not declare publicly in 2014 as required by law.

Trillanes, who is running for vice president and is backing a rival candidate of Duterte, went to the Bank of the Philippine Islands and met with the mayor's lawyer but said the questioned account was not opened for scrutiny. When Trillanes stepped out of the bank, some of the dozens of Duterte supporters yelled "liar" at him before he was whisked off by escorts in a van. Riot police stood by to maintain order in the business district where Trillanes' supporters also came, carrying posters that read: "We don't want corrupt candidates." A large throng of journalists, TV cameramen and photographers stood outside the bank to await the outcome

of the meeting between Trillanes and Duterte lawyer Salvador Panelo. Panelo said the mayor authorized him to ask that the questioned account be opened to prove the allegations were false, but bank officials told him it would take seven days to study the request.

"I have no problem with that," Panelo said he told bank officials. Trillanes made public a signed statement, where he named the informant who provided him documents showing Duterte's alleged secret bank accounts, including in the bank branch where he met Panelo yesterday. When an investigation by him and his staff showed that his informant's disclosures were credible, he said he decided to go public. "I believe it is important for our people to know about the gross misrepresentation and pretensions perpetrated by Mayor Duterte that he is poor and he lives a simple life when ... he held bank accounts containing hundreds of millions, if not billions of pesos," he said in the statement.

Panelo described the documents the senator showed to back his allegations as "bogus." Trillanes has said he would resign as a senator if his disclosure was wrong. Duterte's spokesman initially denied last week the mayor had such a bank account. The mayor, however, acknowledged its existence on Friday in a news conference but denied he had committed any wrongdoing, although he did not explain where the money came from.

"I will admit there is money in that account," Duterte told reporters, saying it was less than the 211 million pesos that Trillanes had alleged. The tough-talking Duterte has led voter preference polls ahead of the May 9 elections on a promise to eradicate crime and corruption in the country within six months if he triumphs. It remains unclear whether the controversy over Duterte's bank account will affect his strong popularity with a week to go before the elections. Duterte remained in the top spot in the most recent polls despite a storm of criticism after he remarked that he wished he could have been the first to rape an Australian missionary who was sexually assaulted and killed by inmates in a 1989 prison riot because she was so beautiful. — AP



MANILA: Salvador Panelo, lawyer of presidential candidate Rodrigo Duterte, gestures as he holds documents before meeting Philippine senator and vice-presidential candidate Antonio Trillanes IV at a bank in Pasig, east of Manila, yesterday. — AP

MASSACRE SURVIVORS GIVE INDONESIAN GOVT LIST OF MASS GRAVES

JAKARTA: Survivors of Indonesia's anti-communist massacres in 1965 submitted a list of what they say are more than 100 mass graves to the government yesterday after the president called for an investigation into the killings. Five survivors, aged in their 70s, who are founders of the Research Foundation for 1965 Murder Victims, gave the documents to the Coordinating Ministry for Politics, Legal and Security Affairs, which is responsible for the probe.

The list is the product of research since 2000 and the graves, which are located on the islands of Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Sulawesi, Flores and Bali, account for nearly 14,000 victims, according to the group.

Historians say half a million people died in the months-long frenzy of killing that began in October 1965 at the instigation of the military after six right-wing generals were killed in an attempted coup by suspected communists.

Security minister Luhut Pandjaitan was not on hand to receive the documents but his officials said he would meet with the group next week. He was instructed by President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo to oversee an investigation into the massacres after a conference held by the government and rights groups last month broke a half-century taboo on public discussion of the killings. Luhut, a retired general, caused a stir by saying at the event that very few people were killed and vowing the government would never apologize. He later demanded that rights groups prove that mass graves exist.

Bedjo Untung, a survivor of the massacres who heads the foundation, said it had documented the locations of 122 mass graves with the help of survivors and witnesses, including people who dug the graves and buried the bodies. "We believe this is only 2 percent of the victims," he said. — AP



DENPASAR: The body of Amokrane Sabet from France arrives at Sanglah hospital in Denpasar, on Bali island yesterday. — AFP

BALI POLICE SHOOT DEAD FRENCHMAN RESISTING ARREST

DENPASAR: Police on the Indonesian holiday island of Bali shot dead a French national yesterday after he killed a policeman while resisting arrest, an official said.

Amokrane Sabet, reported to be a mixed martial arts fighter, was known as a troublemaker in the area in southern Bali where he lived. "There had been many complaints about him such as eating at restaurants without paying, carrying a knife, and harassing people, but every time we called him in for questioning, he never showed up," Bali police spokesman Hery Wiyanto told AFP. Around 40 police and immigration officials came to arrest the 49-year-old after discovering that his tourist visa had run out in September. But as they arrived at his residence in

Canggu, a village popular with foreign tourists, Sabet emerged brandishing a knife. "One of our officers tried to approach him and calm him down, but Sabet stabbed him," said Wiyanto, adding that the officer died from his wounds. Police then gave Sabet three warnings but as these were ignored, they shot him several times, Wiyanto said. Images circulating online showed Sabet waving a knife and later lying on the ground.

The French embassy in Jakarta said it had been informed of the death and was in contact with police. Such flare-ups of violence are rare in Bali, a pocket of Hinduism in Muslim-majority Indonesia that attracts millions of foreign tourists to its palm-fringed beaches every year. — AFP

SCIENTISTS DISCOVER 'HABITABLE' PLANETS

Continued from Page 1

exoplanets - planets revolving around stars outside our solar system. The innermost two circle their dwarf star every 1.5 and 2.4 days, though they are hit with only four and two times the amount of heat-generating radiation that Earth receives from the Sun.

The more distant orbit of the third planet takes between four and 73 days, according to the study. "So far, the existence of such 'red worlds' orbiting ultra-cool dwarf stars was purely theoretical, but now we have not just one lonely planet but three," said co-author Emmanuel Jehin, also from the University of Liege. He called the discovery a "paradigm shift" in the search for life elsewhere in the universe. Given their size and proximity to their low-intensity star, all three planets may have regions at temperatures within a range suitable for sustaining liquid water and life, the study concluded.

Their proximity to Earth means scientists will be able to find out a lot more. "These planets are so close, and their star so small, we can study their atmosphere and composition," said co-author Julien de Wit, a postdoc at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). "This is a jackpot for the field," he said in a statement, adding that it should be possible to

determine if they harbour life "within our generation." Up to now, the search for Earth-like orbs in our Galaxy and beyond centred on stars like our Sun, more massive and hotter than the dwarf around which the newly-discovered worlds orbit. But the discovery suggests that a significant fraction of ultracool dwarfs hold potentially habitable planets in their gravitational sway. "At the scale of the Galaxy, this means billions of additional places where life might have developed," Gillon said.

The mass of the three planets circling TRAPPIST-1 cannot be less than 50 percent of that of Earth, and are probably not more than double, he added. "They could be richer or poorer in water and rocks than our planet, and if they have an atmosphere, it is probably very different than ours." To give rise to life as we know it, planets have to be in a "Goldilocks zone" in relation to their star, far enough away so that its heat doesn't evaporate all the water, but close enough so that it can exist in liquid form.

Building and using the TRAPPIST infrared telescope to hunt for planets was a risky strategy. "It's not looking at 100,000 stars at a time, like the Kepler Space Telescope," de Wit said. "It is few of them that you're spending time on, one at a time. And one paid off," he added. — AFP



The Dome of the Rock Mosque in the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound is seen in Jerusalem's Old City yesterday. — AP

AUSTRALIAN CRAIG WRIGHT SAYS HE CREATED...

Continued from Page 1

Bitcoin is a technically sophisticated currency based on the same underlying mathematics as governments and militaries use to encrypt codes. Unlike traditional currencies such as the dollar or the euro, which require the sponsorship of a central bank, Bitcoin is decentralized.

Digital coins are created by supercomputers and then traded online or exchanged for goods and services by a peer-to-peer network of computers connected to the Internet. Despite some early notoriety over its use by drug dealers on the dark web, the system has grown beyond its radical libertarian roots and is being taken increasingly seriously by the financial establishment. Billions of dollars worth of Bitcoins are now in circulation.

Wright had presented proof that only the true creator of Bitcoin could have provided, the BBC said. It posted a video of him demonstrating the signing of a message with the public key associated with the first transaction ever done on Bitcoin following its 2009 launch. These keys had to be created by Satoshi Nakamoto, the pseudonym used at the time by the currency's creator, the broadcaster said.

But The Economist was more skeptical, saying there were still a number of steps to go through in order to verify the claim and "important questions remain." "Imagine that the paternity of a particularly brilliant child is in doubt, and someone steps forward to claim he is the father," its article

said. "In the real world a DNA test would sort the matter out quickly. In the confusing world of Bitcoin... things are not that simple." The claim also drew skepticism from some members of the tech community on online forums like Reddit.

In a statement, Wright said he was going public because he wanted to "dispel any negative myths" about Bitcoin. "I cannot allow the misinformation that has been spread to impact the future of Bitcoin," he said. "I'm now able to build on what I have previously completed by releasing my research and academic work and help people understand just how powerful this can really be."

Jon Matonis, founding director of the Bitcoin Foundation, wrote on his blog yesterday that it was his "firm belief" that Wright had invented Bitcoin. He said he had seen complex cryptographic, social and technical evidence. "According to me, the proof is conclusive and I have no doubt that Craig Steven Wright is the person behind the Bitcoin technology, Nakamoto consensus, and the Satoshi Nakamoto name," Matonis wrote.

Wright was identified as the possible creator of Bitcoin in December by technology publications Wired and Gizmodo, shortly before his home in Sydney was reportedly raided in a tax probe. Little biographical detail is known about Wright, who describes himself as a cyber-security expert and was born in Brisbane but, according to The Economist, has now moved to London. — AFP

BINLADIN GROUP LAYS OFF 77,000 WORKERS

Continued from Page 1

On Friday, Al-Watan reported that 50,000 of the group's staff were refusing to leave the country while their salaries remained unpaid after more than four months. Another newspaper, Arab News, on Sunday cited Saudi Binladin Group employees as confirming "massive layoffs". An Arab News report yesterday blamed "unpaid workers" for torching several Binladin Group buses in Makkah over the weekend. Authorities confirmed seven buses were burned but did not give the cause.

Egyptians account for a large percentage of Binladin Group employees. Some complained to Egypt's labor ministry that their salaries had not been paid for three months, the Arab News reported in March. A well-informed source told AFP in March that "because of delays in payments from the government administration, several companies today have problems... paying both their employees and producers".

Minister of State Mohammad bin Abdulmalik Al-Sheikh told Bloomberg News in an interview published April 4 "that all or 95 to 98 percent of all arrears will be

paid" within two weeks. Saudi Binladin Group was founded more than 80 years ago by the father of Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, killed five years ago by US Navy Seals. It developed landmarks including the domed Faisaliah Tower in central Riyadh and the Makkah Royal Clock Tower, one of the world's tallest buildings.

After decades of thriving on lucrative government contracts, the company faced unprecedented scrutiny after one of its cranes working on a major expansion of the Grand Mosque in Makkah, Islam's holiest site, toppled in September. At least 109 people including foreign pilgrims died, leading King Salman to suspend the firm from new public contracts. This has been a factor in the firm's economic difficulties, a well-informed source said.

Two Gulf banking industry sources, declining to be named because of commercial sensitivities, said it was believed to owe local and international banks a total of about \$30 billion. Bankers said the company had been meeting with banks to reassure them that its loans would be repaid, and that it had brought in outside experts, including foreigners, to beef up its project management and budgeting skills. — Agencies

IRAN CRITICIZES US PRESENCE IN GULF

Continued from Page 1

Khamenei also reiterated his criticism about the conspicuous spending habits of Iran's increasingly prominent wealthy upper class, saying the government needed to regulate consumption patterns. Critics have drawn attention to the wave of new luxury cars present in Tehran and other major cities. "I have many times

warned but the consumption patterns have not been amended. The nouveau-riche kids with those cars in the streets are there for this reason, he said. Khamenei has the final say on all state matters in Iran. Despite last summer's landmark deal between Iran and the world powers, he has remained publicly suspicious of Western intentions toward Iran and the influence of Western culture and values. — AP

CHAMPIONS LEICESTER TURN TABLES ON ELITE

Continued from Page 1

His centre-back partner Wes Morgan, the captain, did not play top-level football until he was 30. Winger Marc Albrighton was released by his formative club Aston Villa in 2014. His season began amid personal tragedy, after his partner's mother was killed in the terror attack in Sousse, Tunisia last June.

Most famous of all, now, are Riyad Mahrez and Jamie Vardy, signed for a combined fee of some £1.4 million (\$2 million) and who have become two of the most feared forwards in England. Dazzling Algerian winger Mahrez, told he was "too skinny" by his youth coaches in the Sarcelles district of Paris, recently became the first African to be named England's Player of the Year. The prolific Vardy, rejected by boyhood club Sheffield Wednesday for being "too small", is now a Premier League record-breaker and England international whose rags-to-riches tale is reportedly being turned into a Hollywood film.

Overseeing it all has been 64-year-old Ranieri, derided as a nearly man by Jose Mourinho and mocked on his return to England last year, but whose lyrical soundbites became the soundtrack to Leicester's drive to glory. Leicester escaped relegation last season by winning seven of their last nine games, so there was dismay when manager Nigel Pearson was sacked after his son, a Leicester youth player, was involved in a racist sex tape during a post-season tour of Thailand, home of club owner Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha.

But Ranieri, the former Chelsea manager, was canny enough to see that there was momentum to be harnessed and had the good sense to retain key members of Pearson's staff, such as well-regarded head of recruit-

ment Steve Walsh. "The most important thing, and what he deserves the most credit for, is he hasn't come in and tried to change everything," said Schmeichel during the season. With new signings Huth, Christian Fuchs, Shinji Okazaki and French midfield monster N'Golo Kante carefully added to the blend, Ranieri ditched the back three used by Pearson for a 4-4-2 system. His underdog playing strategy - structured defence allied with rapid counter-attacks - would prove devastatingly effective. Leicester were top following a 4-2 defeat of Sunderland on the season's first day and returned to the summit in November after Vardy's record-breaking run of scoring in 11 successive games.

There was only one real wobble - a run of one win in five matches immediately after Christmas - and to date they have been beaten just three times. Even when, no longer misdiagnosed as over-achieving minnows, Leicester found opposing teams massing themselves behind the ball, they ground out five 1-0 wins in six games to move to within sight of the title.

Leicester's triumph also owes a debt to the perfect storm that saw defending champions Chelsea collapse, Manchester United toil and Manchester City and Arsenal fail to last the course. But for an unheralded team composed of players with almost zero title-winning know-how, their success in leading from the front represents an astonishing feat of fortitude and sporting courage. The club's disbelieving supporters will hope that by the time Champions League football arrives at the King Power Stadium for the first time next season, players like Vardy, Mahrez and Kante are still around. But whatever becomes of Ranieri's 'Impossibles' in the months, years and decades ahead, their sporting immortality is assured. — AFP

FREEDOMS MAKE AUSTERITY CAMPAIGN TRICKY...

Continued from Page 1


"The oil strike was a showdown between a welfare government and a civil society fearful that the government will solve its problem, resulting from a lack of planning, at its expense," said Shafeeq Ghabra, political science professor at Kuwait University. "This strike shows that the government needs to have a major dialogue with civil society regarding economic as well political reform."

Billions of dollars are at stake; finance ministry under-secretary Khalifa Hamada told the al-Qabas newspaper at the end of last year that "rationalizing" subsidies would save the government KD 2.6 billion (\$8.7 billion) over three years. Savings would be greater if the bloated public payroll could be reformed. The finance ministry projected in January that the government would run a budget deficit of KD 12.2 billion in the fiscal year starting on April 1, 2016, after state contributions to the sovereign wealth fund. Between 7,000 and 13,000 of around 18,000 Kuwaiti nationals in the oil sector took part in the strike in late April, union members estimated. Union membership is not compulsory and foreign workers are not permitted to strike. Workers were protesting a proposed overhaul of the public sector payroll system that would set uniform standards for salaries, bonuses and benefits. The Oil and Petrochemical Industries Workers Confederation fears the government will use the reform to freeze salaries of high-

er-paid employees.

Ultimately, the union called off the strike "in honor of His Highness the Amir", and the government insisted it made no concessions - an apparent victory for authorities. But the union has been talking to the government since the strike ended, so concessions could still be made. Kuwait's oil output fell as low as 1.1 million barrels per day during the strike from the usual output of around 3 million bpd, tarnishing the country's image as a reliable exporter. "The workers have achieved their main objective of getting their message across," said Faisal Abu Sulaib, another political science professor at Kuwait University. Saif al-Qahtani, chairman of the oil workers' union, said he could not speak for other unions but that some of them also opposed wage system reform. Some other union members and analysts said a string of strikes in Kuwait remained unlikely. An official at the headquarters of the Kuwait Trade Union Federation, which represents 15 unions in the energy and government sectors, said it had not been informed of any other planned walkouts.

Nevertheless, in the wake of the oil strike, the government may move even more gradually and cautiously with reforms. While most of the current parliament has been relatively supportive of the idea of reform, legislative elections are due next year, and the government will not want the issue of austerity to cause the election of a more antagonistic parliament. — Reuters



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Focus

LADEN DOCTOR
LANGUISHES IN
PAKISTAN JAIL

Five years after his fake vaccination program helped the CIA track and kill Osama bin Laden, Pakistani doctor Shakeel Afridi languishes in jail, abandoned by the US, say supporters, in its bid to smooth troubled relations with Islamabad. Afridi, believed to be in his mid-50s, has no access to a lawyer, and his appeal against a 23-year prison sentence has stalled. "I have no hope of meeting him, no expectation for justice," his elder brother Jamil told AFP. The former senior surgeon lives in solitary confinement in a small room, according to his lawyer, able to see his immediate family no more than six times a year.

Afridi's role in one of the most famous assassinations of recent decades is murky. Details of how he was sought out by the Central Intelligence Agency are unclear - Pakistani reports suggest officials at Save the Children acted as go-betweens, though the charity denies involvement. What is known is that Afridi's job was to run a fake Hepatitis C vaccination program with the aim of obtaining genetic samples from Abbottabad, a garrison city and home to the Pakistan Military Academy, the country's answer to Westpoint. It was there that Al-Qaeda chief bin Laden and his family had set up home in the mid-2000s, under the noses - and some say protection - of senior Pakistani military officers.

Deadly Raid

In the darkness of May 2, 2011, two helicopters full of elite Navy Seals touched down inside the compound. In a dramatic raid just one kilometre from the military academy, they fought their way in and surprised the terror mastermind. They shot him in the head and fled with his body, abandoning a damaged Black Hawk helicopter. The killing was a huge success for US President Barack Obama, whose country was profoundly scarred by the attacks on New York and Washington of September 2001.

It decapitated Al Qaeda, badly hampering the organization's ability to carry out further atrocities. But it drew a wedge between Islamabad and Washington, with lingering suspicions that the Pakistanis had for years been covering up the whereabouts of one of the world's most wanted men. Weeks after the raid, Afridi was arrested and thrown in jail, accused of having ties to militants, a charge he has always denied.

Commentators believe Pakistan opted to punish Afridi in this way, rather than try him for treason-aiding a foreign power - because that would have entailed a public trial that would throw a spotlight on Islamabad's role in harboring bin Laden. A furious US senate committee voted to cut aid to Islamabad by \$33 million - \$1 million for each year of his original sentence. The sentence was later cut by 10 years.

But since then, US pressure for Afridi's release has tapered off, and analysts say Washington has dropped the issue, preferring to concentrate on what it sees as more pressing matters - such as negotiating with Islamist extremists in Afghanistan. "The Taleban talks have taken priority over everything. The Americans don't want to muddy the water by raising other issues that are contentious," says Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani author and security expert.

On the Backburner

Qamar Nadeem, Afridi's lawyer who has been denied access to him for the past two years, believes his client's best hope for early release is US pressure. "But so far they have not shown their support," he says. He is allowed to see his wife and children every two months or so, according to Nadeem. But an appeal against his sentence that began in 2014 is bogged down in adjournments and an uncooperative government.

Though elder brother Jamil and his siblings won a Peshawar High Court decision granting them visiting rights, that verdict has not been implemented, and he has been told by his lawyer that pursuing the matter could result in harm to the doctor. "They are not admitting the High Court decision. What can I say? I am pessimistic," he said. Author Rashid says justice for Afridi has gone by the wayside for the US, which would rather Pakistan use its influence with the Afghan Taliban to encourage them to restart peace talks with Kabul. "The Americans have ceased to criticize Pakistan on many fronts," he said.—AFP

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MIGRANTS KEPT FROM ENROLLING IN US SCHOOLS

By Garance Burke

Candelario Jimon Alonzo came to the US dreaming of becoming something more than what seemed possible along the rutted roads of his hometown in Guatemala's highlands. This was his chance: He could earn a US high school education and eventually become a teacher. Instead, the 16-year-old spends most days alone in the tumbledown Memphis house where he lives with his uncle, leaving only occasionally to play soccer and pick up what English he can from his friends.

Local school officials have kept Jimon out of the classroom since he tried to enroll in January. Attorneys say Jimon and at least a dozen other migrant youth fleeing violence in Central America have been blocked from going to Memphis high schools because officials contend the teens lacked transcripts or were too old to graduate on time. The AP has found that in at least 35 districts in 14 states, hundreds of unaccompanied minors from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras have been discouraged from enrolling in schools or pressured into what advocates and attorneys argue are separate but unequal alternative programs - essentially an academic dead end, and one that can violate federal law.

Instead of enrolling Jimon and the other minors in high school, their cash-strapped district routed them to an adult school in East Memphis that offered English classes a few hours a week. But before Jimon could even register, the state shut the GED and English-language programs over concerns that few students were graduating, effectively ending his chances for a formal education. "I really wanted to study math and English when I got here," said Jimon, who grew up speaking Spanish and the indigenous language Quiche. The teen is in the process of applying

for permission to stay in the country permanently.

Choice

Shelby County Schools spokeswoman Natalia Powers said her sprawling district had a policy that allowed students 16 and older to choose to enroll in a GED program, and that once the program closed, students could continue studying in a "similar" program at a local nonprofit. But attorneys and advocates said their clients weren't given the choice to attend a mainstream high school, and that the Memphis nonprofit did not teach English.

America's schools remain one of the few government institutions where migrant youth are guaranteed services, but the federal government has extended little money or oversight to monitor whether that happens, in part because schools are locally governed. Since fall 2013, the federal government has placed nearly 104,000 unaccompanied minors with adult sponsors in communities nationwide, where they are expected to attend school while they seek legal status in immigration court. Months later, during the dramatic surge of illegal crossings at the border, the Education and Justice departments issued joint guidance reminding districts that a 1982 Supreme Court ruling established that states cannot deny children a free public education, regardless of immigration status.

For students learning English, guidance says school districts must provide appropriate language assistance services so students can participate equally in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time. Districts found to have broken the law can be forced to change their enrollment policies, but making that happen is not easy. To start, few migrant children understand their rights.

Students and their advocates can sue districts or file

complaints with the Education or Justice departments, but investigations are backlogged and typically result in civil sanctions, said Lisa Carmona, senior attorney with the nonprofit Southern Poverty Law Center. Many local school districts have stretched to find the resources and staff to meet the educational needs of these students, who often carry emotional trauma, have gaps in their education and are older than other English-language learners.

Data

To determine where that was not happening, the AP analyzed federal data to identify areas where the number of migrant children was relatively large when compared to public school enrollment, along with the number of students formally learning English. In Alabama, California, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and South Carolina, social workers and attorneys told AP that migrant students have been barred from enrolling, kept out of class for months due or routed to reform schools and adult programs.

The full extent of how the Central American minors are faring in schools is unknown because the government does not release data on counties where fewer than 50 minors have been placed, which means information was not provided for about 25,000 of the migrants. Spokeswomen for the Education and Justice departments would not say how many of the nation's roughly 14,000 school districts have been investigated for such failures. "We remain committed to working with federal partners and community-based organizations to address any issues that unaccompanied children may face in dealing with the education system," Education spokeswoman Dorie Nolt said.—AP

EGYPT KILLINGS DEEPEN REGENI MYSTERY

By Maggie Michael and Sam Magdy

It was a brutal killing that became an international incident: An Italian graduate student disappeared from the streets of the Egyptian capital in January, his body discovered days later dumped by a roadside, tortured to death. The death of Giulio Regeni quickly poisoned ties between Egypt and Italy, where suspicions were high that Egyptian police - who have long been accused of using torture and secret detentions - snatched the 28-year-old and killed him. Egyptian officials - as high up as the president, Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi, in a national address - have denied any police role, but in the months since the slayings, the Italian government has hiked the pressure for answers.

Then last month came a surprise twist. Egyptian police announced they had killed a gang of five Egyptian men they said specialized in kidnapping and robbing foreigners and, while searching the gang leader's sister's home, came upon Regeni's passport. Government media proclaimed that Regeni's killers had been found. The claim was immediately dismissed by Italian officials as not credible, with some Italian media calling it an outright cover-up. Even the editor-in-chief of Egypt's top government newspaper, Al-Ahram, wrote that Egyptian authorities had to get serious about uncovering the truth and that such "naive stories" about Regeni's death were only hurting the country.

Now accounts from witnesses and family members interviewed by AP raise further questions about the official version of the March 24 shooting in a wealthy suburban enclave outside Cairo. The Interior Ministry said security forces hunting for the gang stopped their minibus and the men opened fire on them, prompting a gun battle in which all five were killed. But witnesses say the men were unarmed and tried to flee as police fired on them, and that afterward police confiscated footage from security cameras near the scene. The men's relatives say they were house painters merely heading to a job in the suburb, Tagammu al-Khamis, when they were killed.

Cover-Up?

"I am accusing the Interior Ministry of trying to cover up their wrong deeds by killing my family," said Rasha Tareq Saad, whose husband, brother and father were among those killed. "I want my family's rights." The AP spoke to six witnesses in Tagammu al-Khamis as well as six relatives and lawyers of the slain men. No video footage from the shooting has emerged, so their accounts could not be independently verified. A number of other family members have been arrested, and their lawyers say they have not been allowed to see investigators' reports on the shooting.

Asked about their accounts, Interior Ministry spokesman Abu Bakr Abdel-Karim said he was not authorized to comment and referred questions to the prosecutor-general investigating the case. Repeated calls to the prosecutor-general's office went unanswered. A series of visits to the forensic

agency, security headquarters in Cairo and the Tagammu al-Khamis police station were also unfruitful: Officers and prosecutors refused to speak to the AP.

The shooting adds a new layer to the mystery surrounding Regeni's slaying. The Italian PhD student vanished after leaving his apartment on Jan. 25, the anniversary of the 2011 uprising that ousted autocrat Hosni Mubarak. It was a tense day: Police were out in force to prevent demonstrations commemorating the day, and in the preceding days dozens of activists had been arrested.

Regeni had been researching the labor movement, a sensitive subject in Egypt since labor activists are frequently protest organizers, and security agents are known to monitor activities by foreign researchers. The interior ministry has denied that police detained Regeni, and authorities have offered various possible scenarios for his death, including a personal dispute or a robbery. The day Regeni's body was found a top police official said he died in a car accident, until investigators reported the extensive signs of torture, including cigarette burns, broken bones and bruises from beatings.

Explanation

The announcement about the gang is the closest that authorities have come to an explanation for Regeni's slaying. However, since the Italian reaction - including Rome withdrawing its ambassador from Cairo - Egyptian officials have avoided claiming the culprits have been found. In a speech this month, el-Sissi angrily rejected accusations that police were behind the Italian's death but he made no mention of any gang involvement. Abdel-Karim, the Interior Ministry spokesman, has said the gang was "a new variable" but that Regeni's death was still under investigation.

There has been no explanation of how the men allegedly obtained Regeni's passport if they were not his killers. Two witnesses told the AP the five men were not armed. They said seven police vehicles surrounded the minibus they were riding in and opened fire on it around 6 a.m. As police sprayed the vehicle with bullets, several men jumped out and ran, only to be gunned down "in cold blood," one of the witnesses said.

Afterward, police confiscated footage from security cameras at nearby houses, said the two witnesses as well as four others who saw the aftermath of the shooting. The bodies were left in the street for around 10 hours, the witnesses said, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. The slain men included three members of a single family - 62-year-old Tareq Saad, his son Saad and his son-in-law Salah Ali - along with a family friend, Mustafa Bakr and the minibus driver, 26-year-old Ibrahim Farouk.

Announcing their deaths, the Interior Ministry said the five had criminal records and claimed their gang had been posing as policemen to abduct and rob foreigners. It listed a string of nine robberies in the past months they were allegedly involved in - though none of the cases were listed as involving kidnappings. Their relatives acknowledge all except the

younger Saad had past offenses but nothing involving theft. Tareq Saad and Ali were jailed for two years in the mid-2000s for impersonating police officers, after they were arrested at a checkpoint for carrying a police ID card, said Tareq Saad's son, Sameh. Later, he said, the two were jailed for drug possession.

Bakr served 15 years in prison for drug offenses, according to his ex-wife's uncle, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. Rasha Saad, Ali's wife and Tareq Saad's daughter, said police were well acquainted with the family and often raided their homes in the lower-class Cairo district of Shubra al-Kheima after the men's release from prison. She said her husband was a house painter and got a call from a client to paint a villa in Tagammu al-Khamis, and she showed the AP photos of past jobs he'd done. She said she suspected her husband was secretly having an affair so she asked her father and brother to go with him, along with Bakr, a friend of her father.

Shock

Sameh Saad, who went to the morgue with his sister to identify the bodies, said he was shocked by the injuries. All five were riddled with bullet wounds and "the heads were blown up so much you could see the bones of the skull," he said. Later that day, police searched the house of one of Tareq Saad's sisters and said they found Regeni's passport, his university ID and other items in a bag decorated with the Italian flag. They arrested Tareq Saad's wife, one of his brothers and the sisters, along with her husband and son, on suspicion of hiding stolen goods. Days later, police arrested Bakr's ex-wife and her two sons, witnesses said.

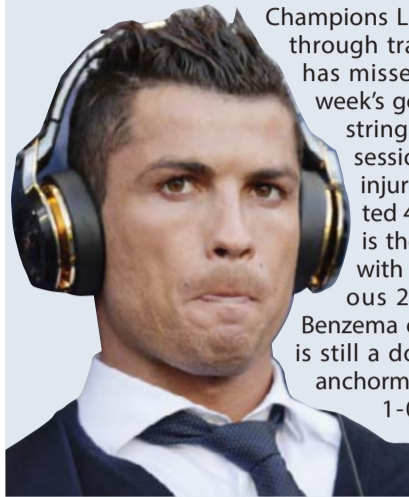
Police photos of the bag's contents showed a man's black wallet, a woman's pocketbook with the word "love" on it, a watch and several pairs of sunglasses. Rasha Saad said the pocketbook belonged to her mother and the watch to her brother, Sameh. The wallet was her husband's and he carried it at all times, she said, causing her to suspect it was planted along with the other possessions. "They took the wallet from his jeans and put it in the bag," she said.

The siblings said their father, brother and Ali were in the Nile Delta region of Sharqiya on Jan. 25, the day that Regeni disappeared in Cairo. Choking back tears, Ali's mother, Umm al-Hassan, said, the police killed her son "and now they are the ones investigating the case. Everything is in their hands. They control everything."

It appeared the driver, 26-year-old Farouk, had little connection to the other men. While the authorities quickly announced the identities of the four men, they initially listed the fifth as "unknown," until days later when they identified him as a gang member as well. A lawyer for Farouk's family, Abdel-Wahab Youssef, told AP that he had been refused access to forensic reports or investigation documents in the case. "The secrecy of the investigation raises suspicions. They tell me these are instructions from the top prosecutor," he said.—AP

RONALDO POISED TO RETURN AGAINST CITY

MADRID: Real Madrid's talismanic forward Cristiano Ronaldo is set to face Manchester City in tomorrow's Champions League semi-final second leg after coming through training yesterday. The Portugal marksman has missed Real's last three games, including last week's goalless first leg in Manchester, with a hamstring strain. Ronaldo completed a full training session yesterday for the first time since being injured against Villarreal on April 20. He has netted 47 goals in all competitions this season and is the leading scorer in the Champions League with 16, one shy of his record from Real's victorious 2013-14 campaign. Fellow striker Karim Benzema could only do running work yesterday and is still a doubt with a hamstring problem. Midfield anchorman Casemiro received a knock in Saturday's 1-0 La Liga win at Real Sociedad but is expected to face City.



AZARENKA, KVITOVA EASE THROUGH IN MADRID OPEN

MADRID: World number five Victoria Azarenka extended her winning streak to 16 matches with a comfortable 6-3, 6-2 victory over France's Alize Cornet to reach the third round of the Madrid Open yesterday. The Belarusian clinched her last two tournaments at Indian Wells and Miami and is the favorite to land her first title in Madrid in the absence of world number one Serena Williams due to flu. Azarenka raced into a 4-1 first set lead against world number 48 Cornet and, despite a blip dropping serve for the only time in the match for 4-2, broke once more to seal the set 6-3.

The second set was even more straightforward for the two-time Grand Slam champion as two breaks of serve sealed victory in just under 90 minutes on court. Azarenka will face either 14th seed Ana

Ivanovic or American qualifier Louisa Chirico in the third round. Defending champion Petra Kvitova remained on course for a quarter-final showdown with Azarenka with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Russian Elena Vesnina.

The two-time Wimbledon champion reached the semi-finals in Stuttgart a fortnight ago and believes her positive start to the clay-court season is down to her new coach David Kotyza. "I have a new coach. That's always great to have someone who's helping you and finding a good way of your game and plan," said Kvitova. "I feel okay. Importantly it's that my body feels okay. I hope that this will kind of continue." Kvitova faces Australian Daria Gavrilova in round three after she ousted 12th seed Elina Svitolina 6-2, 7-6 (7/4). —AFP

FAILURES AND REPRIMANDS ADD TO HAMILTON'S WOES

SOCHI, Russia: As if Lewis Hamilton did not have enough on his plate already, with two successive engine failures and Mercedes team mate Nico Rosberg on a seven-race winning streak, the Formula One champion now has the stewards to worry about as well. The Briton, 43 points behind Rosberg after four races, collected his second reprimand of the season at the Russian Grand Prix. Three would trigger an automatic penalty on the starting grid and, with 17 races still to come, Hamilton saw trouble ahead.

"I am just aware that there is most likely going to be at least one 10 place penalty in the future because I have got one more reprimand to go," he told reporters after fighting from 10th on the grid to second on Sunday. "When I was in karting there was one steward, he was just there to make everyone's weekend a bad weekend. Families would turn up and spend so much money to be there ... and he was just there to ruin people's weekends. I've started to see signs of him."

The triple champion collected his first reprimand in Bahrain, the second race, for reversing in the pitlane when he parked up in the wrong place after qualifying on

pole. The punishment was seen by some as excessive, given that the session was over and he was merely repositioning the car a matter of centimetres. The second came in Sochi during the first phase of qualifying when he ran slightly wide and rejoined the track incorrectly, failing to go round a bollard.

Hamilton said that reprimand, after he had been to see stewards to argue his case, was "ridiculous". The Briton has not won a race since October, when he took his third title in Texas, while Rosberg has started the year with four straight victories. The German has also had a reliable car whereas Hamilton had to start from the rear in China after a power unit failure in qualifying.

In Russia, another failure meant he missed the final phase of qualifying. Mercedes had to fly parts out overnight to ensure he did not start from the pit lane. Drivers have five power units each to last a season, and exceeding that allocation incurs automatic penalties. The recent setbacks mean Hamilton is at a disadvantage to Rosberg there as well. "I'm running out of engines. That's in my mind," he said. —Reuters

PARK BEGS FOR CHANCE TO COMPETE IN RIO

SEOUL: Disgraced South Korean swim star Park Tae-Hwan literally got down on his hands and knees yesterday and begged the Korean Olympic Committee (KOC) to let him compete in the Rio Games. The multiple Olympic medallist completed an 18-month drug ban last month after testing positive for a banned anabolic steroid in out-of-competition controls before the 2014 Asian Games. But the 26-year-old remains barred from competing in Rio by a KOC rule banned athletes from representing the country for three years after the expiration of any doping ban.

"I will be grateful if I could be given another chance to serve my country and put on a good performance for the South Korean people," Park told reporters at a press event in Incheon west of Seoul. He then got down on his knees and bowed his head to the floor, in a traditional Korean

gesture of extreme remorse. Park was once the poster-boy of South Korean swimming - courted by advertisers and idolized by fans. He won 400m freestyle gold and 200m freestyle silver at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and two silver medals at the 2012 London Olympics, as well as 400m world titles in 2007 and 2011. On his competitive return to the pool last month, he easily won the 100m, 200m, 400m and 1,500m freestyle events at the 88th Dong-A meet - which doubles as a national trial. His performance reignited debate around the fairness of the KOC regulation, which remains the only barrier to Park competing in Rio. His positive doping test was only revealed in January last year, and was initially blamed by Park's management team on the incompetence of a doctor at the hospital where the swimmer was receiving treatment. —AFP



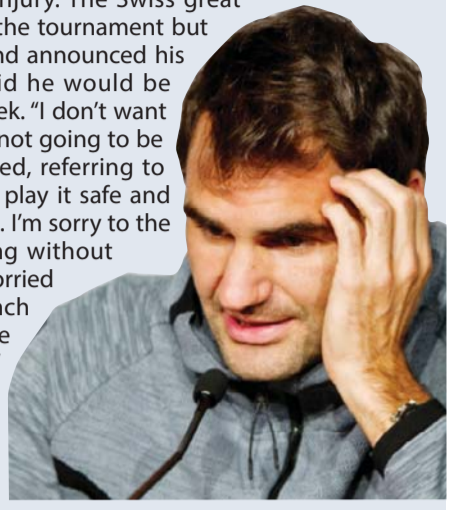
INCHEON: South Korean swimmer Park Tae-Hwan makes a formal deep bow to express his regret for his doping during a press conference yesterday. — AFP

SPRINGBOKS EX-COACH, SKIPPER SMITH DIES

JOHANNESBURG: Former Springboks scrum-half, skipper and coach Cornelius 'Nelie' Smith died yesterday in Cape Town of heart failure aged 81, the South African rugby body said. He won seven caps between 1963 and 1965 against Australia, France and New Zealand, scoring a try and kicking three penalties. Four of the Test appearances were as captain having succeeded Abie Malan. Smith coached the Springboks between 1980 and 1981, winning 12 of 15 Tests, and served as a national team selector for a decade. He also took his coaching skills abroad to guide Ballymena in Ireland and Rovigo in Italy. "Nelie was one of the best," said South African Rugby president Oregan Hoskins. "It is only a select few who play for, captain and coach the Springboks. His rugby by knowledge was massive and touched the lives of thousands of players over the many years he coached. His approach to basics like fitness and handling was well known and many players will remember his driving maul techniques with a smile today."

FEDERER OUT OF MADRID OPEN WITH BACK INJURY

MADRID: Former world number one Roger Federer has pulled out of this week's Madrid Open with a back injury. The Swiss great travelled to the Spanish capital for the tournament but was unable to practice yesterday and announced his withdrawal. Federer, however, said he would be back for the Rome Masters next week. "I don't want to take more chances as I know I'm not going to be fully ready for Wednesday," he added, referring to his opening match. "I would rather play it safe and rest up now and get ready for Rome. I'm sorry to the tournament for coming and leaving without playing." Federer said he was not worried about his preparations for the French Open that starts on May 22. "I've been doing a lot of practice on clay," the world number three explained. "I don't always need a lot of matches to feel 100 percent ready."



IRVING, Texas: Jenny Shin poses with the trophy after her two-stroke victory at the Volunteers of America Texas Shootout at Las Colinas Country Club on Sunday. —AFP

SHIN BREAKS THROUGH FOR FIRST WIN AT TEXAS

LOS ANGELES: Jenny Shin became the third first time winner on the USLPGA Tour this year, coming from behind to close with a four-under 67 Sunday and win the Texas Shootout tournament. "I was really nervous on the last hole," said South Korea's Shin. "Right now I have nothing on my mind, I have absolutely nothing. I think it will hit me when everything is over and when I get on a plane and home to my mom." It took the 23-year-old Shin 135 starts since turning pro in 2010 to record her first victory. Her best showing prior to Sunday was finishing runner-up at the 2012 HSBC Women's Champions to Angela Stanford, who beat Shin in a playoff.

Shin played the final 43 holes at the Dallas-area Las Colinas Country Club bogey free as she finished at 14-under 270. She was two strokes in front of fellow South Koreans Amy Yang (71) and Hur Mi-Jung (71) as well as American Gerina Piller who led heading into the final round but closed with a two-over 73. Asian players took nine of the top 12 spots on the final leaderboard, including seven South Koreans in that group. Shin joins compatriot Jang Ha-Na and Japan's Haru Nomura as first time winners in 2016 and will jump from 38th to 24 in the world rankings. Shin launched her 67 with three birdies in the first five holes, quickly whittling away at the four-shot deficit she faced at the start of the round. "I was chasing the leader all week so looking at the leaderboard didn't get me nervous at all," Shin said. "I practiced a lot of three footers the first two days because I kept hitting it too far past, and I know that I've made almost every single one of them so that really helped me with my confidence and I had a lot of them coming down the last six holes. "As soon as I made the first one I went 'OK, I know I'll make the second one and make the third one,'" added Shin.

Piller, meanwhile, opened her round with the first of her five bogeys. "I mean, the conditions are pretty tough, so it definitely wasn't a cakewalk out there," Piller said. The pins were really, really tough today and it's tough to get them close, especially coming in. "But I've taken nothing but good things away from this week. That was my first time ever holding the lead, especially for two rounds, so it's just more confidence that I'm adding to what I already have." —AFP

STUARD CLINCHES MAIDEN WIN WITH PLAYOFF VICTORY

LOS ANGELES: Brian Stuard won the weather-disrupted Zurich Classic yesterday, holding his nerve to claim a maiden PGA Tour victory in a three-way playoff. Stuard had finished level on 15-under-par with Jamie Lovemark and South Korea's An Byeong-Hun after officials reduced the tournament in New Orleans to 54 holes following multiple weather interruptions. The 33-year-old from Michigan sealed victory on the second hole of sudden death, playing a superb approach shot on the par-five 18th to leave himself with a two-foot birdie putt.

Lovemark's hopes faded after his third shot

flew off to the side of the green leaving himself a difficult up and down at a sodden TPC Louisiana. Korea's An had been eliminated on the first playoff hole after carding a bogey six. The win earned Stuard a cool \$1.26 million in prize money as well as exemptions to next year's PGA Tour and the Masters. "I'm happy with the way I hung in there," Stuard said after his win. "I didn't play too good this morning. I just kind of hung in there. My short game was awesome, my putter was great. Winning this week makes this year and next year easy I guess," he added. —AFP



AVONDALE, Louisiana: Brian Stuard holds up the tournament trophy after winning the rain-delayed Zurich Classic golf tournament at TPC Louisiana yesterday. — AP



VIVA TO ANNOUNCE PLAYERS SELECTED TO ATTEND MAN UTD TRAINING PROGRAM

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, VIVA, will be selecting the top players who will attend Manchester United's training program in UK. The top players will be selected from over 300 participants who joined the Manchester United's try-outs, held from 28 to 30 April 2016, at Corner Soccer field near the Kuwait Towers, by a joint judging committee consisting of Manchester United coaches.

Players were judged based on their footballing capability and talent, physical fitness, dis-

cipline, their communication skills amid each other as players and their general conduct on and off the field. The training program focused on different technical areas, such as dribbling, short passing, turning and finishing. The programs were also designed to develop young players in other fields, such as tactical understanding, and mental, physical and social growth. All the players will enjoy a fully funded weeklong training camp in Manchester, UK being trained by some of the best Real Madrid coaches. VIVA is also committed to supporting

their sport activities, showcase their promising talents, and improve their skills while contributing to the development of the Kuwait sports sector in Kuwait.

VIVA is keen to continue its ongoing socially responsible role in the community by spreading the spirit of goodness amongst Kuwaiti society. We believe at VIVA in taking a holistic approach to our CSR activities, one that engages our employees, and creates goodwill in our communities with a focus on helping to grow and develop the State of Kuwait.

FRENCH MINISTER FUMES AT EURO 2016 SONG IN ENGLISH

PARIS: A French minister yesterday described as "incomprehensible" the choice of a song in English as the official anthem for French supporters at Euro 2016. Andre Vallini, the secretary of state for Francophony, said the French Football Federation's decision to choose a cover of "I Was Made for Lovin' You" performed by French group Skip The Use was "very concerning". "Euro 2016 will be a great festival of sport which is taking place in France and will therefore project the image of our country abroad. And our language too! It is therefore incomprehensible that the anthem of the French national team should be in English," Vallini said.

The song, originally performed by American rock veterans Kiss, has been

renamed "I Was Made for Lovin' You, My Team" for the tournament. Skip The Use's lead singer Mat Bastard said the group was asked to record the song ahead of others by French singers Charles Trenet and Jean-Jacques Goldman "because it was the song which meant the most to us".

Vallini also bemoaned the fact that France's entry in this year's Eurovision Song Contest, "J'ai cherché" by Amir, features a chorus largely in English. "At a time when we are defending the place of the French language in international institutions, and especially European institutions... it is incomprehensible that for these two big popular events, the French language has lowered its guard," he added. Euro 2016 takes place from June 10 to July 10. — AFP

PAKISTAN DROP AFRIDI, AKMAL SHEHZAD FROM ENGLAND TOUR

LAHORE: Pakistan's new selectors yesterday dropped star players Shahid Afridi, Ahmed Shehzad and Umar Akmal from next month's tour of England, stressing there would be no compromises after the country's disastrous exit from the World Twenty20 in India. Former Afghanistan coach Inzamam-ul-Haq, who is heading up the newly formed selection committee as

domestic matches," Inzamam said at a news conference in Lahore. As for Shehzad and Umar, he said, "the selection committee will not compromise on discipline".

Shehzad was declared best batsman of the Pakistan Cup one-day tournament which ended on Sunday, scoring 372 runs, but along with Umar has been involved in various disciplinary breaches. Former Pakistan head coach Waqar Younis - who resigned in early April - had also recommended dropping Shehzad and Umar. Spot-fixing convict Salman Butt was also not selected. "Butt has not played four-day cricket since his ban was lifted so we need to assess him in longer formats before selecting him," said Inzamam.

Butt is also likely to face issues with obtaining a visa to England - though another spot-fixing convict, Mohammad Amir, was included in the squad as he is expected to get the visa after pleading guilty in a UK court. Butt, Amir and Mohammad Asif were caught in a spot-fixing case on Pakistan's last tour of England in 2010, taking money for no-balls during the Lord's Test. Their five-year ban ended in September last year. Pakistan will play four Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 international on a two-month long tour of England.

Squad named for boot camp: Mohammad Hafeez, Sami Aslam, Iftikhar Ahmed, Azhar Ali, Sharjeel Khan, Khurram Manzoor, Shan Masood, Younis Khan, Misbah-ul-Haq, Asad Shafiq, Shoaib Malik, Haris Sohail, Babar Azam, Khalid Latif, Fawad Alam, Akbar-ur-Rehman, Asif Zakir, Anwar Ali, Bilawal Bhatti, Mohammad Amir, Rahat Ali, Imran Khan, Sohail Khan, Wahab Riaz, Junaid Khan, Hasan Ali, Sarfraz Ahmed, Mohammad Rizwan, Adnan Akmal, Yasir Shah, Zulfiqar Babar, Mohammad Asghar, Imad Wasim, Bilal Asif, Zohaib Khan. — AFP



LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket's chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq speaks during a press conference in Lahore yesterday. — AP

part of wholesale changes following last month's tournament humiliation, announced 35 players would attend boot camp starting in Kakul from May 14 to June 4. He said Afridi - who announced he would continue playing the Twenty20 format after resigning as captain in the wake of the event - needed to perform in domestic matches. "Since we are playing only four Twenty20 matches this year we want to give new players a chance, and that will also allow Afridi to rest and perform in

KAUSHIK REPRISSES ADAMS' FROG-IN-BLENDER ACTION

NEW DELHI: When Paul Adams burst onto the scene with his bizarre way of delivering the ball, many were convinced they would never see anything like it again. Two decades later, India's Shivil Kaushik has emerged as the proud heir to the South African spinner's "frog-in-a-blender" action. Heads, including Kaushik's own, turned at Pune's Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium when the left-arm chinaman bowler made his Indian Premier League (IPL) debut for Gujarat Lions on Friday.

Pressed into attack in the eighth over, the 20-year-old ambled slightly wide of the crease when a spirit seemed to enter his body as he bent his knees, twisted his torso and sent down the ball rotating his left-arm around his head. "Shivil Kaushik. Wow!! Wouldn't have thought we'd ever see that action again. #Gogga #PaulAdams #FrogInABlender," tweeted former Zimbabwe cricketer Pommie Mbangwa.

He was not alone. For many, it brought back memories of Adams' outrageous action which got him a bagful of wickets, especially in his debut home series against England. Adams, now coaching Cape Cobras, himself appeared amused. "Remind you of someone! Wow #Kaushik! Great to see the art of #Chinaman bowling alive," tweeted Gogga, who played 45 tests and 24 one-day internationals for South Africa between 1995-2004.

Kaushik thanked all his coaches for not forcing him to dump the action, however weird it may be. "I was eight-years old when I started playing cricket and the first ball I bowled was this way and I have not

changed," the spinner said after claiming 3-20 against Kings XI Punjab on Sunday. "Batsmen found it a bit difficult because my action was a bit different. I got a lot of support from all my coaches. They've not tinkered my action and been backing me."

Spinner-Contortionist

Seeing him bowl is like watching a contortionist perform - straining every muscle in his torso but the spinner assures his body can cope with it. "It's something which comes naturally to me so my body doesn't take much of a load." Kaushik went wicketless in his IPL debut but bounced back against Punjab, dismissing rival skipper Murali Vijay and the Australian duo of Shaun Marsh and Glenn Maxwell.

"The first three balls, I didn't understand what was happening," Vijay, who opens for India in tests, said with a smile. It was very difficult for me to pick whether it's going in or coming out. I did my video analysis before the game and I saw a bit of his bowling, but it was still difficult. Maybe the next time I face him, I will be better equipped."

Once the element of surprise wears off, Kaushik will need much more than just an unorthodox bowling action to graduate to international cricket. The youngster is now focusing to get his line and length right and refuses to look too far. "It feels really nice that a lot of people (are) talking about me but I think it's more important to stay focused and look at our future matches and all I look to do is to contribute to our team." — Reuters



RAJKOT, India: Gujarat Lions bowler Shivil Kaushik bowls during the 2016 Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 cricket match between Gujarat on Sunday. — AFP



SHEFFIELD: England's Mark Selby plays a shot during the third session of the World Snooker Final against China's Ding Junhui yesterday. — AFP

SELBY MAINTAINS LEAD OVER DING IN WORLDS

SHEFFIELD: Mark Selby continued to frustrate Ding Junhui's bid to become Asia's first world champion by maintaining his three-frame lead in the World Championship final yesterday. At the end of yesterday's first session world number one Selby - world champion in 2014 - led 14-11 after the match resumed with the Englishman 10-7 ahead overnight. Now Selby will need just four more frames for victory when the best of 35-frame contest was to resume later yesterday at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre in northern England.

Leicester-born Selby will hope to be involved in a notable sporting double as the

city's football club will be crowned champions of England if nearest challengers Tottenham Hotspur don't win their Premier League match away to Chelsea yesterday. Ding needed a good start to the day's snooker and got one by winning a 50-minute opening frame before taking the next on the black to cut Selby's lead to 11-10.

However, the Englishman won three of the next four frames to stay in front with a healthy, but by no means decisive, lead after he went 6-0 up at the start on Sunday. In an attritional match - Sunday's evening session did not finish until 2323 GMT - the pair then exchanged centuries to leave Selby narrowly

ahead. Breaks of 52 and 68 then assured Selby would lead going into the concluding session. Ding pulled one back to close to within two before Selby ended the session with a break of 55.

Impressed six-times world champion Steve Davis, commentating for the BBC, said: "Mark Selby is an animal on the table, he took that last frame by the scruff of the neck. He can grind frames out but he can also attack them. How do you approach the final session? It's like another day in the office apart from the fact it's the most important session of your career. Ding knows he's up against a rock of a player." — AFP



BANGALORE: Royal Challengers Bangalore batsman Virat Kohli (right) runs between the wickets while Kolkata Knight Riders bowler Umesh Yadav looks on during the 2016 Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 cricket match between Royal Challengers Bangalore and Kolkata Knight Riders at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium yesterday. — AFP

INJURED MARSH OUT OF IPL, BAILEY JOINS PUNE

NEW DELHI: Australian batsman Shaun Marsh has been ruled out of the rest of the Indian Premier League with an injury, while another Kangaroo player George Bailey made his season entry with Team Pune, Australia's cricket board said yesterday. Marsh, who played six matches for IPL franchise Kings XI Punjab this season, is set to join national teammates John Hastings (Kolkata Knight Riders), Mitchell Marsh and Steve Smith (Rising Pune Supergiants) back home.

Marsh though - unlike Hastings, brother Mitchell and Smith - is not part of the 16-man Australia squad named for the West Indies tri-

series starting June 3, which also involves South Africa. Marsh picked up the injury during the game on April 19 against Kolkata Knight Riders and seemed to have carried the back niggle ever since, the Cricket Australia website said.

Meanwhile Bailey signed up for the Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led Pune to give some hope to the team's stuttering campaign, which was further hit by a string of injuries to its foreign recruits. Englishman Kevin Pietersen and South Africa's Faf du Plessis were two early casualties before Mitchell and Smith also pulled out due to injury. Bailey,

who had captained the Punjab team in the previous edition, went unsold in the February auctions only to make a late entry into the cash-rich league.

"We lost four crucial players, but we are looking ahead," said Pune chief executive Raghu Iyer. "Bailey has tremendous experience and had a very successful season before last. He can contribute to the leadership group. Smith's (injury news) been a bummer. He was just coming into his own and this happened. It is a challenging time. Before we could settle down we lost the core group of players around whom you build a team." — AFP

DODGERS TOP SAN DIEGO PADRES 1-0

LOS ANGELES: Clayton Kershaw pitched a three-hitter, struck out 14 and also singled home the game's only run to lead the Los Angeles Dodgers over the San Diego Padres 1-0 on Sunday. Kershaw (3-1) ended the Dodgers' six-game losing streak by pitching his 13th shutout and 22nd complete game in 248 career starts. The three-time NL Cy Young Award winner walked none and retired the first 14 batters. Kershaw also hit an RBI single in the third off Drew Pomeranz (2-2), who gave up three hits in seven innings. Kershaw is 6-0 with an 0.98 ERA in his last nine starts against the Padres. The lefty threw seven innings of one-hit ball at San Diego on opening day in a 15-0 victory.

RED SOX 8, YANKEES 7

Christian Vazquez hit a two-run homer over the Green Monster to break a seventh-inning tie, sending Boston to a three-game sweep of rival New York. Dustin Pedroia and Xander Bogaerts each had three hits and Travis Shaw homered for the Red Sox, who have won seven of eight to move into first place in the AL East. Alex Rodriguez homered for the third time in four games and added a two-run double for the Yankees, who have lost a season-high five in a row.

GIANTS 6, METS 1

Madison Bumgarner pitched through rain to extend his Citi Field scoreless streak to 18 innings while Hunter Pence homered and drove in three runs as the San Francisco Giants ran at will against Noah Syndergaard to stop the New York Mets' eight-game winning streak. Bumgarner (3-2) gave up six hits in six innings, struck out seven and walked three. He is 4-0 with a 0.62 ERA at Citi Field and has the longest shutout streak by an opposing pitcher in the ballpark's eight-season history.

WHITE SOX 7, ORIOLES 1

Chris Sale took a shutout into the sixth inning and Brett Lawrie homered for the third straight day as the Chicago White Sox beat the Baltimore Orioles for a split of the four-game series. Jerry Sands had two RBIs for the White Sox, who took control with a five-run fifth inning against Ubaldo Jimenez (1-3). Lawrie went 3 for 3 with two walks and his fourth home run. He went 6 for 14 in

the series, along with assembling the first three-game homer streak of his career.

ROCKIES 6, DIAMONDBACKS 3

Nolan Arenado hit his major league-leading 11th home run and Gerardo Parra also connected as the Colorado Rockies beat the Arizona Diamondbacks for a three-game sweep. Arenado hit a two-run shot into the bullpen in left field in the sixth off reliever Randall Delgado. Parra hit a solo drive with two outs in the fifth. Chad Bettis (3-1) got the win after allowing three runs on nine hits in six innings. Jake McGee worked the ninth for his sixth save.

BREWERS 14, MARLINS 5

Chris Carter went 3 for 5 with two homers and three RBIs to lead Milwaukee's season-high 18-hit barrage as the Brewers beat Miami to snap the Marlins' seven-game winning streak. Jonathan Villar also went 3 for 5, with two doubles and two runs scores for the Brewers, who ended a four-game losing streak in a game that saw the teams combine for 34 hits. The Brewers chased starter Tom Koehler (2-3) during a seven-run third inning highlighted by Carter's two-run, opposite-field shot to right-center. The cleanup hitter hit a solo homer down the left-field line an inning later.

NATIONALS 6, CARDINALS 1

Max Scherzer pitched seven strong innings to beat his hometown team for the first time as the Washington Nationals completed a three-game sweep of the St. Louis Cardinals. Clint Robinson and Danny Espinosa hit back-to-back home runs, providing the power for Washington on a day when NL MVP Bryce Harper struck out all four times up. It was Washington's first series win in St. Louis since May 2007 and the Nationals improved to 17-7 overall, the best start in club history through 24 games.

BLUE JAYS 5, RAYS 1

Marcus Stroman allowed one run in eight innings on his 25th birthday while Troy Tulowitzki hit a three-run homer during a four-run ninth as the Toronto Blue Jays beat the Tampa Bay Rays. The Blue Jays took two of three to win just their fourth series in the last 27 trips to Tropicana Field. Stroman (4-0) scattered three hits, walked two and



PITTSBURGH: Pittsburgh Pirates' Andrew McCutchen (left) scores ahead of the tag by Cincinnati Reds catcher Tucker Barnhart during the eighth inning of a baseball game on Sunday. —AP

struck out nine. The Blue Jays' opening day starter is 8-0 in 10 starts since returning from knee surgery last year. Pinch-hitter Darwin Barney doubled and Michael Saunders walked to open the ninth against Xavier Cedeno (2-1). Alex Colome entered and walked Josh Donaldson before striking out Jose Bautista. After Edwin Encarnacion hit a tiebreaking RBI grounder, Tulowitzki made it 5-1 on his fifth homer. Tulowitzki had been hitless in his previous 10 at-bats in the series.

REDS 6, PIRATES 5, 11 INNINGS

Scott Schebler hit an RBI double in the 11th inning as the Cincinnati Reds snapped a six-game skid that also ended the Pittsburgh Pirates' six-game winning streak. Eugenio Suarez led off the Reds 11th with a triple past diving left fielder Starling Marte and scored on Schebler's hit off Ryan Vogelsong (1-1). Schebler had entered earlier in a double switch. In the ninth, he doubled home Adam Duvall for a 5-4 lead. Blake Wood (3-0) pitched two scoreless innings, including a perfect 11th for the Reds, who won for only the second time since being no-hit by the Cubs' Jake Arrieta on April 21. Gregory Polanco and John Jaso homered for the Pirates, who committed a season-high four errors and misplayed other balls.

PHILLIES 2, INDIANS 1

Vince Velasquez tossed two-hit ball over six innings as the Philadelphia Phillies beat the Cleveland Indians for their sixth straight win. Freddy Galvis had an RBI single a day after driving in three runs in a 4-3 win, helping the surprising Phillies win for the 15th time in 21 games since starting 0-4. Velasquez (4-1) struck out six and pitched around trouble because of four walks. He lowered his ERA to 1.44. David Hernandez pitched two hitless innings and Hector Neris earned his first career save after giving up a solo homer to Carlos Santana with one out in the ninth. Closer Jeanmar Gomez wasn't available after pitching four of the previous five games.

ASTROS 2, ATHLETICS 1

Jose Altuve homered leading off a game for the fourth time this season - one of just two hits by Houston - as the Astros beat the Oakland Athletics to avoid a series sweep. Doug Fister (2-3) gave up one run over 6 2/3 innings to end his three-game losing streak. Fister walked one, struck out five and pitched out of a pair of early jams to win in his first start at the Coliseum in near-

ly two years. Altuve hit his seventh home run of the season on a 1-1 pitch from starter Rich Hill (3-3) after going hitless in the first two games of this series between AL West rivals. Tony Sipp, Will Harris and Luke Gregerson completed the eight-hitter for Houston. Gregerson pitched the ninth for his fifth save.

TIGERS 6, TWINS 5

Jarrod Saltalamacchia doubled home the go-ahead run in the eighth inning and Nick Castellanos hit a three-run homer as the Detroit Tigers beat the Minnesota Twins for their fifth straight victory. Saltalamacchia's drive to left field off reliever Ryan Pressly (1-2) allowed Justin Upton to score from first. Twins shortstop Eduardo Escobar could've had a play at the plate, but he bobbled the ball on the relay throw. Mark Lowe (1-0) pitched a perfect seventh for the win. Justin Wilson worked a scoreless eighth and Francisco Rodriguez converted his seventh save in eight opportunities.

BRAVES 4, CUBS 3, 10 INNINGS

Daniel Castro singled and scored on Nick Markakis' sacrifice fly in the 10th inning as the short-handed Atlanta Braves picked up a rare victory by beating the major league-leading Chicago Cubs. Jason Grilli pitched a scoreless 10th for his second save and the Braves won for just the sixth time in 24 games despite blowing a 3-0 after Julio Teheran threw seven scoreless innings.

Addison Russell's one-out single in the ninth off Aroldys Vizcaino (1-0) tied it for the Cubs, who scored two in the eighth. Hector Rondon (0-1) allowed two hits in the 10th as the Cubs' four-game winning streak was snapped.

ANGELS 9, RANGERS 6

Kole Calhoun got three hits and drove in two runs as the Los Angeles Angels avoided a series sweep, beating Texas and ending the Rangers' four-game winning streak. Shane Robinson got two hits, scored three times and drove in a run after being called up from the minors by the Angels earlier in the day. C.J. Cron added three hits for Los Angeles. Geovany Soto hit his third home run of the season and second of the series.

ROYALS 4, MARINERS 1

Eric Hosmer homered and Ian Kennedy took a shutout into the sixth inning as the Kansas City Royals ended a long scoreless streak and a five-game skid with a victory over the Seattle Mariners. Kennedy (3-2) gave up four hits and struck out six in five-plus innings. He loaded the bases in the sixth on two singles and a walk. Danny Duffy struck out Dae-Ho Lee and Kyle Seager before Chris Iannetta hit a run-scoring single. However, Jarrod Dyson easily threw out Robinson Cano at home trying to score a second run. Wade Davis pitched the ninth for his eighth save in eight chances.—AP



ST PETERSBURG, Florida: Toronto Blue Jays shortstop Troy Tulowitzki throws out Tampa Bay Rays' Brandon Guyer at first base after fielding his grounder during the fourth inning of a baseball game on Sunday. — AP

MLB results/standings

San Francisco 6, NY Mets 1; Toronto 5, Tampa Bay 1; Chicago White Sox 7, Baltimore 1; Cincinnati 6, Pittsburgh 5 (11 innings); Detroit 6, Minnesota 5; Milwaukee 14, Miami 5; Washington 6, St. Louis 1; Atlanta 4, Chicago Cubs 3 (10 innings); Philadelphia 2, Cleveland 1; LA Angels 9, Texas 6; Houston 2, Oakland 1; Colorado 6, Arizona 3; Kansas City 4, Seattle 1; LA Dodgers 1, San Diego 0; Boston 8, NY Yankees 7.

American League Eastern Division					National League Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Boston	15	10	.600	-	Washington	17	7	.708	-
Baltimore	14	10	.583	0.5	NY Mets	15	8	.652	1.5
Toronto	12	14	.462	3.5	Philadelphia	15	10	.600	2.5
Tampa Bay	11	13	.458	3.5	Miami	12	12	.500	5
NY Yankees	8	15	.348	6	Atlanta	6	18	.250	11
Central Division					Central Division				
Chicago White Sox	18	8	.692	-	Chicago Cubs	17	6	.739	-
Detroit	14	10	.583	3	Pittsburgh	15	10	.600	3
Kansas City	13	11	.542	4	St. Louis	12	13	.480	6
Cleveland	10	12	.455	6	Cincinnati	10	15	.400	8
Minnesota	7	18	.280	10.5	Milwaukee	9	15	.375	8.5
Western Division					Western Division				
Texas	14	11	.560	-	LA Dodgers	13	13	.500	-
Seattle	13	11	.542	0.5	San Francisco	13	13	.500	-
Oakland	13	13	.500	1.5	Colorado	12	12	.500	-
LA Angels	12	13	.480	2	Arizona	12	15	.444	1.5
Houston	8	17	.320	6	San Diego	9	16	.360	3.5

GORDON'S SUSPENSION DEFIES PED STEREOTYPES

WASHINGTON: Dee Gordon's suspension was another reminder of an issue that may never totally go away: performance-enhancing drugs in baseball. But this positive test flies in the face of at least one aspect of the PED narrative. Gordon, after all, is listed at 5-foot-11 and 170 pounds. He's hit eight home runs in 495 major league games. "It's probably more of a surprise than the power guys," New York Mets second baseman Neil Walker said. "It's more surprising given his stature and his style of game."

When people talk about PED use in baseball, the conversation usually turns to beefed-up sluggers hitting prodigious home runs. That's the stereotype, at least. But the evidence suggests that positive tests can come from many different types of players. There have been seven suspensions in 2016 under the Major League Drug Prevention and Treatment Program, the same number as in all of 2015. Before Gordon, the most high-profile players to be suspended over the past couple years were Ervin Santana and Jenry Mejia - two pitchers. Mejia received a lifetime ban this year after testing positive for a perform-

ance-enhancing substance for the third time.

Of the 12 players suspended in 2015 and 2016, six were pitchers - Santana, Mejia, Daniel Stumpf, Andrew McKirahan, Aroldys Vizcaino and David Rollins. The six hitters included players of all shapes and sizes, including 6-foot-4 Chris Colabello of Toronto, 6-foot-7 Juan Duran of Cincinnati, 5-foot-9 Abraham Almonte of Cleveland - and now, Gordon.

Even back in 2013, when big names such as Alex Rodriguez, Ryan Braun, Nelson Cruz and Johnny Peralta were ensnared by the Biogenesis investigation, it wasn't just power hitters who were punished. Anyone remember Fautino De Los Santos, Sergio Escalona and Jordany Valdespin? They were implicated, too. The sluggers may get the headlines when a scandal like that unfolds, but it's hard to pin all of baseball's drug issues on them. As for Walker, he's satisfied with the progress the sport's testing program is making. "The system that's in place is doing exactly what Major League Baseball and the players and the owners have hoped," he said. "It's catching the guys that aren't following the system the right way."

Here are a few other developments from around baseball:

How Bad? This Bad

Atlanta has managed only five home runs so far this season, and that anemic offensive showing is a big reason the Braves have the worst record in baseball. Atlanta's team batting average is .226, with an on-base percentage of .299 and a slugging percentage of .287. For comparison, the infamous Mario Mendoza had a career slugging percentage of .262 - not far below what the Braves are slugging as a team right now.

How Good? This Good

Being around the bottom of the league in save opportunities is usually a bad thing because it means you haven't had the lead much in the late innings. But the Chicago Cubs' staff is only 4 of 5 in save chances this season - because of all of that team's blowout victories.

Fantasy Focus

Gordon's suspension removes one of fanta-



WASHINGTON: In this Sept 18, 2015 file photo, Miami Marlins' Dee Gordon reacts after a strike while batting during the ninth inning of a baseball game against the Washington Nationals at Nationals Park. — AP

Line of the Week

After an unusually rocky start earlier in the week against Miami, Clayton Kershaw bounced back in a big way Sunday, striking out 14 in a three-hit shutout as the Los Angeles Dodgers beat San Diego 1-0. —AP

BLUES LEVEL WITH STARS, SHARKS DOWN PREDATORS

LOS ANGELES: David Backes scored the winner halfway through overtime Sunday to lift the St. Louis Blues to a 4-3 win over the Dallas Stars in game two of their second round NHL playoff series. With the Blues on the powerplay, Alexander Steen's initial shot was stopped by Dallas goaltender Antti Niemi, but American Backes found the loose puck and tapped it home to even the best-of-seven series at one game apiece. "We just stuck with it found a way to win," said Backes. "We learned we have to stay on our toes. The guys were battling their butts off and Moose (Brian Elliott) made some big saves." The Blues scored 17 seconds into the man advantage with France's Antoine Roussel sitting in the penalty box after being called for interference. Dallas Stars captain Jamie Benn scored the game-tying goal with 2:36 remaining in regulation. Benn scored off a rebound with heavy traffic in front of the St. Louis net. Canadian Benn was held without a point in game one. Troy Brouwer had a goal and an assist during regulation time for the Blues, who got goals from Patrik Berglund and Joel Edmundson.

Alex Goligoski and Mattias Janmark scored in regulation time for Dallas, which got two assists from Cody Eakin. It was a rough day for goaltenders as St. Louis scored on its first two shots of the game and on three of five shots in the first period on Dallas starter Kari Lehtonen. Niemi came on in relief and stopped 19 of 20 shots. Then early in the third, the game was delayed for several minutes after a Jason Spezza drilled a

slap shot from the right side which exploded into the face mask of St. Louis goalie Elliott. After being attended to by a member of the Blues training staff, Elliott's facemask was repaired, a contact that popped out was found and he remained in the game.

Sharks top Predators

In San Jose, Joe Pavelski scored the go-ahead goal with 2:40 remaining and Martin Jones finished with 37 saves as the Sharks defeated the Nashville Predators 3-2 for a 2-0 series lead. Pavelski also assisted on Logan Couture's powerplay goal late in the second period, and Joe Thornton added an empty-net goal with 55.6 seconds remaining - a goal that proved the game-winner when Nashville's Ryan Johansen scored with 3.2 seconds to play. The Predators had leveled the score at 1-1 at 12:56 of the third, when defenseman Mattias Ekholm's snap shot from inside the blue line got past Jones. Pavelski's goal was his sixth of the playoffs and first of this Western Conference second-round series. He gathered a loose puck in front of the crease after a shot by Matt Nieto, tapping in the rebound. Couture's goal came less than a minute after the Predators were penalized for having too many men on the ice. Defenseman Roman Josi, realizing his team had six skaters on the ice, tried in vain to prevent the penalty by climbing over the boards in front of the Sharks' bench. The series now shifts to Nashville for games three and four. — AFP



OAKLAND, California: Portland Trail Blazers' Damian Lillard (0) drives past Golden State Warriors' Harrison Barnes (bottom left) and Shaun Livingston (34) during the second half in Game 1 of a second-round NBA basketball playoff series on Sunday. — AP

WARRIORS CRUISE AS HEAT AND RAPTORS BOOK CLASH

LOS ANGELES: Klay Thompson and Draymond Green made sure the Golden State Warriors barely missed injured superstar Stephen Curry on Sunday in a 118-106 victory over Portland in the first game of their NBA Western Conference second-round playoff series. Thompson scored 37 points and Green notched the first post-season triple-double of his career as the reigning champion Warriors leapt to a quick lead and never looked back on their home floor in Oakland, California. Thompson drained a three-pointer 17 seconds into the contest and the Warriors rolled from there.

Thompson scored 18 of his 37 points in the first quarter - when Portland scored just 17 points total. The Warriors led 37-17 after the first frame, and the Trail Blazers never got the gap under nine points. Australian big man Andrew Bogut delivered a double-double of 10 points and 12 rebounds, as did Harrison Barnes. Shaun Livingston, starting in place of Curry, chipped in 12 points and six assists. Curry watched from the sidelines, and indicated he'd like to be back on the floor by game three next Saturday. Golden State coach Steve Kerr was making no promises about the return of Curry, who sprained a knee ligament in game four of the first-round series against Houston. But his Warriors are managing just fine without the NBA's reigning Most Valuable Player. "It helped us to have to play most of the Houston series without Steph," Kerr said. "We just got into a good groove, and that carried over to tonight. Our guys have an understanding of how we have to play without Steph."

Green said the Warriors won't expect Damian Lillard, CJ McCollum and the rest of the Trail Blazers to struggle so much in every game. But he's confident the Warriors have what it takes to beat them, with or without Curry. "Listen, we know they're not going to have games like this every night," Green added of a Blazers team whose five starters made just 23 of 75 attempts. "But if we can make them take tough shots ... we think they'll wear down throughout the course of the series."

Raptors Hold Off Pacers

While the Warriors were setting a tone for the second round, the Toronto Raptors and Miami Heat finally wrapped up first-round series victories to set up an Eastern Conference semi-final showdown. In Toronto, DeMar DeRozan scored 30 points and the Raptors held off the Indiana Pacers 89-84 to win their first-round series four games to three, while the Heat thumped the Charlotte Hornets 106-73 in game seven of their series. Toronto's first post-season series triumph since 2001 ended the longest active drought between playoff series wins. It was also the Raptors' first win in a seven-game series, rather than a five-game set. "I think everybody wrote the Raptors off and gave us up for dead," Toronto coach Dwane Casey said of the reaction to the Raptors' failure to close out the series in game six. "But that locker room is full of fighters and scrappers."

The Raptors needed that fight in the fourth quarter, when a 16-point lead dwindled to three with 2:36 to play. The Pacers had the ball with 26.9 seconds remaining and the Raptors' lead still at three, but Toronto got a defensive stop. DeRozan made two free throws to build the lead to five with 6.5 seconds remaining. "We stunk it up in the fourth quarter," admitted Casey, who thought the emotion of the game might have added to his players' fatigue. "It wasn't pretty, but our defense carried us down the stretch."

Slovenian point guard Goran Dragic was the star in Miami, scoring a game-high 25 points. Britain's Luol Deng added 15, Dwyane Wade scored 12 points and Hassan Whiteside produced 10 points, 12 rebounds and five blocks for the Heat, who had trailed 3-2 in the series. Hornets guard Kemba Walker meanwhile, was held to just nine points on three-of-16 shooting and had three turnovers. "I'm not a prophet, but I knew we were winning this game," Wade said. "This team has had opportunities all season to cave and every time when we have been in that situation we have somehow prevailed." — AFP



DALLAS: Dallas Stars goalie Antti Niemi (31) deflects a shot during the second period of Game 2 of the NHL hockey Stanley Cup Western Conference semifinals against the St. Louis Blues on Sunday. — AP

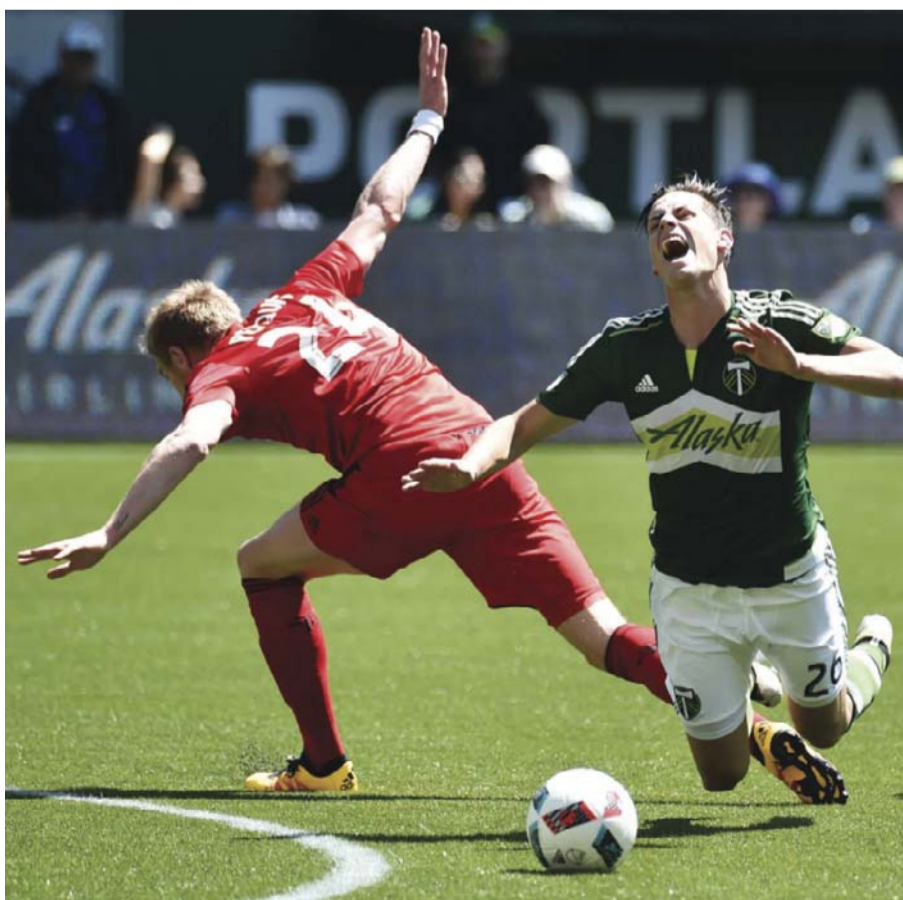
DOS SANTOS ON TARGET AS GALAXY DRAW WITH KC

KANSAS CITY: Giovani dos Santos marked his inclusion in Mexico's preliminary squad for the 2016 Copa America Centenario by scoring the equalizer in Los Angeles Galaxy's 1-1 draw with Sporting Kansas City on Sunday. Dos Santos has not played for Mexico since Juan Carlos Osorio became coach last October but his form in Major League Soccer, where he has scored four goals in three games, saw the 26-year-old named in the national side's 40-man squad.

Brad Davis put Kansas City ahead in the 30th minute before Gyasi Zardes sent dos Santos in on goal three minutes before the break and the Mexican finished with a delightful chip over goal-

keeper Tim Melia. "It was motivation," dos Santos. "It has been a dream since I was a kid. I will continue to work hard and hopefully I get called up to the national team." Galaxy survived the final 20 minutes after going down to 10 men when defender Ashley Cole received a second yellow card in the 70th minute.

In Sunday's other game, Diego Valeri celebrated his 30th birthday by curling home a 25-yard free kick in the 74th minute, giving defending champions Portland a 2-1 home win over Toronto FC. Portland's Fanendo Adi opened the scoring in the 17th minute with his seventh goal of the campaign before Timbers' captain Will Johnson equalized five minutes before half-time. — Reuters



PORTLAND: Portland Timbers forward Lucas Melano (26) is tripped by Toronto FC defender Damien Perquis (24) during the first half of an MLS soccer game on Sunday. — AP

CHILEAN SURFING STAR ON A QUEST TO SAVE HOME COAST

PUNTA DE LOBOS, Chile: Ramon Navarro is one of the world's top big-wave surfers, but this fisherman's son still has a place in his heart for the spot where he learned his trade - a stretch of Chilean coastline he is now fighting to save. Navarro, a wiry 37-year-old with the deeply tanned face of those who have spent their lives on the sea, is from Punta de Lobos, a remote, rocky stretch of coast in central Chile. He remembers it as an unspoiled paradise of fierce waves where fishermen like his father shared the coast with sea turtles, sea lions, birds and llamas.

But in recent years, a burst of development has brought construction cranes, real estate speculators and tourists to the area, and the coastline is increasingly broken up by hotels, houses and restaurants. That is threatening the ecosystem, the wild beauty of the region and the livelihood of local fishermen, environmentalists say. The small-scale fishermen in Punta de Lobos who make their living from the ocean complain it is ever more difficult to access through this labyrinth of private properties - despite Chilean law that guarantees public access to all beaches on the country's long Pacific coast.

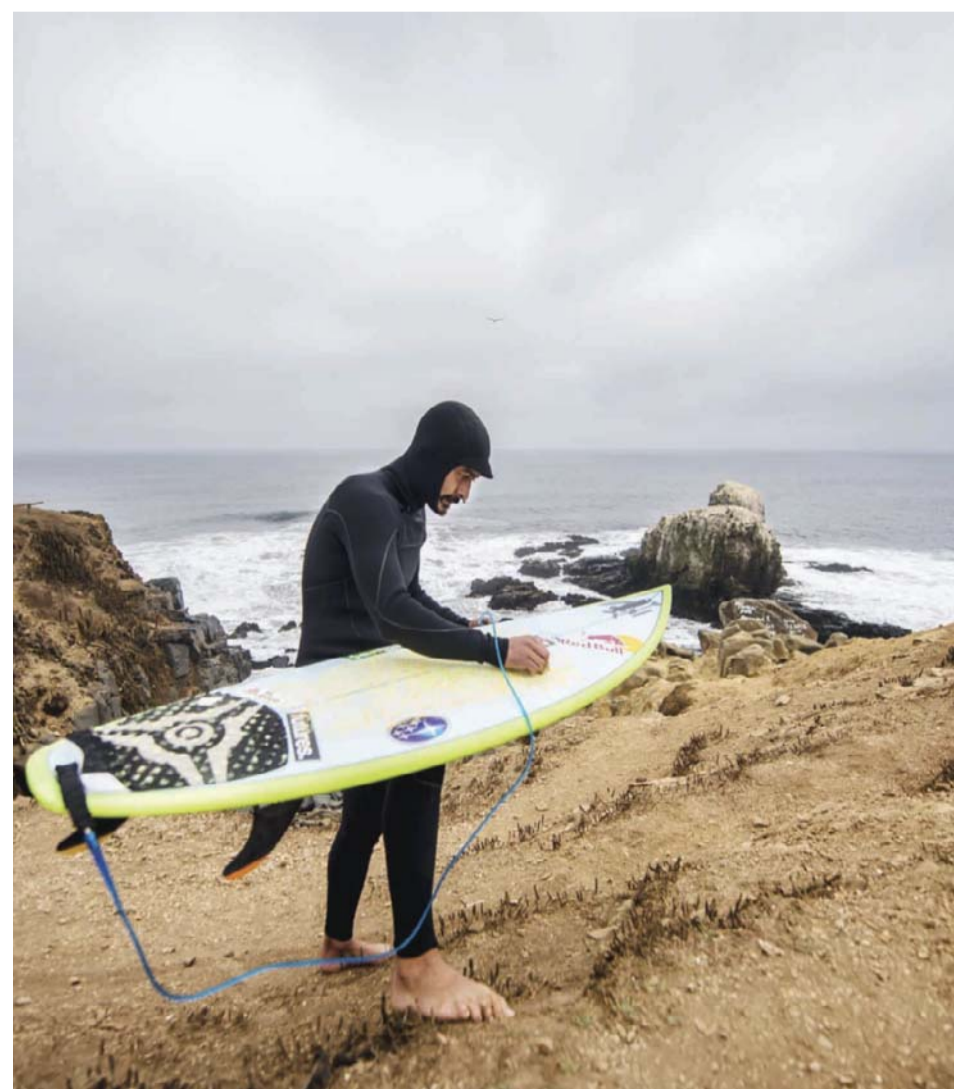
"In Chile, they say the sea belongs to all Chileans, but it's far from true," says Navarro, a prize-winning big-wave specialist who currently stands 12th in the world rankings and finished runner-up in the 2011 world tour. Fearing for the future of his home break, he launched an online campaign to raise awareness and funds, seeking to buy up as much land as possible and save it from development. He has already raised more than \$270,000 through his website, lobospor siempre.org. He is also lobbying for a strong law to

protect the Chilean coast. "My vision of the ocean isn't just to go in and catch a wave. It's different. I try to understand why that wave was generated and make people understand that if we take care of this place, that wave can have economic potential for the region," he told AFP.

'Tearing Down Walls'

Navarro has traveled the world riding the largest waves on Earth, surfing in spots as far-flung as Antarctica for his sponsors, which include energy drink maker Red Bull and outdoor gear company Patagonia. His career has taken him a long way from his hometown, in more ways than one. "It was hard for my family to understand the idea of trying to live off surfing. People here saw surfers as outsiders who came with money and a board to have parties and do drugs," he said. To become a professional surfer, he had to "tear down a lot of walls," he said.

Now he is trying to do the same with his environmental campaign. He is backed by the Save the Waves Coalition, a US-based advocacy group dedicated to protecting the coastline and the world's surfing zones. The group has declared Punta de Lobos, which is hosting a stop on the World Surf League's Big Wave Tour this year, a "world surfing reserve." Navarro is fighting to make that designation more than just a name on paper. In a first big victory, he has convinced an anonymous buyer to purchase the 2.5 hectares that make up the rocky point of Punta de Lobos, where the area's waves are at their gnarliest. The buyer has agreed to donate the land to Navarro's foundation, which plans to reforest it and turn it into a natural park. — AFP



PUNTA LOBOS, Chile: This photo taken on March 16, 2016 shows Chilean surfer Ramon Navarro preparing to enter the sea. — AFP

NO REGRETS FOR PELLEGRINI AS CITY EYE MADRID

SOUTHAMPTON: Manuel Pellegrini insisted he had no regrets about making eight changes to his Manchester City side ahead of this week's trip to face Real Madrid in the second leg of the Champions League semi-final. The City manager admitted his team's 4-2 defeat against Southampton at St Mary's stadium could affect confidence as the Premier League club prepare for the visit to the Bernabeu Stadium.

But Pellegrini, who was frustrated Sunday's meeting with Southampton was not moved to Friday or Saturday to give his side more time to prepare, insisted he had no choice but to make wholesale changes and protect his key players. "We knew before the game it was a risk to put so many players without football against a difficult team but we have to take those risks because we have an important game on Wednesday," he said.

"Maybe if we had played on Saturday we could put more players but it was a risk similar to the FA Cup that we had to play. I would do exactly the same again because we have an important game on Wednesday that we play now for the

final in the Champions League. We continue in the Premier League what we are going to do in the next two games to be in the top four so that was a risk but one we also had to take. I always say the best way to prepare the next game is to win and that's why we did so well before Paris Saint Germain and Real Madrid, we won our games before in the Premier League. Today I don't know why we defended so bad in the first half, those were the two goals that decided the game. We scored one goal, we had another clear chance to equalize but we didn't and after that the set pieces decided the game."

Pellegrini made no attempt to disguise his disappointment at his side's defensive display as Sadio Mane's hat-trick following an opening goal from Shane Long secured Southampton's victory. But he made it clear the performance was the players' responsibility with only Kelechi Iheanacho, the scorer of both City goals, emerging with credit. Pellegrini, who confirmed he expects Vincent Kompany, Yaya Toure and Kevin de Bruyne to be fit to face Real, added: "It's my responsibility

for the starting eleven and after that you have their performance and you must analyse everything.

"I'm very disappointed especially in the defending because we were doing well in the other games. It was the same players who played other games. "We start thinking tomorrow about what will be the starting 11 for Wednesday. Kelechi today scored two goals and is doing well in all the games but for the moment I am not thinking about that."

Southampton's win strengthened their bid for a Europa League place and manager Ronald Koeman singled out Mane for praise. He said: "Sadio can be a bit unpredictable but he was focused and clinical. That was one of my criticisms to all of the strikers but we are very productive at home with more chances to score more. He is still a young player and sometimes they need to be more consistent and that is why we train and work with all the players to get a team who knows what they can and when we get problems and that is all about development of the individual player and the development of the team." — AFP



SOUTHAMPTON: Manchester City's Chilean manager Manuel Pellegrini looks on during the English Premier League football match between Southampton and Manchester City at St Mary's Stadium on Sunday. — AFP



Sadio Mane

MANE LEADS AFRICAN RUSH WITH HAT-TRICK

PARIS: Senegalese Sadio Mane spearheaded an African goal rush in the English Premier League at the weekend with his hat-trick inspiring Southampton to a 4-2 triumph over Manchester City. Africans claimed nine of the 27 goals in nine matches, including a brace from Nigerian teenager Kelechi Iheanacho for City. The Ayew brothers from Ghana were also among the goals. Andre bagged two as Swansea won 3-1 at home to Liverpool while Jordan got one for Aston Villa in a 3-2 loss at Watford.

ENGLAND

Andre Ayew (Swansea)

The Ghana forward scored twice in a 3-1 win over Liverpool that guaranteed Swansea will avoid relegation from the Premier League. Ayew netted with a header in the 20th minute and struck again with a cool 67th-minute finish at the Liberty Stadium. The 26-year-old's first goals since January ended a nine-match goalless drought and took his season tally to 10.

Jordan Ayew (Aston Villa)

The Ghana forward bagged his eighth goal of the season, but couldn't stop relegated Aston Villa slumping to a 3-2 defeat against Watford. The 24-year-old put Villa 2-1 ahead in the 48th minute at Vicarage Road with a fine low strike from long range. But Watford's Troy Deeney scored twice in the final moments to leave Villa with a win in 11 matches.

Cheikhou Kouyate (West Ham)

The Senegal midfielder netted his side's opening goal as they swept to a 3-0 win over West Bromwich Albion. The 26-year-old struck in the 34th minute when he headed home Dimitri Payet's cross for his fifth goal of the season. He capped an impressive display by setting up Mark Noble for West Ham's second goal.

Riyad Mahrez (Leicester)

The Algeria winger was unable to inspire Leicester to a victory that would have clinched the Premier League title as the leaders were held to a 1-1 draw against Manchester United. Mahrez was below his best at Old Trafford but still could have won a first-half penalty when his quick feet induced

a rash tackle from Marcos Rojo that went unpunished.

Sadio Mane (Southampton)

The Senegal winger fired a hat-trick in Southampton's 4-2 win against Manchester City at St Mary's. Mane was on target in the 28th minute, sweeping a cool shot past City goalkeeper Joe Hart for his 12th goal of the season. It was the 24-year-old's third goal in his last three appearances and he scored again in the 57th minute with a close-range header before completing his treble 11 minutes later.

SPAIN

Youssef El Arabi, Abdoulaye Doucoure (Granada)

Moroccan striker El Arabi registered his 16th goal of the season with a bullet header from Malian midfielder Doucoure's corner as Granada came from 2-0 down to beat Las Palmas 3-2 and remain a point above the relegation zone with two games of the La Liga season to play.

FRANCE

Rachid Ghezzal (Lyon)

The Algerian scored direct from a corner in Lyon's 2-1 win at home to Gazelec Ajaccio. Ghezzal's cross from the right was bundled in by Gazelec goalkeeper Clement Maury as Lyon took an 11th-minute lead at Parc OL, before securing three points that kept them second in Ligue 1.

Nabil Dirar (Monaco)

The Morocco winger netted Monaco's second goal in a 3-2 victory against Guingamp at the Stade Louis II. Dirar struck five minutes before half-time to put Monaco 2-0 ahead with his first goal since September as Leonardo Jardim's side kept pace with Lyon. — AFP



Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Bayern Munich v Atletico Madrid 21:45

beIN SPORTS 1 HD
beIN SPORTS 2 HD

GUARDIOLA EAGER TO BREAK SPANISH CURSE

BERLIN: Pep Guardiola insists Bayern Munich can make it third time lucky against Spanish opposition in tomorrow's Champions League semi-final return leg with Atletico Madrid at the Allianz Arena. Atletico come to Munich holding a slender lead after Saul Niguez's early solo strike in last Wednesday's first leg sealed Madrid's 1-0 home win. Guardiola, who will coach Manchester City next season, wants to sign off in Munich by winning a sixth European title with Bayern in the Champions League final in Milan on May 28. Bayern's head coach could finish his third and final year in Munich with the treble. The Bavarian giants are set to win a fourth consecutive German league title on Saturday away to Ingolstadt and face rivals Borussia Dortmund in the German Cup final on May 21. But the Champions League title is the one both Guardiola and Bayern crave, especially after the failed semi-final attempts of the last two years.

In 2014, Bayern were routed 4-0 in Munich by Real Madrid, when Sergio Ramos and Cristiano Ronaldo both netted twice, after the Bavarians had lost the first leg 1-0 at the Bernabeu. In last year's semi, Lionel Messi tore the Bayern defence apart in the second-half in the first-leg in Barcelona. He scored two goals, then created one for Neymar, in Barcelona's 3-0 win at the Camp Nou, before Bayern bowed out despite winning the return leg 3-2 in Munich.

"It's the third semi-final in a row. It's very important to reach the final, but it was just as important as against Real and Barcelona when we didn't manage it," said Guardiola. "Against Real, we didn't have Ronaldo, (Gareth) Bale, (Karim) Benzema or (Angel) Di Maria under control. Against Barcelona, we weren't ready, we only had 14 available players, but we're ready for tomorrow and it will be a different game."

Guardiola insists his side has improved since their home debacle against Madrid two years ago. "We learnt from the game against Real," said the 45-year-old. We have only conceded 15 goals in the Bundesliga this season and have not allowed many goal chances. What I have noticed in my time here is that we can defend very well high up the pitch and not just in the penalty area."

Bayern need at least a goal - and must stop Atletico from scoring - to keep their dreams of reaching a fourth Champions League final in seven years. Guardiola is still smarting from the German media's criticism from the first leg. He left Thomas Mueller, Bayern's all-time top scorer in European football, on the bench and the Germany star is set to start on Tuesday. "We need our best performance to reach the final," said Guardiola. "We must not think about how many goals we have to score, first we need to defend well and control the game. We did not win or lose because Thomas Mueller wasn't there (in the first leg), and tomorrow we will not win or lose because Thomas is or isn't there."

Guardiola implied centre-back Jerome Boateng will start. The Germany centre-back played for an hour in Saturday's 1-1 league draw with Borussia Moenchengladbach after 99 days out with a groin injury. French winger Franck Ribery, who picked up a back injury last Friday, is also an option. "I don't know if Jerome's fit for 120 minutes, I'll know that if he plays the 90 minutes," said Guardiola. "I can only judge that myself tomorrow, he's only had three days to regenerate for the game, so we'll have to see how he is. Ribery is fit and he is one more option for us." — AFP



MUNICH: Bayern head coach Pep Guardiola gestures during a news conference prior to the Champions League semifinal second leg soccer match between Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid yesterday. — AFP

PREVIEW

BAYERN OUT TO END SEMI MISERY AGAINST ATLETICO

BERLIN: Bayern Munich are desperate to avoid losing a third consecutive Champions League semi-final to Spanish opponents when they host Atletico Madrid today but coach Pep Guardiola has his work cut out to end his time in Germany on a high. Guardiola inherited the reigning European champions when he joined Bayern in 2013, but has endured successive semi-final failures since, falling to Real Madrid in 2014 and to his former club Barcelona last season.

His hopes of reaching a first Champions League final since his Barcelona side beat Manchester United 3-1 in 2011 were dented after Saul Niguez's brilliant solo goal gave Atletico a 1-0 first-leg victory. With Guardiola leaving for Manchester City at the season's end, this is his last chance to conquer Europe with Bayern, who won the first of their five European Cups by defeating Atletico in the 1974 final. "It's not over yet, we still have a chance," Guardiola told reporters. "If we lose it, you can kill me, but we still have a chance."

Atletico coach Diego Simeone also believes the tie is open. "Playing in Munich means they'll have their fans supporting them, but we have the opportunity to score an away goal." "We need to be on fire on Tuesday," said Thomas Mueller, who shone as Bayern were held 1-1 by Borussia

Moenchengladbach on Saturday and were consequently made to wait for their fourth consecutive Bundesliga title.

Mueller's return was one of eight changes from the Atletico match made by Bayern, who were boosted by the return of Jerome Boateng, who had not featured since January. Arjen Robben, sidelined for two months with a hamstring injury, says that he is "fighting" to return this season but will miss out, while Guardiola confirmed he does not know whether Franck Ribery will recover from a back complaint. "We'll do everything we can to have Franck back," said Guardiola, who is also without defender Holger Badstuber.

While Bayern were unconvincing on Saturday, Diego Simeone's Atletico are finishing strongly in Spain, having won their last six league games and keeping four consecutive clean sheets. They are level on points with La Liga leaders Barcelona after defeating Rayo Vallecano 1-0 on Saturday. "It'll be a close game like today's match," said Simeone after the Rayo game. "We'll see who makes the most of their chances." Influential central defender Diego Godin returns from a hamstring injury, Yannick Ferreira Carrasco is also available and Tiago Mendes travels despite not yet being passed fit to play. — Reuters

ALAN KEY AS EVERGRANDE MARCH ON

SHANGHAI: Brazilian striker Alan netted an impressive double as Luiz Felipe Scolari's Guangzhou Evergrande beat Shanghai Shenhua 2-1 at the weekend to remain top of the Chinese Super League (CSL). The ex-Fluminense striker's fantastic turn and shot from 18 yards (16 metres) in the 40th minute was cancelled out by former Newcastle United and Chelsea front man Demba Ba's equaliser in the 69th minute. However Alan replied just two minutes later with a stunning finish, running at the back four from deep before curling a right-footed strike into the top right corner from outside the penalty area.

It propelled his side to their sixth league victory in a row - Scolari's longest winning streak in the CSL since taking over the Guangzhou

coaching hotseat. Alan's twin strikes also continued a successful comeback for the player who sat out most of last season with a cruciate ligament injury after being signed from Austrian club Salzburg just over a year ago for 11 million euro (\$12.6 million).

With Guangzhou's club-record signing Jackson Martinez injured, Alan has seized his chance with three goals in two matches after netting in the previous week's 4-0 drubbing of Tianjin. Alberto Zaccheroni's position as Beijing Guoan manager is looking increasingly fragile as his stuttering side drew 1-1 at Chongqing. The former Internazionale, Juventus and Japan boss was again without the services of injured Turkish international striker Burak Yilmaz and the capital side have only a solitary victory to

show from their opening six games and sit just a point above the relegation zone.

Beijing had looked to be heading for three points when Zhang Xiaobin scored in the 81st minute, but Chongqing hit back just a minute later when defender Liu Yu headed home to send the 40,000 crowd into raptures. Big-spending Jiangsu Suning have 17 points and remain a point behind Evergrande in second after goals from Ren Hang and Ji Xiang gave them a 2-0 victory at home to bottom-of-the-table Changchun Yatai. Sven-Goran Eriksson's Shanghai SIPG remain third, a further three points behind, after a comfortable 3-0 win at home to Yanbian Funde with former Evergrande Brazilian hitman Elkeson scoring twice. — AFP

Sports

Shin breaks through for first win at Texas

15



Warriors cruise as Heat, Raptors book clash

18



TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2016

GUARDIOLA EAGER TO BREAK SPANISH CURSE

Page 19



LONDON: Chelsea's Gary Cahill (left) scores a goal during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur at Stamford Bridge stadium yesterday. — AP

HAZARD BRINGS LEICESTER HISTORIC TITLE



LONDON: Leicester City completed their fairy tale quest for the Premier League title yesterday after Eden Hazard's stunning late goal earned Chelsea a 2-2 draw with second-place Tottenham Hotspur. With Leicester's players gathered at the home of striker Jamie Vardy to watch the match, goals from Harry Kane and Son Heung-Min at Stamford Bridge appeared to have set Spurs up for a victory that would have kept their title hopes alive. But after Gary Cahill had reduced the arrears in the 58th minute of a stormy affair, Hazard met Diego Costa's pass with a first-time shot into the top-right corner to send hordes of supporters in Leicester, as well as their millions of new admirers around the world, into raptures.

"Claudio Ranieri and his players have captured the imaginations of football fans around the world with the most brilliant and unlikely sporting triumphs ever seen," Leicester said in a statement on their website shortly after. "From a team that spent the majority of last season rooted to the bottom of the table and

among the favourites for relegation this term, a combination of team spirit, hard work and talent has seen them transform into champions."

Shortly after the final whistle at Stamford Bridge, Leicester left-back Christian Fuchs posted a video on Twitter of himself and his team-mates joyously celebrating their triumph at Vardy's house. Ranieri's side, 5,000-1 outsiders who narrowly avoided relegation last season, can now look forward to a title party when they lift the trophy at their King Power Stadium home following Saturday's game with Everton.

They are England's first new title-winners since Brian Clough's Nottingham Forest 1978 and their surge to glory in the world's most-watched football championship will go down as one of the most improbable feats in sporting history. Their previous best season in the English top flight was a second-place finish in 1929 and their last piece of silverware had been the 2000 League Cup. "Congratulations to Leicester because they have been superb this year," said John Terry, the Chelsea captain. "(Ranieri) has been different class. To do what they have done has been unbelievable and given hope to the smaller sides."

'Only One Ranieri!'

Fans in the east Midlands city of Leicester gathered to watch the game in bars and pubs, roaring on Chelsea, the outgoing champions, as if supporting their own team. There were scenes of delirium at Hogarth's pub, near the cathedral where 15th-century

monarch Richard III was reentered in March last year, supposedly sparking the team's rise to glory. Supporters spilled into the surrounding streets afterwards, chanting the names of beloved manager Ranieri and 22-goal top scorer Vardy, who was named the Football Writers' Association (FWA) Footballer of the Year earlier in the day.

Mauricio Pochettino's young Spurs team needed to win all three of their final games to stand any chance of claiming a first league title since 1961, but having been held 1-1 by West Bromwich Albion on their previous outing, they failed to close out victory again. Ranieri had never previously won a league title and was sacked by Chelsea in 2004, but chants of "There's only one Ranieri!" rang around the game as the final whistle approached.

Bringing the story of his association with the Premier League full circle, the 64-year-old Italian will return to Stamford Bridge for his miracle team's final game of the season on May 15. Ranieri was reported to have flown back from Italy earlier on Monday, having gone to visit his 96-year-old mother following Sunday's 1-1 draw at Manchester United.

Hazard, last season's Player of the Year, had scored the goal that brought Chelsea the title a year previously and after a dismal campaign, he resurfaced to write another chapter in English football history. Spurs, meanwhile, could face disciplinary action from the Football Association after midfielder Mousa Dembele appeared to eye-gouge Diego Costa in one of several fractious incidents. — AFP

English Premier League standings

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

Leicester	36	22	11	3	64	34	77 — champions
Tottenham	36	19	13	4	67	28	70
Arsenal	36	19	10	7	59	34	67
Man City	36	19	7	10	68	38	64
Man Utd	35	17	9	9	43	31	60
West Ham	35	15	14	6	60	43	59
Southampton	36	16	9	11	53	39	57
Liverpool	35	15	10	10	59	48	55
Chelsea	35	12	12	11	55	48	48
Stoke	36	13	9	14	38	52	48
Everton	35	10	14	11	55	49	44
Watford	35	12	8	15	36	42	44
Swansea	36	11	10	15	37	50	43
West Brom	36	10	11	15	32	46	41
Bournemouth	36	11	8	17	43	63	41
Crystal Palace	36	10	9	17	36	46	39
Newcastle	36	8	9	19	39	64	33
Sunderland	35	7	11	17	40	58	32
Norwich	35	8	7	20	35	61	31
Aston Villa	36	3	7	26	27	72	16 - relegated

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

VOKES SENDS BURNLEY BACK TO PREMIER LEAGUE

LONDON: Burnley returned to the Premier League at the first attempt as a 1-0 win over QPR at jubilant Turf Moor sealed promotion from the Championship yesterday. Sean Dyche's side kicked off knowing a lucrative place in the top-flight was within touching distance after promotion rivals Brighton were held to a draw by Derby earlier in the day. With Middlesbrough, the other of the three teams battling for automatic promotion, having drawn at Birmingham on Friday, the path to promotion was clear for Burnley and Sam Vokes ensured they completed the journey with his 61st minute winner.

Burnley are now two points clear at the top and, because second placed Middlesbrough play third placed Brighton on the final day of the season next Saturday, it is impossible for the Lancashire club to miss out on promotion. Just 12 months after they were relegated from the Premier League, there can be little doubt Burnley deserve to once again be rubbing shoulders with the elite after a tense victory against QPR extended their unbeaten run in the second tier to 22 matches.

The Claret's have now been promoted to the top-flight three times in the Premier League era and will hope to stay up for longer this time after being relegated after one season in 2010 and 2015. Once news of Brighton's 1-1 draw with Derby had filtered through, there was an expectant atmosphere at Turf Moor as Burnley fans arrived in anticipation of a promotion party. The celebratory mood went a little flat as Dyche's men struggled to establish control and it took good saves from Tom Heaton to stop Matt

Phillips and then Junior Hoilett giving QPR a shock lead. But those first half nerves were erased by a more convincing display after the interval and Burnley threatened when Scott Arfield looped a volley narrowly wide.

Not for the first time this season, former Manchester City and Newcastle midfielder Joey Barton was an influential presence for Burnley as he underlined his status as one of the Championship's best players. The hosts' pressure was rewarded just after the hour mark when Wales forward Vokes timed his run perfectly to meet David Jones' free-kick with a glancing header into the far corner.

Vokes' 15th goal of the season was extra special for the 26-year-old, who missed the finale to Burnley's promotion two years ago after suffering a knee ligament injury that also ruled him out for five months of their top-flight campaign. The raucous celebrations were nearly silenced when QPR's Alejandro Faurin hit a post in the 68th minute, but Burnley held on through the anxious final minutes before supporters flooded the pitch in delight.

With promotion sealed, Burnley will travel to relegated Charlton for their final match on Saturday knowing a win would secure the Championship title. The second automatic promotion place will be decided in a dramatic shoot-out at the Riverside Stadium when Middlesbrough host Brighton. Middlesbrough, level on points with Brighton but with a superior goal difference, will go up with a draw or win, while only a victory will be enough for the Seagulls. — AFP



Jamie Vardy

LEICESTER'S VARDY GETS TOP AWARD

LONDON: Leicester City forward Jamie Vardy has been voted the 2016 Footballer of the Year by the Football Writers' Association (FWA), it was announced yesterday. The 29-year-old striker took the award as a clear winner ahead of teammates Riyad Mahrez, who had already taken the Player of the Year award voted on by his fellow professionals, and N'Golo Kante. Vardy has scored 24 goals for club and country so far this season as the Foxes clinched a remarkable Premier League title triumph. They were crowned champions after closest rivals Tottenham Hotspur failed to beat Chelsea yesterday.

In total seven Leicester players received votes in the FWA poll, with Danny Drinkwater, goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel, captain Wes Morgan and Danny Simpson also receiving votes. Vardy will be honoured with the prestigious FWA accolade, which has been running since 1948, at a gala dinner in London on May 12. FWA chairman Andy Dunn, of the Sunday Mirror, said: "It is testament to their all-round excellence that so many Leicester players polled votes from our members. The Jamie Vardy story, though, clearly captured the imagination of so many writers."

"His record-breaking feat of scoring in 11 consecutive matches is the jewel in what will surely be Leicester's Premier League crown. "And the Footballer of the Year award is not just a reflection of his fantastic season, but recognition of a remarkable journey from non-league to the international stage." Other players to receive votes from FWA members were Tottenham striker Harry Kane, West Ham playmaker Dimitri Payet, Manchester City duo Sergio Agueiro and Kevin de Bruyne as well as Spurs midfielder Dele Alli.

Vardy said: "It's a great honor to win such a prestigious award and to have my name added to a list of previous winners that includes some unbelievable players." The England striker added: "We're all totally focused on getting over the line in the final two weeks of the season and turning a great season into one we'll never forget. Hopefully I can contribute to that and, if selected, carry some good form into the Euros (European Championships) this summer." — AFP

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2016

Kuwait's credit growth remains steady at 7.5%

Page 22

Buffett still likes big stakes in Coke, American Express

Page 25

AL MULLA GROUP LAUNCHES JOB FAIR WITH PAAET

Page 26



NBK's ATM network; the largest, spans across Kuwait

Pages 23



MONROVIA: A child sleeps under a table at the Jorkpan market in Sinkor district in Monrovia yesterday. —AFP

US, EUROPE STRUGGLE TO MAKE PROGRESS IN TRADE TALKS

MAKING SUCCESS UNDER OBAMA ADMINISTRATION LOOKS LESS LIKELY

BRUSSELS: Talks to create a massive free trade zone between the United States and the European Union continue to be held back because of disagreements on key issues, making success under President Barack Obama's administration ever less likely.

With the November US elections drawing closer, chief EU negotiator Ignacio Garcia Bercero says that "still, there is a lot, a lot that needs to be done before this negotiation is ripe for conclusion."

After the sides last week held a 13th negotiating session, Garcia Bercero says fundamental disagreements remain over several issues including market access for European firms and protection for the agriculture sector. Worsening the climate was yesterday's release

by Greenpeace of confidential negotiating texts that the environmental group claims shows US ill intent and EU acquiescence. The breach of confidentiality also undermined mutual confidence, said Garcia Bercero.

"Does this bother us in the negotiations? Yes, for sure. It is not good for confidence in the negotiating process," he told reporters. Greenpeace claimed Monday that 248 pages of negotiating documents show how the US is pressuring the 28-nation bloc to accept its terms, weaken consumer protection standards and push through more business-oriented legislation. Both sides denied the charges, with Garcia Bercero saying several Greenpeace conclusions were "false" and U.S. Trade representative spokesman Trevor Kincaid saying "the

interpretations being given to these texts appear to be misleading at best and flat out wrong at worst." The socialist group in the European Parliament, never on the side of big business in such negotiations, said yesterday that the leaked documents mean little. "Nothing in this leak indicates that the EU has complied with any of the US demands," said David Martin, member of parliament for the S&D group. "At this stage, the papers show a great deal of posturing and tactics but little concrete information." Still, it was a further indication of the challenges ahead for an agreement that is already running well over a year behind schedule. The talks, which seek to tighten ties between regions that together have over 800 million people and half the world's

economic output, have come under increasing pressure, especially in the Germany, the economic engine of the 28-nation EU.

There are also fears that a free trade deal could become a target in a US election campaign where economic protectionism and political isolationism have turned into key debating points. Last week, Obama said in Germany that the "time is now" for the agreement. He warned that if negotiations aren't completed by the end of the year, the deal may be delayed for much longer due to the switch to a new administration in the US and major elections in France and Germany.

In Germany, some 100,000 people have protested against the so-called Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership but the gov-

ernment continues to push for it.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said Monday that "the speedy completion of an ambitious agreement is very important."

He said that a trade agreement is a great opportunity to shape globalization and that there are few countries in the world that are as dependent on free global trade as the export nation Germany is. Despite the backing of several key EU governments, progress is slow on numerous points, especially on reducing tariffs and opening markets for services and procurement. The EU opposes some US farms policies that give greater freedom to trade in genetically modified food, chlorine-rinsed poultry and hormone-treated beef. — AP

GULF MARKETS FALL; EMAAR DROPS AFTER EARNINGS

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Stock markets in the Gulf fell yesterday after oil prices pulled back and Dubai blue chip Emaar Properties dropped following the release of its first-quarter earnings.

Saudi Arabia's index slipped 0.6 percent as petrochemical shares in particular were weak, with Saudi Basic Industries losing 1.2 percent. Saudi Arabian Mining Co retreated 3 percent after jumping by its 10 percent daily limit on Sunday on news that the miner had reshuffled its board and appointed the chairman of state oil giant Saudi Aramco, Khalid al-Falih, as its own chairman as part of a government drive to develop the mining sector.

In Dubai, the index fell 1.8 percent. Emaar rose at the opening but closed 2.1 percent lower; it reported a 17 percent rise in first-quarter net profit to 1.21 billion dirhams (\$330 million). SICO Bahrain had forecast 1.22 billion dirhams. Dubai Investments, another stock commonly seen as a play on the Dubai economy, sank 5.1 percent. Dubai Financial Market slid 4 percent after reporting a 27 percent rise in first-quarter net profit on the back of an increase in trading activity.

But GFH Financial rose 0.9 percent after saying it had signed a preliminary letter of intent with Abu Dhabi's Eshraq Properties, under which GFH might sell real estate assets to Eshraq in exchange for Eshraq shares. Eshraq dropped 1.2 percent and was Abu Dhabi's most heavily traded stock. Abu Dhabi's index lost 0.8 percent as some banks continued falling after last week's disappointing earnings in the sector. Abu Dhabi National Energy Co (TAQA) outperformed, rising early on and closing flat in unusually heavy trade, after sources told Reuters that TAQA was considering whether to sell its overseas oil and gas assets to another Abu Dhabi state-owned entity as it focuses on its core business of power generation and water production. TAQA declined to comment.

Qatar's index fell 0.9 percent as real estate firm Ezzan Holding lost 2.7 percent after reporting a 12 percent increase in first-quarter profit to 585 million riyals (\$161 million), with growth restrained by a sharp rise in expenses and financial costs. But Dalal Brokerage surged its 10 percent daily limit in unusually heavy trade. Egypt's market was closed for a public holiday. — Reuters



TEHRAN: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani meeting with South Korean President Park Geun-hye at the presidential palace in the capital Tehran. — AFP (See Also Page 8)

IRAN AND SOUTH KOREA SET TO TRIPLE TRADE TO \$18 BN

TEHRAN: Iran and South Korea have decided to triple their annual trade volume to \$18 billion, President Hassan Rouhani announced yesterday after meeting his South Korean counterpart Park Geun-Hye. "The two sides decided to increase by three times the current trade volume of around \$6 billion (5.2 billion euros) to \$18 billion," Rouhani said in a joint televised press conference.

"We also spoke about tourism, direct flights between Seoul and Tehran, and Korean investment in Iranian tourism infrastructure, including building hotels," he added. Park is the first South Korean president to visit Iran since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1962, and as Seoul seeks new markets to turn around a lengthy decline in export revenues.

Her three-day visit comes just months after a historic nuclear deal with world powers lifted sanctions crippling Iran's economy in exchange for limits on its nuclear program.

Park, who is accompanied by several ministers and a 230-strong business delegation, will also be received by Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The two countries have pledged to develop their relations in the energy sector.

"We will expand relations in energy projects and infrastructure... and in oil, gas, railroads and ports," Park said. Tehran hopes this month to increase its oil exports to Seoul to 400,000 barrels per day from a current 100,000 bpd, according to Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh.

The two governments signed 19 cooperation documents in the presence of the presidents, and further memorandums of understanding were due to be signed by the private sector, Rouhani said.

Talks also included discussions about the situation on the divided Korean peninsula amid fears that Pyongyang is preparing to conduct a fifth nuclear test. — AFP

WORLD'S LARGEST SOVEREIGN FUND TO WEIGH IN ON EXECUTIVE PAY CONTROVERSY

OSLO: Norway's sovereign wealth fund, the biggest in the world with shares in more than 9,000 companies, will add its influential voice to those of investors increasingly concerned by executives' skyrocketing pay. Worth nearly 7 trillion kroner (757 billion euros, \$868 billion), the fund will lay out its stance on the thorny subject in a "position paper", a spokeswoman for the division of the Norwegian central bank responsible for managing the fund said yesterday.

"It is a theme that we will watch," Martha Skaar said. Positions taken by the fund, which holds the equivalent of 1.3 percent of world market capitalisation, are seen as important indicators to other investors. The publication date of the position paper is not yet known, but it will certainly spike the interest of investors who see the Norwegian fund as a good role model, and who are irritated by the ballooning pay of some executives.

The issue has come to a head in recent weeks at some industry giants. BP shareholders overwhelmingly rejected on April 14 a pay deal worth \$19.6 million (17.3 million euros) for chief executive Bob Dudley, up from the \$16.4 million he currently receives, as the group clocked up a loss of \$6.5 billion for 2015. And last week, Renault shareholders also said no to a pay deal for chief executive Carlos Ghosn. "7.2 million euros for a part-timer?" thundered the Proinvest financial consultancy, which contested the remuneration, in an allusion to the fact that Ghosn also serves as head of Japanese carmaker Nissan. While the shareholder votes were purely non-binding and will not be followed, they illustrate just how sensitive the issue is.

In a report published on April 21, international influential business figures said executive pay at major British companies sometimes rewarded failure. The following week,

several British groups saw their pay deals rejected or contested by shareholders.

Dilemma over pay

In Germany, Volkswagen drew public ire for paying out 63 million euros to 12 top executives for 2015, as the company suffered its first loss in more than 20 years because of an emissions-rigging scandal.

Nonetheless, negative votes like those at BP and Renault remain rare. In France in 2015, shareholders approved pay packets 87 percent of the time, compared to 92 percent in 2014, according to an analysis of 95 annual general meetings conducted by the specialised magazine L'Hebdo des AG.

The Norwegian fund, which voted in favour of Dudley's pay raise, has not been too critical of executive pay so far. In 91 percent of cases, it approved the salaries paid out to the top-paid US executives in 2014, according to Norwegian financial daily Dagens Naeringsliv.

But times are changing. "We have so far looked at this in a way that has focused on pay structures rather than pay levels. We think, due to the way the issue of executive remuneration has developed, that we will have to look at what an appropriate level of executive remuneration is as well," Yngve Slyngstad, chief executive of the fund, told the Financial Times. In a globalised world with highly-competitive sectors, companies are torn between the need to attract top-notch talent, and the need for moderation, especially in hard times when cutbacks are called for. The Norwegian fund has itself come in for criticism. Dagens Naeringsliv has in recent days revealed that the fund paid out bonuses that were sometimes as high as 200 percent of employees' fixed wages, far more generous than the EU recommendation of up to 100 percent, or 200 percent in exceptional cases. — AFP

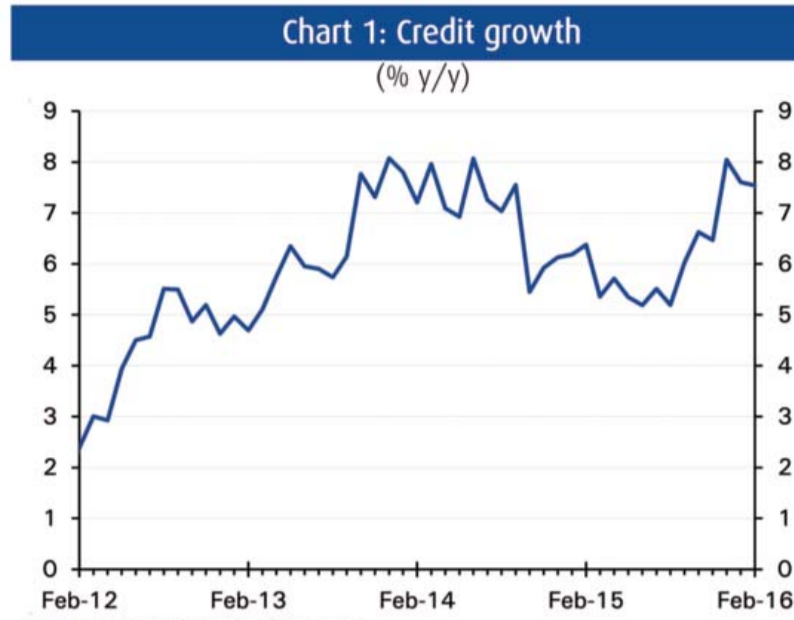
KUWAIT'S CREDIT GROWTH REMAINS STEADY AT 7.5%

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

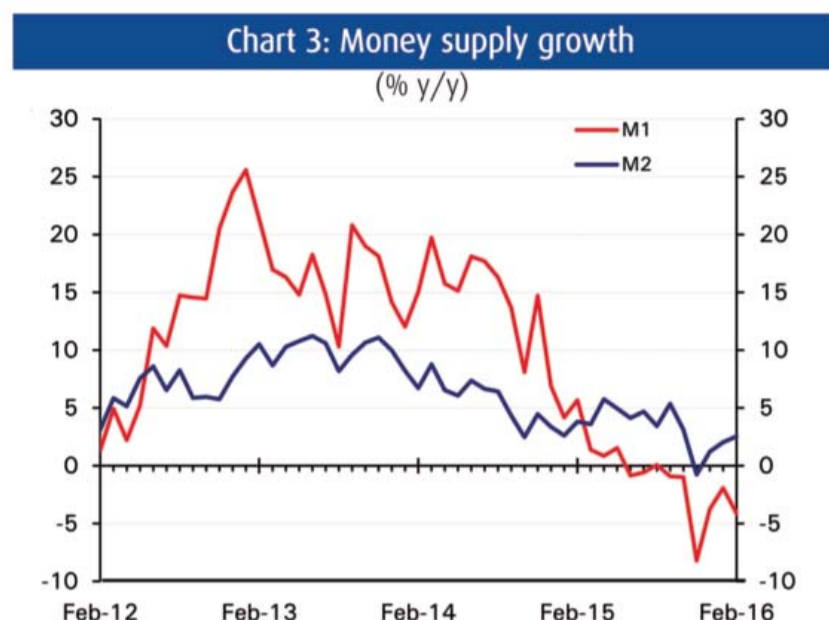
KUWAIT: Credit growth saw a relatively moderate gain in February, though growth slipped to 7.5 percent. Total credit was up by KD 83 million during the month. Most of the gains were in personal facilities and "other sectors". Some sectors saw notable declines including the real estate sector. Meanwhile, private deposits saw a strong bounce, as interest rates remain steady.

For the third consecutive month, household debt recorded smaller gains than usual in February. Personal facilities excluding loans for the purchase of securities added KD 50 million in net new debt, with growth improving slightly to 12.3 percent y/y. Installment loan growth slowed to 14.5 percent y/y, but remained the main source of growth. Consumer loans (car, etc.) saw a small decrease on the month and registered a 1.8 percent decline y/y.

Non-bank financial companies saw a net gain in credit in February of KD 22 million. While the sector remained in deleveraging mode, declining by 4.9 percent y/y, it continued to indicate a slowing in the pace. All remaining credit was largely flat in February, with growth slowing to 6.1 percent, as the sector added a mere KD 11 million. The sector still managed to hold on to an improved pace of growth seen thanks to December's large increase in credit. Most of the February gains were in "other sectors" which added KD 89 million.



Source: Central Bank of Kuwait



Source: Central Bank of Kuwait

Lending for the purchase of securities accounted for another KD 25 million. Meanwhile, the real estate and trade sectors saw notable declines in outstanding credit.

February saw private deposits bounce back following months of decline. Private deposits rose by KD 734 million, pushing up money supply (M2) growth to 2.5 percent y/y. Narrower money supply (M1) growth remained in negative territory, shrinking by 4.1 per-

cent y/y. Gains in private deposits were largely in KD time deposits, though KD sight deposits also benefited, while foreign currency deposits declined. Private deposits are still down by KD 698 million compared to May 2015.

Government deposits, which have helped offset some of the decline in private sector deposits in recent months, were up in February. Government deposits with domestic banks increased by KD 109 million during the month,

and were up by KD 817 million since July 2015; their ratio to total bank assets has risen from 9 percent in July 2015 to 10 percent in February.

Banking system liquidity received a boost in February on financial inflows. Bank reserves (which include cash and deposits with the CBK, as well as CBK bonds) rose by KD 515 million to KD 5.6 billion or 9.5 percent of total bank assets. The main boost appeared to come from financial inflows, as CBK for-

ign reserves rose by KD 495 million to KD 8.4 billion. February had seen dinar interest rates steady. The 3-month Kuwait interbank offered rate (Kibor) stood steady at 1.75 percent in February, unchanged from January, and up 70 basis points (bps) since early 2015. Rates have fallen since, recording a drop of 12 bps in March, to settle at 1.63 percent. Customer deposit rates on dinar time deposits saw a small increase in February, up 2-3 bps.

News

In brief

Bahrain's Alba Q1 profit falls 89%

DUBAI: Aluminium Bahrain (Alba), owner of one of the world's largest aluminium smelters, reported a 88.6 percent fall in first-quarter net profit yesterday as a result of changes to its accounting standards. Alba's net income for the three months to Mar. 31 was 4.2 million dinars (\$11.22 million) it said in a statement. This compares with a profit of 37.2 million dinars in the prior-year period. Net income included extraordinary non-recurring items amounting to 54,263 dinars for the first quarter, compared with 396,981 dinars the previous year, as a result of changes in its accounting standards, it said. Alba in February cut its dividend for 2015 to free up cash for its expansion project, expected to cost \$3.5 billion and raise its annual output to 1.45 million tons. The firm appointed Bechtel as the contractor for the Line 6 expansion in April.

OPEC basket price up \$0.68 to \$42.70pb

VIENNA: The OPEC daily basket price gained \$0.68 on Friday standing at \$ 42.70 a barrel, compared to \$42.02 on Thursday, the organization announced yesterday. The annual average of the OPEC basket price hit \$49.64 pb, it said in a press release. The new OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Mery (Venezuela).

Saudi looks to UK, France, China for help building homes

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's government has authorized the housing ministry to seek the assistance of Britain, France and China in building hundreds of thousands of homes to ease a shortage of affordable housing in the kingdom. The housing minister and his deputy were given the power to sign memorandums of understanding with those countries, the official Saudi Press Agency reported yesterday. It gave no details of what the agreements might contain, but in March the ministry signed memorandums with South Korea and a Saudi-South Korean consortium to develop 100,000 housing units in northern Riyadh over 10 years. The consortium includes Daewoo Engineering & Construction Co and Hanwha Engineering and Construction Corp.



TOKYO: Women walk past an electronic stock indicator of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Asian stock markets fell yesterday as investors displayed their disappointment over the lack of further stimulus from Japan's central bank. —AP

LOANS, DEPOSIT GROWTH HELP LIFT ARAB BANK'S Q1 PROFITS

AMMAN: Arab Bank Group, Jordan's largest lender, said yesterday its first-quarter net profit was \$218.3 million, up from \$217.2 million a year earlier, helped by a rise in loans and customer deposits.

The bank, one of the Middle East's major financial institutions, said in a statement loans and customer deposits grew by 3 percent and 2 percent respectively compared with the same period last year. Customer deposits were \$35.4 billion at the end of March while loans were \$24.4 billion. Arab Bank, present in 30 countries in five continents, owns 40 percent of Saudi Arabia's Arab National Bank ANB. Chairman Sabih Al-Masri said first-quarter results reflected "the bank's well-diversified asset based and geographical spread".

Chief Executive Neme Sabbagh said the ratio of non-performing loans to net loans was 4.7 percent at the end of March.

Liquidity continued to be robust with a loan-to-deposit ratio of 68.9 percent. In January, Arab Bank reported 2015 net profit of \$442 million, from \$577 million a year earlier, after putting aside hundreds of millions to cover a legal settlement in the United States.

Arab Bank agreed last August to settle lawsuits filed by about 500 US citizens who sued the lender under the US. Anti-Terrorism Act, which permits US citizens to pursue claims arising from international terrorism. The terms were not disclosed.

In September 2014, a US jury in New York found the bank liable for providing material support to Hamas and said it must compensate victims of two dozen attacks attributed to the Islamic militant group that took place more than a decade ago in and around Israel, the first time a bank was held liable in US court for violating the act. — Reuters

ABU DHABI TAQA MULLS HIVING OFF OIL, GAS ASSETS

ABU DHABI/DUBAI: Abu Dhabi National Energy Co is considering whether to sell its overseas oil and gas assets to another Abu Dhabi state-owned entity as it focuses on its core business of power generation and water production, sources told Reuters.

According to TAQA's 2015 annual report, the company has an agreement with a "related party" under which, at the request of TAQA, that party would buy all its oil and gas assets in North America and Atrush in Iraqi Kurdistan, plus most of its assets in Europe, at an agreed price. The annual report didn't specify the price or the related party. But the sources, who are close to TAQA but declined to be named because the matter isn't public, said the company was now considering exercising that option. TAQA declined to comment.

Loss-making TAQA, 75 percent owned by the government of Abu Dhabi, has been scaling back investments overseas and cutting costs to cope with the slump in crude oil prices. Founded in 2005, TAQA went on an expansion drive to create an energy giant to rival oil majors such as Exxon and BP. Billions of dollars were spent acquiring assets in North America, Britain, the Netherlands and Iraq.

But in the last two years it has suffered from the plunge of global oil prices and huge debts taken on to fund its expansion. TAQA's oil and gas assets were valued at 30.10 billion dirhams (\$8.2 billion) at end-2015, its annual report showed.

Now it plans to focus on its core water and power business and divest stakes in non-core assets, company officials have said. "TAQA's investment

strategy hasn't worked as expected and weak oil prices are forcing it to sell its oil and gas assets to one of the Abu Dhabi government-related entities," one source familiar with the matter told Reuters.

The sources said they believed one of three Abu Dhabi state entities might buy the assets: International Petroleum Investment Co (IPIC), investment firm Mubadala, or Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC). Contacted by Reuters, Mubadala and ADNOC said they did not have any agreement to buy TAQA assets. IPIC declined to comment.

On Thursday, Standard & Poor's affirmed its 'A' long-term corporate credit rating of TAQA, although it said it considered TAQA's stand-alone credit profile had weakened to 'B'. S&P cited not only continued Abu Dhabi government support for TAQA but also the agreement with the related party, which it said gave the company "an option to sell most of its oil and gas assets at book value".

This provides a floor to the value of the oil and gas business and, "in our view, is further evidence of the financial links between TAQA and the government," S&P added. TAQA made a net loss of 1.8 billion dirhams in 2015, mainly because of lower revenue from oil and gas. The company will not pay a dividend for 2015, the third straight year it has not paid shareholders. Its total debt stood at 74.3 billion dirhams at end-2015. In November, TAQA said it was aiming to develop domestic oil and gas projects, leveraging on its overseas expertise; it signed an agreement with ADNOC to develop oil and gas projects within Abu Dhabi. — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.830
Indian Rupees	4.562
Pakistani Rupees	2.880
Srilankan Rupees	2.068
Nepali Rupees	2.847
Singapore Dollar	225.410
Hongkong Dollar	38.881
Bangladesh Taka	3.845
Philippine Peso	6.417
Thai Baht	8.660

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.470
Qatari Riyal	82.891
ani Riyal	783.784
Bahraini Dinar	801.380
UAE Dirham	82.175

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	32.220
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.353
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	2.111
Tunisian Dinar	151.560
Jordanian Dinar	425.030
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.011
Syrian Lira	2.150
Morocco Dirham	31.915

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	301.600
Euro	347.440
Sterling Pound	442.450
Canadian dollar	241.470
Turkish Lira	108.680

Swiss Franc	316.310
Australian Dollar	232.250
US Dollar Buying	301.800

GOLD

20 Gram	248.350
10 Gram	127.090
5 Gram	64.390

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.550
Canadian Dollar	241.185
Sterling Pound	442.715
Euro	347.305
Swiss Frank	292.570
Bahrain Dinar	800.405
UAE Dirhams	82.615
Qatari Riyals	83.825
Saudi Riyals	81.360
Jordanian Dinar	426.200
Egyptian Pound	33.974
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.075
Indian Rupees	4.552
Pakistani Rupees	2.880
Bangladesh Taka	3.848
Philippines Peso	6.448
Cyprus pound	576.260
Japanese Yen	3.835
Syrian Pound	2.375
Nepalese Rupees	3.845
Malaysian Ringgit	78.125
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	47.110
Thai Bhat	9.635
Turkish Lira	108.200

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY

	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.433645	0.442645
Czech Korune	0.004782	0.016782
Danish Krone	0.042426	0.047426
Euro	0.0340102	0.0348102
Norwegian Krone	0.033469	0.038669
Romanian Leu	0.086515	0.086515
Slovakia	0.008969	0.018969
Swedish Krona	0.033556	0.038556
Swiss Franc	0.307764	0.317964
Turkish Lira	0.102437	0.112737
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.220684	0.232184
New Zealand Dollar	0.204449	0.213949
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003427	0.004001
Chinese Yuan	0.045043	0.048543
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036813	0.039563
Indian Rupee	0.004319	0.004709
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002755	0.002935

Kenyan Shilling	0.003102	0.003102
Korean Won	0.000254	0.000269
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073552	0.079552
Nepalese Rupee	0.002874	0.003044
Pakistan Rupee	0.002659	0.002939
Philippine Peso	0.006360	0.006640
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.221218	0.227218
South African Rand	0.015238	0.023738
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001688	0.002268
Taiwan	0.009227	0.009407
Thai Baht	0.008311	0.008861

Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.793432	0.801432
Egyptian Pound	0.029671	0.034789
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000191	0.000251
Jordanian Dinar	0.421375	0.428875
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020707	0.044707
Nigerian Naira	0.001241	0.001876
Omani Riyal	0.776957	0.782637
Qatar Riyal	0.082131	0.083344
Saudi Riyal	0.079540	0.080490
Syrian Pound	0.001278	0.001498
Tunisian Dinar	0.147935	0.155935
Turkish Lira	0.102437	0.112737
UAE Dirhams	0.081133	0.082282
Yemeni Riyal	0.001363	0.001443

NBK'S ATM NETWORK; THE LARGEST, SPANS ACROSS KUWAIT MORE THAN 260 ATMS ADVANCED, CONVENIENT AND SECURE

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) enjoys the largest ATM network in Kuwait with more than 260 ATMs that provide withdrawals and accept deposits to provide its customers with the most convenient services and products.

NBK is present in a combination of 170 locations including Kuwait's International Airport and Saad Al Abdullah Airport. NBK offers multi-currency ATM machines at Kuwait's International Airport to allow travelers withdraw cash in six different currencies; Kuwaiti dinar KWD, US Dollar USD, euro EUR, Sterling pound GBP, Emirati dirham AED and Saudi riyal SAR. NBK is the only bank to offer ATM machines at Saad Al-Abdullah Airport with two currencies: Kuwaiti Dinar KWD and Emirati Dirham AED.

"NBK's focused strategy is to ensure that its customers have access to their money through NBK ATM's in locations where they want it most. This has led to the investment of the



largest number of machines located throughout the country," said Salman Ahmed Al-Rasheed, NBK Executive manager, Consumer Banking Group.

"NBK is keen to strengthen its local banking network to provide superior services and prod-

ucts to its growing customer base," added Al-Rasheed. "NBK has maintained its leading position in the market by constantly investing in its local network to ensure the reach of products and services to a wider segment of customers."

NBK adopts the best, most-advanced prac-

tices and measures in Information Security to provide its customers a secure banking environment. NBK utilizes the latest secure technologies and cyber defense protection to its ATMs.

NBK ATM locations include Gas Stations, Shopping Malls, Restaurant complexes, Leisure parks, Co-Operatives and Airports. NBK's ATM machines offer a range of services such as pin number changes, statement requests, account to account transfers, check book requests as well as offering Cash Deposits, and Cash Withdrawal services.

In addition to its largest local banking network, NBK enjoys the widest international presence in many of the world's leading financial centers including London, Paris, New York and Singapore, as well as China (Shanghai). Meanwhile, regional coverage extends to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey. For more information, please call NBK Call Center on 1801801.

Salman Al-Rasheed

ASIA FACTORIES SLUGGISH, STIMULUS LACKS TRACTION

SYDNEY: Japanese manufacturing activity shrank in April at the fastest pace in more than three years as deadly earthquakes disrupted production, while output in China and the rest of Asia remained lukewarm at best.

Even the former bright spot of India took a turn for the worse as both domestic and foreign orders dwindled, pulling its industry barometer to a four-month trough.

Surveys due later yesterday were expected to show only sluggish activity in Europe and the United States as the world's factories are dogged by insufficient demand and excess supply.

"The backdrop remains one of sub-trend growth, inflation that is below target, difficulty in increasing revenue as margins are sacrificed to win modest volume gains, slow wage growth cramping spending and central banks that have used up much of their policy ammunition," was the sober assessment of Alan Oster, chief economist at National Australia Bank.

That is exactly why the US Federal Reserve has been dragging its feet on a follow-up to its December rate hike, leaving the markets in a sweat in case they move in June.

Doubts about policy ammunition mounted last week when the Bank of Japan refrained from offering any hint of more stimulus, sending stocks reeling as the yen surged to 18-month highs.

The Nikkei share index was down another 3.6 percent yesterday while the yen raced as far as 106.14 to the dollar and squeezed the country's giant export sector. Industry was already struggling to recover from the April earthquakes that halted production in the southern manufacturing hub of Kumamoto.

The impact was all too clear in the Markit/Nikkei Japan Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) which fell to a seasonally adjusted 48.2 in April, from

49.1 in March. The index stayed below the 50 threshold that separates contraction from expansion for the second straight month. The news was only a little better in China where the official PMI was barely positive at 50.1 in April, a cold shower for those hoping fresh fiscal and monetary stimulus from Beijing would enable a speedy pick up.

The findings were "a little bit disappointing," Zhou Hao, senior emerging market economist at Commerzbank in Singapore, wrote in a note. "To some extent, this hints that recent China enthusiasm has been a bit overpriced and the data improvement in March is short-lived."

PATCHY PERFORMANCE

South Korea's activity did at least stabilise in April after contracting for three months straight, with the Nikkei/Markit PMI edging up to 50.0, from 49.5 in March. Yet it also reported demand from China was the worst in three months, with exports to its biggest market tumbling 18.4 percent on-year. Likewise, weakness in new orders and exports dragged on Taiwanese activity in April.

In Australia, firms reported another solid month of sales, profits and employment in April, suggesting the broader economy was coping with a protracted slowdown in mining investment.

National Australia Bank's monthly survey of more than 400 firms showed its index of business conditions dipped three points to +9 in April. That was down from its highest since early 2008 but still above the long-run average. That resilience has been cited by the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) as one reason it kept interest rates steady at 2 percent over the last couple of months. The central bank holds its May policy meeting today and there is much speculation it could cut rates following alarmingly low readings for inflation in the first quarter. — Reuters



WASHINGTON: The second Boeing 737 MAX airplane being built is shown on the assembly line in Renton, Washington yesterday. The Institute for Supply Management, a trade group of purchasing managers, issues its index of manufacturing activity for April. — AP

US FACTORY ACTIVITY EXPANDS; CONSTRUCTION SPENDING RISES MANUFACTURING EXPANDS IN APRIL AT A SLOWER PACE

WASHINGTON: US manufacturing activity rose for a second straight month in April but at a slightly slower pace, as new orders and production fell.

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said yesterday its index of national factory activity slipped to 50.8 last month from a reading of 51.8 in March. A reading above 50 indicates expansion in the manufacturing sector. A gauge of orders received by factories fell 2.5 points to 55.8 percent.

Manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy, has been hurt by weak export growth stemming from a strong dollar and soft global demand.

The sector has also been hammered by relentless aggressive spending cuts in the energy sector in the aftermath of last year's plunge in oil prices. Efforts by businesses to reduce an inventory overhang have resulted in fewer orders being placed with factories, causing further erosion of manufacturing.

Economic growth slowed to a 0.5 percent annualized rate in the first quarter. Given a fairly robust labor market, which is expected to boost sluggish consumer spending, economists expect gross domestic product growth to rebound in the second quarter.

The economy grew at a 1.4 percent rate in the fourth quarter. Prices for US Treasuries fell after the data, as did the dollar against a basket of currencies. US stocks were trading higher. A second report from the Commerce Department showed construction spending rose to an 8-1/2-year high in March and the prior month's outlays were revised higher, pointing to sustained strength in the sector despite a sharp downturn in spending by energy firms.

Construction spending increased 0.3 percent to the highest level since October 2007, following an upwardly revised 1.0 percent jump in February, the Commerce Department said yesterday. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast construction spending rising 0.5 percent in

March after a previously reported 0.5 percent decline in February.

Construction outlays were up 8.0 percent from a year ago. Though February's outlays were revised higher, construction spending for January was revised down to show a 0.3 percent drop instead of the previously reported 2.1 percent increase. In March, construction spending was supported by a 1.1 percent surge in private construction, which hit its highest level since October 2007. Outlays on private residential construction increased 1.6 percent.

Spending on private nonresidential structures, which also includes factories and offices, advanced 0.7 percent to its highest level since October 2008. Public construction spending fell 1.9 percent in March as outlays on state and local government construction projects, the largest portion of the public sector segment, declined 1.4 percent. Federal government construction spending tumbled 7.4 percent in March. — Reuters



TOKYO: American flags fly in front of the New York Stock Exchange. European shares rose yesterday despite a poor start for the week in Asia, where the Tokyo benchmark fell more than 3 percent as investors registered their disappointment over the lack of new stimulus from Japan's central bank. — AP

US SUPREME COURT REJECTS APPEAL IN SHAREHOLDER SUIT AGAINST BP

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court yesterday declined a request from shareholders seeking to revive their class action lawsuit against BP claiming the British oil company misrepresented its safety procedures prior to the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

The court left in place a September 2015 ruling by the New Orleans-based 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals that refused to certify the lawsuit filed by investors who bought shares in the 2-1/2 years before the spill. BP's share price plummeted after the disaster that has cost the company more than \$55 billion.

BP said in court papers the lawsuit should not be allowed to proceed because the plaintiffs were improperly seeking damages for the entire decline in stock price as a result of the spill.

The appeals court said some of the investors might have bought the stock even knowing the risk, and these investors may still sue BP individually. In the same ruling, the appeals court allowed a lawsuit by investors who bought shares after the spill to move forward. The April 20, 2010, Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion and Macondo oil well rupture killed 11 workers and caused the largest offshore environmental disaster in U.S. history, polluting large parts of the Gulf, killing marine wildlife and harming businesses. It took 87 days to plug the leak on the ocean floor.

In total, BP has incurred about \$55 billion in losses as a result of the spill, including \$18.7 billion to settle federal, state and local claims. The case is *Ludlow v. BP*, US Supreme Court, No. 15-952. — Reuters

PUERTO RICO TO DEFAULT ON \$422M DEBT PAYMENT

SAN JUAN: Puerto Rico's financial crisis deepened Sunday as Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla announced the US commonwealth would default on \$422 million in debt. The governor said that San Juan can't pay creditors when it needs to fund public sector salaries, health and education budgets, which, if neglected, could unleash a "humanitarian crisis."

Puerto Rico has been locked in recession for a decade, and already defaulted on some debt payments at the beginning of the year. Despite sweeping spending cuts and some policy reforms, it has not been able to stop the deterioration of its budget deficit. Garcia Padilla says he does not want a bailout but simply legal ability to restructure existing debt. But in order to do so, the US territory in the Caribbean needs the Congress in Washington to act, and it will not for partisan political reasons, the governor said.

"This was a painful decision. We would have preferred to have had a legal framework to restructure our debts in an orderly manner," he said in a somber televised address. "I have had to make a choice, and I made a choice," he added. "I have decided that your basic needs are more important than anything else," he told the territory's 3.5 million resi-

dents. The \$422 million in bond obligations is owed by the Government Development Bank (BGF).

Prior defaults by the island were smaller in nature; this one includes debt held by Wall Street bondholders and hedge funds. With a debt of about \$70 billion, the island is basically bankrupt; the BGF only has \$562 million in assets. "We have asked the US Congress time and time again to give us the tools to restructure our debts," the governor said. "We do not want a bailout, nor has one been offered. We want a process to restructure, which won't cost US taxpayers anything."

Residents of this former Spanish colony won by the US in 1898 eventually were given a type of US local government with a legislature and governor. Island natives have American citizenship but cannot vote in US presidential elections if they are Puerto Rico residents. Puerto Rico's relationship with the US federal government is largely handled by the US Interior Department.

Garcia Padilla stressed that he firmly opposed US federal control over locally earned tax dollars. "That would be reestablishing colonial rule over Puerto Rico, and would be reopening a Pandora's box with extremely dangerous consequences," he warned. — AFP

LOW OIL OFFERS CHANCE TO SPUR G7 ENERGY TRANSITION: CANADA

KITAKYUSHU: Energy ministers of the leading Western economies are discussing ways to create opportunities from the oil slump that include a push for more electric vehicles, Canadian Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr told Reuters yesterday. Members of the G7 include major auto-producing countries such as Japan and Germany, which benefit from cheaper oil but have been hit by fuel consumption and emissions scandals.

In a push to regain the initiative, Germany last week announced the launch of a 4,000-euro-per-electric-vehicle subsidy. For G7 member Canada, a major oil and natural gas producer, an oil price fall of some 70 percent since mid-2014 means economic pain, but the Canadian energy minister said that the slump also opened up an opportunity.

"Prices are low. Investment is down but we see this also as an opportunity to prepare for a transition phase in the energy economy, and we were discussing that over these last two days at the G7 ministerial meeting," he said on the sidelines of the G7 energy ministers' meeting in Kitakyushu, southwestern Japan. "In the case of Canada, we have tabled a budget in the House of

Commons that will invest significantly in this transition through electric vehicles, green technologies, green infrastructure."

Canada still plans to export liquefied natural gas (LNG) despite low energy prices, a current abundance and the delay and cancellation of some projects. "Our policy objective is that Canada should be an exporter of LNG both on the east coast and the west, and the geography is favourable to a Canadian-Japanese relationship," he said. "We also have some hope that there will be an LNG industry that develops on the east coast of Canada for export to Europe."

Canada has said it wants to sell oil to Asian economies but has faced difficulty getting crude pipelines built to the Pacific coast. Carr said that the government is trying to turn that around. "The regulatory process and the way in which the previous government went about trying to get approvals for pipelines didn't work," he said. "So we're going to learn from that experience. We're trying another way... There are several pipeline applications that are currently before regulators. You will know before the end of 2016 whether or not there would be any new pipelines given approval in Canada." — Reuters

EUROPE STOCKS RALLY, SHRUG OFF ASIA LOSSES

PARIS: European shares rallied yesterday in holiday-thinned trading ahead of key US and eurozone data despite a sharp drop in Tokyo as a surging yen hit exporters. Frankfurt and Paris pushed slightly higher after ending last week deep in the red as markets eyed possible clouds looming on the global economic horizon and digested a shock decision in Japan.

Tokyo stocks plunged more than three percent leading a sell-off across Asia, also in limited holiday trades, after the Bank of Japan surprised markets by opting Thursday not to unleash fresh stimulus despite signs of faltering growth.

After Friday's public holiday in Japan, the

Nikkei closed 3.1 percent lower yesterday. "We expect short-term share market volatility to remain high," Shane Oliver, the Sydney-based head of investment strategy AMP Capital Investors, told Bloomberg News.

"Failure by the BoJ to do more soon risks unwinding all the progress on inflation expectations seen under Abenomics, particularly with the yen breaking to ever higher levels," he added, referring to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's growth policy blitz.

But in the eurozone, Germany's DAX 30 climbed 0.7 percent, while France's CAC 40 rose 0.4 percent after both rounded off last week heavily lower as a strong jump in eurozone growth was offset by another fall in con-

sumer prices. London's FTSE 100 was closed for a public holiday Monday.

Germany's DAX rose 1 percent to 10,140.88 and France's CAC 40 added 0.6 percent to 4,453.24. Britain's FTSE 100 was closed for a bank holiday. Wall Street looked set for an upbeat day, with Dow and S&P 500 futures both up 0.2 percent.

"Some disappointing earnings and a higher euro versus the US dollar probably led to profit taking in European equities despite a better than expected eurozone Q1 (first-quarter) GDP number," ING Credit Strategy's Quentin Gilletta said in a note to investors.

Despite Paris shares trading higher, a rise in

the euro against the dollar was holding investors back, Philippe Cohen, of Barclays Bourse, said. Investors were also likely keeping an eye on key manufacturing data in the US and eurozone due to be released later. On Sunday, China released figures showing the country's factory activity eased slightly in April but continued to expand, helped by a recovery in the property market and indicating some level of stability was returning.

Takata dives

The yen has soared against the dollar since the BoJ decision, which came soon after the US Federal Reserve indicated it was keeping its eye on market movements before hiking interest rates again.

And it remains elevated despite Japan Finance Minister Taro Aso trying to talk it down by hinting at possible intervention if its strength continues. On Saturday he said the rally was "extremely worrying", adding that "speculative moves are seen behind it".

"Tokyo will continue watching the market trends carefully and take actions when necessary," he said. The greenback bought 106.49 yen yesterday, well down from the levels above 111 yen before the BoJ's surprise announcement. With the yen rallying, Japan's exporters were under pressure as it reduces the value of their overseas profits.

Sony and Fast Retailing each lost more than four percent, while Toyota slipped 3.8 percent. Troubled car parts maker Takata plunged 9.3 percent after reports in various media said more than 100 mil-

lion vehicles equipped with air bags made by the company are likely to be subject to global recalls, up from the current 60 million.

The auto parts giant has been hammered by an exploding air bag defect blamed for at least 11 deaths. The selling in Asia came after US stocks ended Friday deep in the red as a weak consumer spending reading compounded a below-forecast economic growth result and an uninspiring set of corporate reports. Markets in Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia were closed yesterday. Japan is in the middle of its Golden Week holidays and markets there will be closed today, tomorrow and Thursday of this week.

Investors have also turned broadly negative on the dollar in the past two months, worried that the US Federal Reserve will be unable to raise interest rates this year. A fall to a 6-1/2 month low of \$1.1493 against the euro Friday on the run-up to payrolls data on Friday. The dollar index of its strength against a basket of six rival currencies, fell 0.2 percent to 92.868.

"The start of the new month does not mean a new trend. The technical tone of the dollar is weak," Brown Brothers Harriman's global head of currency strategy in New York, Marc Chandler, said in a note to clients. "The Federal Reserve acknowledges the continued improvement in the labour market. The problem is that it has not translated to stronger consumption, and business investment remains soft." — Agencies

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report										
Monday 02 May 2016										
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low					
Price Index	+0.54	5,372.49	5,403.43	5,404.61	5,360.90	Volume	118,549,479			
Weighted Index	+0.26	363.57	363.19	364.14	362.01	Value (KWD)	8,097,300			
KSEI 10	+0.95	854.95	854.95	855.03	853.54	Number of Trades	2,966			
Trades										
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KWD)	Trades	Last	Change	Security	High	Low
BBANK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	BBANK	0.0	0.0
BAHRI	40.0	40.0	2,657,202	106,000	10	40.0	0.0	BBKAL	0.0	0.0
BKSC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	0.0	BKSC	0.0	0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	120	0.0	NAPESCO	0.0	0.0
ENERGYH	40.0	40.0	102,730	43,000	49	40.0	0.0	ENERGYH	0.0	0.0
GPI	40.0	40.0	6,571,104	277,000	100	40.0	0.0	GPI	0.0	0.0
ABAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	ABAN	0.0	0.0
Oil & Gas			10,971,176	408,700	214	784.02	-0.11	Oil & Gas		
KFPC	196	196	501,000	31,201	0	196	0.0	KFPC	0.0	0.0
BPOC	300	300	375,400	106,641	20	300	0.0	BPOC	0.0	0.0
ALADIT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	ALADIT	0.0	0.0
AL CHALAN	210	210	520,700	68,107	10	210	0.0	AL CHALAN	0.0	0.0
Basic Materials			854,600	288,040	85	1817.20	0.04	Basic Materials		
KOCH	300	300	64,400	21,187	0	300	0.0	KOCH	0.0	0.0
HEPTA	300	300	10,000	3,000	1	300	0.0	HEPTA	0.0	0.0
CABLE	370	370	26,175	9,680	0	370	0.0	CABLE	0.0	0.0
SHIP	140	140	22,000	3,080	2	140	0.0	SHIP	0.0	0.0
POEM	1,000	1,000	1,200	1,270	1	1,000	0.0	POEM	0.0	0.0
PAPER	200	200	1,200	200	1	200	0.0	PAPER	0.0	0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	MRC	0.0	0.0
AGCO	200	200	10,000	10,000	7	200	0.0	AGCO	0.0	0.0
GAMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	GAMC	0.0	0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	HCC	0.0	0.0
HEMAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	0.0	HEMAD	0.0	0.0
NOCIM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	0.0	NOCIM	0.0	0.0
EQUIPMENT	50	54	4,138,400	224,270	107	54	-0.8	EQUIPMENT	0.0	0.0
INDUS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	INDUS	0.0	0.0
CPHAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	CPHAR	0.0	0.0
SALMOON	0.0	0.0	200,000	24,000	40	0	-0.8	SALMOON	0.0	0.0
AGLTY	100	100	4,000	200,170	13	100	0.0	AGLTY	0.0	0.0
REJ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	REJ	0.0	0.0
CLEARING	40.0	40.0	664,700	27,200	27	40.0	0.0	CLEARING	0.0	0.0
CPFGROUP	475	475	1	1	1	475	0.0	CPFGROUP	0.0	0.0
KOL	40.0	40.0	875,700	46,871	63	40.0	0.0	KOL	0.0	0.0
KPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	KPC	0.0	0.0
HUMASOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	HUMASOFT	0.0	0.0
NAFAS	144	144	3,450	300	1	144	0.0	NAFAS	0.0	0.0
SAFWAY	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	0.0	SAFWAY	0.0	0.0
GFC	30.0	30.0	100	17	1	30.0	0.0	GFC	0.0	0.0
MARKEEN	20.0	20.0	801,217	20,200	11	20.0	0.0	MARKEEN	0.0	0.0
COG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	0.0	COG	0.0	0.0
MFCC	70	70	800,200	26,400	13	70	0.0	MFCC	0.0	0.0
LFAC	640	640	4,100	3,400	0	640	0.0	LFAC	0.0	0.0
ALAFOD	300	300	152,700	31,700	0	300	0.0	ALAFOD	0.0	0.0
MUBARAD	40	40	1,029,217	50,530	26	40	0.0	MUBARAD	0.0	0.0
LOGISTICS	0.0	0.0	5,540,817	465,036	103	0	0.0	LOGISTICS	0.0	0.0
SOEN	0.0	0.0	11,200	800	2	0	-0.8	SOEN	0.0	0.0
QJEM	0.0	0.0	27,000	2,191	0	0	-0.8	QJEM	0.0	0.0
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	QIC	0.0	0.0
PCEN	70	71	214,000	16,110	0	72	-0.8	PCEN	0.0	0.0
RYAC	14	10	19,567	1,910	2	10	-0.8	RYAC	0.0	0.0
SPCC	70	70	10,000	700	1	70	0.0	SPCC	0.0	0.0
Subtotal			10,791,176	1,261,700	460	868.87	-0.60	Subtotal		
Health Care			0	0	0	0	0.00	Health Care		
REH	170	170	1,000	170	1	170	0.0	REH	0.0	0.0
REH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	REH	0.0	0.0
PAPOD	100	100	5,100	870	10	100	0.0	PAPOD	0.0	0.0
CATTL	140	140	40,100	1,014	0	140	0.0	CATTL	0.0	0.0
DARWI	0.0	0.0	1,000,000	200,000	0	0	0.0	DARWI	0.0	0.0
POULT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	170	0.0	POULT	0.0	0.0
FOOD	2,440	2,420	33,700	82,200	10	2,420	0.0	FOOD	0.0	0.0
Consumer Goods			3,140,800	208,700	104	1088.21	0.00	Consumer Goods		
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	0.0	MRC	0.0	0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	ATC	0.0	0.0
YACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	0.0	YACO	0.0	0.0
Health Care			0	0	0	0	0.00	Health Care		
KOCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	KOCH	0.0	0.0
KHCF	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	0.0	KHCF	0.0	0.0
BULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	BULTAN	0.0	0.0
CABLETV	30.0	27.0	13,700	3,000	0	28.0	-0.2	CABLETV	0.0	0.0
EYAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	EYAD	0.0	0.0
FWAY	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	0.0	FWAY	0.0	0.0
OLAFUEL	100	100	175,700	18,100	21	100	0.0	OLAFUEL	0.0	0.0
MUNTASHAT	0.0	0.0	10,000	0	0	0	0.0	MUNTASHAT	0.0	0.0
JAZZERA	0.0	0.0	201,000	210,000	0	0	-0.8	JAZZERA	0.0	0.0
BOG	100	100	10,200	3,700	0	100	0.0	BOG	0.0	0.0
PLUMBING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	PLUMBING	0.0	0.0
ALNABAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	0.0	ALNABAD	0.0	0.0
ALBA	140	140	501,000	50,540	11	140	0.0	ALBA	0.0	0.0
ZEMAN	40.0	40.0	4,000,700	174,700	65	40.0	0.0	ZEMAN	0.0	0.0
LFSD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	0.0	LFSD	0.0	0.0
Mozan	1,100	1,100	21,000	21,000	0	1,100	0.0	Mozan	0.0	0.0
Consumer Services			4,808,800	488,870	154	818.81	-0.20	Consumer Services		
JAN	300	300	808,517	317,300	41	300	0.0	JAN	0.0	0.0
COORCO	1,100	1,100	2,000	2,000	4	1,100	0.0	COORCO	0.0	0.0
HYSTELIC	30.0	30.0	6,470,201	200,100	67	30.0	-0.2	HYSTELIC	0.0	0.0
VPR	1,000	1,000	10,000	10,000	0	1,000	0.0	VPR	0.0	0.0
Telecommunications			4,820,800	488,110	171	820.81	-0.27	Telecommunications		
HEH	0.0	0.0	1,000,000	100,000	20	0	0.0	HEH	0.0	0.0
GRK	340	340	1,000,000	340,000	22	340	0.0	GRK	0.0	0.0
CRK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	0.0	CRK	0.0	0.0
ADK	300	300	6,000	2,300	2	300	0.0	ADK	0.0	0.0
ALMATAHED	400	400	12,000	1,200	4	400	0.0	ALMATAHED	0.0	0.0
KR	200	200	1,100,000	204,400	21	200	0.0	KR	0.0	0.0
KPFC	300	300	10,000	3,000						

GREENPEACE LEAKS US-EU TRADE PAPERS, FEARS FOR CONSUMERS

BERLIN: Greenpeace charged yesterday that a massive US-EU trade deal would place corporate interests above the environment and consumer safety, as it released classified documents from the negotiations. The campaign group published 248 pages online to "shine a light" on the closed-door talks to forge a so-called Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), which would be the world's largest bilateral trade and investment agreement.

"This treaty is threatening to have far reaching implications for the environment and the lives of more than 800 million citizens in the EU and US," said Greenpeace as it presented the documents in Berlin. Both Washington and Brussels want the mega-deal completed this year before US President Barack Obama leaves office, but the agreement in the making has faced mounting opposition on both sides of the Atlantic.

In Europe there is deep suspicion that TTIP will erode social, ecological and consumer protections to the advantage of big business, while the US has also seen rising protectionist sentiment.

Greenpeace said the papers show, for example, that the US wants to be able to scrap existing EU rules in areas such as food labelling or approval of dangerous chemicals if it they spell barriers to free trade. "TTIP is about a huge transfer of power from people to big business," the group argued, having also projected an image of a classified text passage onto the facade of Berlin's parliament building.

In Brussels, Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom insisted that the papers "reflect each side's negotiating position, nothing else. And it shouldn't come as a surprise that there are areas where the EU and the US have different views." It begs to be said, again and again: no EU trade



BERLIN: People read classified papers from the ongoing US-EU trade talks, presented to the public by Greenpeace in a glass container near the Brandenburger Gate, in Berlin yesterday. — AFP

agreement will ever lower our level of protection of consumers, or food safety, or of the environment," Malmstrom said in a blog.

'Dark forebodings'

Greenpeace said the cache, a snapshot from ongoing talks, represents two-thirds of the TTIP draft text as of the latest round of talks in April, and covers a range of sectors from telecoms to autos to agriculture. Germany's Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily, which received the documents early, said they indeed "show that the opponents' fears are not unfounded ... They show that the reality of the negotiations is worse than these dark forebodings."

The Munich-based daily said the papers show

that the US side is trying to use the carrot of easing restrictions on auto imports from Europe for concessions on its agricultural exports, perhaps including genetically modified foods.

The Sueddeutsche paper behind the publication of the so-called "Panama Papers" also charged that some political leaders who publicly defend TTIP "either don't know the status of negotiations, or are deliberately leaving the public in the dark."

The newspaper focussed on a controversial TTIP proposal to set up private investor courts that would allow multinational companies to sue governments if they deem public policy to hinder fair competition.

While Brussels and Berlin had suggested, after

strong opposition, that the investor courts are off the table, the newspaper said that "that was not and is not true". Although the EU had made such a proposal, "the Americans flatly rejected it" and the issue had not been seriously negotiated yet.

21st century deal

TTIP is billed as a free-trade deal for the 21st century, focused on harmonising regulations, lowering barriers on investment, opening access to government contracts and addressing new areas like data trade. Last week, Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel made a joint pitch for TTIP, saying it would spur much-needed economic growth.

Following the latest negotiations last month, US and EU said they had made progress but "substantial work" remained to agree a deal in 2016. They said that while 97 percent of tariff issues had been covered, three percent-the most challenging, including for farm products-remained.

French newspaper Le Monde, which also had access to the leaked documents early, said they showed that "the Europeans (are) more involved and more interested in negotiations" than the Americans, whose stance it described as "reluctant". Greenpeace said the confidential documents prove that long-standing environmental protections are being ignored and that, for example, there is no mention at all in the proposed text of global goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"These leaked documents confirm what we have been saying for a long time," said Greenpeace EU director Jorgo Riss. "TTIP would put corporations at the centre of policy-making, to the detriment of environment and public health." — AFP



BEIJING: A couple look out in front of a window at a mall in Beijing yesterday. China's economic recovery stabilized in April, an official factory activity gauge sowed on May 1, as the property market recovered and credit grew. — AFP

JAPAN ANNOUNCES \$7BN PLAN TO DEVELOP MEKONG REGION

BANGKOK: Japan's foreign minister announced a multibillion-dollar initiative yesterday to promote development in Southeast Asia's Mekong region, which encompasses parts of Vietnam, Laos and Thailand through which the river flows. In a speech at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Fumio Kishida affirmed the importance of Southeast Asia's economic prosperity to Japan. He pledged 750 billion yen (\$7 billion) in funding during the next three years to support development and growth in the region.

The initiative will help promote "connectivity" within Southeast Asian countries and Japan, through funding in infrastructure and development of human resources. Thailand has become a key manufacturing and export hub for Japanese manufacturers such as Toyota and Honda.

"Invigorating the flow of goods and people by connecting the region through roads, bridges and railways is indispensable for promoting economic development," he said, adding that Japan's cooperation will go beyond just building infrastructure.

Over the next three years, "we will make use of funds amounting to 750 billion yen toward cooperation with the Mekong region," Kishida said. Specific details have not been announced but he said Japan would like to work together

with the Mekong countries to create a framework to support the various efforts, including regional issues and theme-oriented support, in a detailed manner.

"I am expecting the day when, as a result of these efforts, I can depart from Bangkok eastward in the morning and arrive in Ho Chi Minh City at night and enjoy pho for dinner," he said. Kishida also renewed his call for the establishment of a code of conduct in the South China Sea, where China, Vietnam, the Philippines and others have competing territorial claims, and that prosperity can only be achieved if there is peace and stability in the region. "In this region, there are issues of terrorism, extremism, and ensuring maritime safety and security," he said. "There are multitudes of issues now facing our ASEAN partners. We need to face these issues together, and maintain stability in this region. What is necessary is respect for diversity, and what is fundamental for that is the rule of law."

Referring to Thailand's current political situation and its military government, Kishida said he hoped that the people of Thailand will overcome the current difficult challenges and "play more active role in the region and international community." The visit to Thailand is part of his regional tour that includes stops in China, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam. — AP

GOLDMAN TARGETS 'MASS AFFLUENT' BORROWERS WITH NEW LENDING PLAN

NEW YORK: Goldman Sachs Group Inc, the banking gold standard for the world's elite, sees a future in less prosperous investors. A creative strategy taking shape inside the bank calls for it to partner with small brokerages and wealth management firms to lend money to their clients, many of whom have far less wealth than what's in the typical Goldman private bank account.

The idea is for Goldman to reach a big set of borrowers, in the US and possibly abroad, without having to acquire them through a merger or build relationships one by one, people familiar with the initiative said. The plan is still in very early stages and may not be active until next year, the people added. The strategy is unusual not just for Goldman, but across Wall Street, since most banks simply lend to their own customers. It also carries more risk because it may be harder to vet borrowers or the assets they post as collateral.

The bank is looking to earn money from a broader borrower base as profits from traditional businesses like bond trading have slowed down. In April, Goldman completed a deal to buy \$17 billion worth of online deposits from GE Capital Bank to expand its reach on Main Street.

"Growing the lending business to a broader client base helps to offset some of the pain that has been happening on the trading

side," said Steven Chubak, an analyst with Nomura. Bankers involved with the Goldman plan say they are not upending its business model of catering to the uber wealthy. The typical client in Goldman's US private wealth unit has an average account size of around \$50 million. Those customers are where Goldman remains primarily focused, said the bankers, who were not authorized to speak publicly. Lending to wealthy individuals and corporate clients represented less than half of the balance sheet within Goldman's investing and lending business segment at the end of 2010, but that percentage is now more than 75 percent.

The new strategy will target clientele who are lower on the economic totem pole. Sources would not detail a wealth threshold for borrowers Goldman will reach through third parties, but said they are likely to be "mass affluent" - which is broadly defined as those with less than \$1 million in investable assets.

They declined to give details on how its partnerships with brokerages will work in terms of fees, underwriting or collateral. Goldman already has relationships with outside investment managers where it sells its own mutual funds, structured notes and alternative investments. Loans would be an additional offering, people involved in the strategy said. — Reuters

BUFFETT STILL LIKES BIG STAKES IN COKE, AMERICAN EXPRESS

BIG BARGAINS ENTICE BUFFETT FANS ON BERKSHIRE WEEKEND

OMAHA, Nebraska: Investor Warren Buffett says he would be willing to sell Berkshire Hathaway's big investments in American Express, Coca-Cola and other companies if he found a significantly better option, but he still believes in those companies. Buffett appeared on CNBC yesterday after meeting with roughly 40,000 Berkshire shareholders on Saturday.

Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc. has held major stakes in American Express and Coca-Cola for decades, so the company would face a significant tax bill on the gains if he did ever sell those investments. Buffett says the tax implications are a factor in his decisions. Buffett says he likes owning roughly 15 percent of American Express' stock even though competitors are trying to develop a better way to process payments. Berkshire owns about a 9 percent stake in Coca-Cola Co.

Bargain-hunter

Buffett, the CEO of Berkshire Hathaway Inc, is known for his keen eye for a bargain. And there were plenty on offer for shareholders attending Berkshire's annual meeting over the weekend, where goods from some 50 Berkshire businesses were on show, often at big discounts. Shareholder Shelli Clausen thought a \$5 kitchen spatula from Berkshire's Pampered Chef business fit the bill. "It's a good buy, and it's fun to get the good deals," she said while waiting in a line a couple of hundred deep in downtown Omaha's CenturyLink Center, where Buffett had addressed shareholders and taken questions.

When not listening to the Oracle of Omaha and his partner Charlie Munger, shareholders had two days to browse and buy Berkshire's products. These included See's Candies peanut brittle that Buffett and Munger chomped during the meeting. Courtney Cohen, a sales director at See's Candies, estimated that 19,000 of the 22,956 pounds of candy that the company brought to the meeting were sold. Dairy Queen events manager Dean Peters said those shareholders needing an ice cream fix consumed about 28,000 of its Dilly, Vanilla Orange and Fudge bars and its Mini Oreo Blizzards.

Those with more to spend could buy a \$9,277 pair of white gold diamond stud earrings from Borsheim's jewelry. Some vendors said numbers seemed down on in 2015, when Buffett celebrated his 50th anniversary running Berkshire.

Official attendance was not immediately known, but this year's meeting was the first to be streamed online. This was widely cited as a reason Omaha may have attracted fewer people to the weekend of events that Buffett calls "Woodstock for Capitalists." Buffett said on CNBC on Monday that he thought attendance was down by 10 percent.

Among the other Berkshire businesses on show were Kirby vacuum cleaners sold through in-home demonstrations and Fruit of the Loom clothing brand, which was among the more popular items. Fruit of the Loom had to put up a barrier at one stage to stop shareholders from overwhelming staff selling its \$8 neon green "Berky Boxer" shorts, or the bright yellow 2015 edition for just \$3.

"It's packed, incredibly packed," first-time attendee Steve Peters, from nearby Papillion, Nebraska, said. He and his wife Marlene had just bought a bed from Nebraska Furniture Mart and jackets from Fechheimer Brothers. "There are good deals," Marlene Peters said. Just what Buffett would want his shareholders to say. — Agencies



OMAHA: Berkshire Hathaway Chairman and CEO Warren Buffett (left) and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates play table tennis against prodigy Ariel Hsing, unseen, outside the Borsheims jewelry store, a Berkshire Hathaway subsidiary in Omaha on Sunday. — AP

OIL PRICES SLIP FROM 2016 HIGHS ON OPEC BOOST

LONDON: Oil prices edged back from 2016 highs yesterday as rising production in the Middle East outweighed a decline in US output and a sliding dollar. Crude production by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries rose in April to 32.64 million barrels per day (bpd), close to the highest level in recent history.

Iraq's April exports from southern fields increased, as did seaborne exports from Russia, the biggest exporter outside OPEC. Brent was trading at \$47.20 per barrel at 1130 GMT, down 17 cents from its last settlement. US crude was down 2 cents at \$45.90 a barrel.

On Friday, the June Brent contract expired at \$48.13 a barrel, a 21.5 percent gain over the month that marked the largest monthly advance since May 2009. Earlier in that session it reached \$48.50, a six-month high. The US oil rig count fell for the sixth week last week, which analysts said showed the price of oil had not risen enough to lure shale producers back.

"Despite the price rise, we continue to see a declining rig count," said Bjarne Schieldrop, chief commodities analyst with SEB Bank in Oslo. "The message from the shale players is that...you don't need prices to fall more. It's already doing what it should do in order to rebalance."

The price slide, which came amid low liquidity due to

the May Day holiday, contrasted with broader investor confidence in an oil price rebound. Speculator bets on rising Brent crude prices reached a fresh record last week, data from the InterContinental Exchange showed on Monday, while money managers raised bullish bets on US crude futures to a fresh 10-month high in the week to April 26. The chief of the International Energy Agency (IEA) said oil prices may have bottomed out if no major global economic issues emerge.

"In a normal economic environment, we will see the price direction is rather upwards than downwards," IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said on Sunday during a G7 meeting of energy ministers in Japan. Non-OPEC output is set to mark its biggest decline in around 20 years, Birol said. At the G7 meeting, US Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz said US production would likely fall by 600,000 bpd this year from 2015, when output peaked at around 9.6 million bpd.

Last week, Texas-based Ultra Petroleum Corp, a victim of low oil and gas prices, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The IEA's Birol also said a drawdown in global stockpiles should start toward the end of the year, though some US shale producers are using the price rally to hedge their production. — Reuters

VIRGIN AUSTRALIA WARNS BUSINESS TRAVEL COOLING AS ELECTION LOOMS

SYDNEY: Virgin Australia Holdings Ltd joined rival Qantas Airways Ltd in slashing seating capacity, warning firms like mining companies are delaying business travel during a 10-week election campaign that will fuel doubts on economic policy. As its focuses on a return to profit after years of losses in a damaging price war, Virgin Australia said yesterday it plans to cut seats on its April-June flights by 5.1 percent to ensure fuller flights. In April, Qantas also trimmed capacity plans citing the run-up to a likely July 2 vote.

"This environment has been impacted by weak consumer demand and sentiment, uncertainty around the federal election and the resources sector downturn," Virgin Australia Chief Executive Officer John Borghetti said in a statement. The capacity cuts add to clouds gathering since Virgin Australia's biggest shareholder, Air New Zealand Ltd, said it may sell its 26 percent stake. The firm's shares fell 5 percent to a two-year intraday low.

The carriers say election campaigns mean businesses delay non-essential travel until they know the outcome. Last month Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull named a probable election date 10 weeks out - double Australia's usual campaign length. "It does tend to cre-

ate a situation where businesses sit on their hands until they get clarity about who's in charge," said Bell Potter analyst John O'Shea. The mining slowdown is "still working its way through the system".

Sliding commodity prices have slammed the country's resources sector. As miners hold off for now on "fly in, fly out" travel - shuttling staff to and from far-flung mines - Virgin Australia will focus seat reductions on regional routes, while it works on a previously announced deal targeting that market with charter operator Alliance Aviation Services.

Corporate travel is big business for Virgin Australia. The carrier previously set a target of reaping 30 percent of its revenue from business travel by end-June 2017. It declined to comment on that goal on Monday, but said it's on track to return to profit this year. It issued a forecast for pre-tax earnings of A\$30 million (\$23 million) to A\$60 million for the year to June 30 - well below the A\$79 million consensus from analysts polled by Thomson Reuters.

Still, the carrier also said earlier this year that it plans to tap its four largest shareholders for a A\$425 million loan, stoking doubt over its progress towards profitability. — Reuters



AL MULLA GROUP LAUNCHES JOB FAIR WITH PAAET

KUWAIT: Al Mulla Group organized a job fair in cooperation with the Public Authority for Applied Education & Training presenting career opportunities to national youngsters. The event was held in the premises of the College of Technical

Studies on 19th and 20th of April 2016. The fair paved the way for the visitors, comprising mostly of students and fresh graduates, to get an insight into the job opportunities at Al Mulla Group which caters to a wide range of sectors: Al Mulla

Engineering, Acura, AlMulla and Behbehani Motor Company, Al-Maseelah Trading Co and Al Mulla Rental & Leasing Company for Vehicles and Machines. In his address at the fair, Al Mulla Group Chief Administrative Officer Abdulla

Najeeb Al Mulla, said that the group is dedicated to serving the youth of the nation to utilize their potentials for the development of Kuwait, and to draw a path for them to exert themselves in productive occupations.

Al Mulla emphasized the keenness of the group in following the government's policy of Kuwaitization in a constructive way by not only recruiting talents but also by providing the right training and guidance for them to develop and grow.



NEW YORK: Halliburton Chairman, President and CEO David Lesar (third from right) rings the New York Stock Exchange opening bell. Halliburton and Baker Hughes, two companies crucial to the business of US energy exploration, have abandoned their planned \$34 billion merger, the Justice Department said Sunday. — AP

ENERGY EXPLORERS HALLIBURTON AND BAKER HUGHES ABANDON MERGER

WASHINGTON: Two companies crucial to the business of US energy exploration - Halliburton and Baker Hughes - have abandoned their planned \$34 billion merger.

The Justice Department disclosed the plans on Sunday. The department filed suit April 6 to block the merger of Halliburton and Baker Hughes. It claims the transaction would unlawfully eliminate significant competition in almost two dozen markets crucial to the exploration and production of oil and natural gas in the United States.

"The companies' decision to abandon this transaction - which would have left many oil-field service markets in the hands of a duopoly - is a victory for the US economy and for all Americans," Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch said in a statement on Sunday. Justice officials said the merger of Halliburton and Baker Hughes would have raised prices, decreased output and lessened innovation in at least 23 oilfield products and services critical to the nation's energy supply.

As part of the agreement, Halliburton will pay Baker Hughes the termination fee of \$3.5 billion by Wednesday, according to a joint release from the companies. "While both companies expected the proposed merger to result in compelling benefits to shareholders, customers and other stakeholders, challenges in obtaining remaining regulatory approvals and general industry conditions that severely damaged deal economics led to the conclusion that termination is the best course of action," Dave Lesar, Halliburton's chairman and CEO, said. "Today's outcome is disappointing because of our strong belief in the vast poten-

tial of the business combination to deliver benefits for shareholders, customers and both companies' employees," Martin Craighead, Baker Hughes' chairman and CEO, said.

Baker Hughes said it is now taking steps to remove costs that were retained in order to comply with the now abandoned deal. Those steps include a strategy to refocus its sales channel and retain a selective footprint in the US. The company will also buy back up to \$1.5 billion in stock and about \$1 billion in debt, all from the proceeds of the \$3.5 billion breakup fee. It will also refinance a \$2.5 billion credit facility. Overall, the company expects \$500 million in annual cost savings by the end of the year.

Halliburton and Baker Hughes announced their plan to combine in November 2014, shortly after oil prices began to fall. Few, however, predicted the depth and duration of lower prices caused by a global oversupply of oil. The glut slowed demand for drilling services and crushed the stock price of both companies. The Justice Department indicated its concern about the acquisition in a lawsuit it filed against ValueAct Capital, a hedge fund that had bought more than \$2.5 billion in stock of Halliburton and Baker Hughes.

The department said in the lawsuit that a Halliburton-Baker Hughes merger "threatens to substantially lessen competition in numerous markets." Europe's top regulator, the European Commission, said it had also had concerns about the deal. It said that it had investigated its potential impact on competition together with regulators in the US, Brazil and Australia. — AP

ALLIANZ REAFFIRMS FULL-YEAR TARGETS AFTER PROFITS RISE

FRANKFURT: German insurance giant Allianz said yesterday that it is upholding its full-year targets for this year despite a decline in revenues and underlying profits in the first three months. At the same time, special gains boosted the group's bottom line in the three-month period, Allianz said.

Allianz said in a statement that its net profit grew by 20.5 percent to 2.2 billion euros (\$2.5 billion) in the period from January to March. That was ahead of analysts' expectations for first-quarter profit of around 1.55 billion euros. The increase was "driven in part by non-operating realised gains," the statement said, without specifying further. By contrast, underlying or operating profit declined by 3.5 percent to 2.8 billion euros and revenues dropped by 6.4 percent to 35.4

billion euros, Allianz continued. "We had a strong start to 2016, reinforcing our confidence that we will be able to reach our outlook for 2016 despite the fact that this is a challenging year for the financial services industry," said chief executive Oliver Baete.

"Despite the market volatility and low interest rates, we continue to expect an operating profit for the full year of 10.5 billion euros, plus or minus 500 million euros," Allianz said it would publish further details of its first-quarter results on May 11. Investors applauded the better-than-expected net profit figure and Allianz shares were the top gainer on the Frankfurt stock exchange yesterday afternoon, adding 3.1 percent to 152.85 euros, while the overall DAX index was up 0.99 percent. — AFP

AIR ARABIA NAMED 'BEST LOW-COST AIRLINE SERVING THE MIDDLE EAST'

BUSINESS TRAVELLER MIDDLE EAST AWARDS 2016

SHARJAH: Air Arabia, the first and largest low cost carrier in the Middle East, announced yesterday that it has been named "Best Low-cost Airline serving the Middle East" at the Business Traveller Middle East Awards 2016, held recently in Dubai.

Air Arabia received the award in recognition of its consistent ability to meet the needs of executive travellers, such as ease of booking, speed and flexibility of check-in, on time performance, and in-flight comfort.

Accepting the award, Adel Ali, Group Chief Executive Officer, Air Arabia, said: "We are proud to be recognised as the region's best low-cost airline for business travellers. This prestigious accolade is a reflection of our efforts in bringing the world closer for business travellers and to making their work trips as hassle free as possible." Senior executives from airlines, airports, and hotels across the region attended the



Business Traveller Middle East Awards to celebrate the best solutions for executive travellers over the past 12 months.

The Business Traveller award is the latest in a series of accolades that Air Arabia has won recently. Last year, the airline won an array of prestigious recognitions, including "Best Low Cost Carrier in the Middle East" at Skytrax World Airline Awards 2015, "Best Low-Cost Airline" at the World Tourism Forum 2015 in Turkey, "Best Low Cost Airline" and "Airline of the Year - Middle East" at the Aviation Business Awards 2015, "World Travel Leaders" Award - at the World Travel Market 2015, and "Customer Innovation Award (Loyalty Scheme)" at the Aviation Achievement Awards 2015, among others.

Air Arabia (PJSC), listed on the Dubai Financial Market, is the Middle East and North Africa's leading low-cost carrier (LCC). Air Arabia commenced operations in October 2003 and currently operates a total fleet of 43 new Airbus A320 aircraft, serving some 115 routes from five hubs in the UAE, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan.

GOLD HITS 15-MONTH HIGH ABOVE \$1,300/OZ

LONDON: Gold rose to a fresh 15-month high yesterday above \$1,300 an ounce, supported by renewed weakness in the dollar, but action was muted because of a holiday in some markets.

Many Asian markets and London were closed for national holidays, dampening momentum in the precious metal, which posted its biggest weekly rally since early February last week, up more than 5 percent. That was chiefly driven by weakness in the dollar, which had its worst week since 2008 versus the Japanese yen after the Bank of Japan unexpectedly opted against further monetary easing. The US currency stayed on the back foot yesterday. Spot gold was up 0.5 percent at \$1,299.71 an ounce at 1135 GMT, off an earlier peak of \$1,302.10, its highest since January last year. U.S. gold futures for June deliv-

ery were up \$12.10 an ounce at \$1,302.60.

"The dollar was the reason behind the spike up (last week), and we broke all the important levels on the upside," Afshin Nabavi, head of trading at MKS said. "\$1,285 was a huge number, and we got through \$1,290 pretty easily. \$1,300 is going to be a very important one."

"The dollar is very weak, especially against the yen, and the white metals all look very healthy, so maybe on the back of that gold may get a bit of a follow through," he said. "I think we're heading for new numbers on the upside." European shares were up 0.2 percent, while the dollar index, which measures the dollar against a basket of currencies, fell for a sixth session to hit an eight-month low. Data on Friday showed hedge funds and money managers cut their net long position

in gold futures and options in the week to last Tuesday. "Even though net long positions in gold were reduced slightly in the week to 26 April, we believe that speculative financial investors have been driving the gold price up significantly of late," Commerzbank said in a note. "The same also applies to silver, platinum and palladium." Speculators added to their bullish stance in COMEX silver for the third straight week, taking it to a record high.

Silver was up 0.6 percent at \$17.91 an ounce. The gold/silver ratio, which measures the number of silver ounces needed to buy an ounce of gold, steadied at 72.7, off last week's 6-1/2-month low of 72.2. Platinum was up 0.6 percent at \$1,081 an ounce, while palladium was up 0.3 percent at \$626.50 an ounce. — Reuters

AHLI UNITED BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-HASSAD ISLAMIC SAVING PROGRAM

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank held its weekly draw of Al-Hassad Islamic Saving program on April 27, 2016. This program offers the biggest prize amount to the largest number of winners. The prize program succeeded in becoming the first prize account in Kuwait compliant with the Islamic Shari'a principles.

The program has been developed to fulfil the needs of the Bank customers and increase their opportunities in winning sizeable and attractive prizes in addition to enjoying the latest banking advantages that Ahli United Bank provides.

On this occasion, the bank issued the following press release: Al-Hassad Islamic Saving program offers the highest amounts of prizes which amount to KD 3.4 million per year. This program also offers 26 weekly prizes, with the highest number of weekly winners. The Islamic Hassad Saving Account may be opened by the lowest amount to open an account, which is KD 100. The winner of the weekly grand prize in the amount of KD 25,000 is: Rabah Deeb Tinawi. The winners of the KD 1,000 prize each

are: Abdullah Saoud AlMutairi, Aiyed Salaibeek Al Anazi, Retaj Nawaf Ahmad, Faisal Mohammad Al Kandari, Wad K Ibrahim Abbas, Najat Badr Al mtairi, Ahmad Mohammad Ahmad, Abdullah Fahad Al Ajmi, Wasmiya Shukhair Thamer, Jamal Ghanim Al Ghanim, Samir A/Rasoul Gambar, Annamma Varghese, Mariam Ibrahim Ahmed, Mohammad Abdulmohsen Al Hussaini, Jawad Thabet Al Saad, Dalal Ali Al Nemesh, Mohammad Shuaifan Al Ajmi, Khalifah Musallam Al Ameerah, Ahmad Mohammad Baker, Mohammad Sulaiman Al Hulail, Nayef Hamad Abu Shaibah, A Aziz Hasan Abbas, Hasan Isa Mohammed, Diana William George, Hasan Mohamed Ali.

The prize program of "Al Hassad Islamic Saving" from Ahli United Bank offers a weekly grand prize worth KD 25,000 in addition to 25 weekly prizes worth a total of KD 25,000 distributed to 25 prizes, KD 1,000 for each winner.

In addition, prizes of Al Hassad Islamic saving program from Ahli United Bank offer 4 quarterly grand prizes announced in quarterly draws. Each is a "Salary for Life" prize which is worth KD 250,000.

In general, Ahli United Bank continues to offer innovative tools and means to meet the needs of its customers to match the Bank's long history of distinctive services which extend over 74 years during which the Bank managed to take the lead among local banks.



VIMEO ACQUIRES VHX, BOLSTERING SUBSCRIPTION VOD TOOLS

LOS ANGELES: Vimeo has acquired VHX, a startup that provides a platform for over-the-top subscription video channels and transactional VOD, looking to build more ways for creators to make money from online video.

Terms of the deal are not being disclosed. VHX had raised about \$10 million from investors including Comcast Ventures and Union Square Ventures. VHX was founded in 2011 by Jamie Wilkinson and Casey Pugh, who are both joining Vimeo with the acquisition. VHX's white-label OTT platform has roughly 30,000 active subscribers to 100 SVOD channels, and hosts nearly 10,000 VOD titles for rent

or purchase. Together, Vimeo and VHX distribution platforms generated nearly \$15 million in sales in 2015, according to Vimeo. Both companies are based in New York.

"Vimeo is home to the world's leading video creators and the viewers who love them, and we're excited to add VHX's team and technology to our streaming marketplace," Vimeo CEO Kerry Trainor said in announcing the deal. "As the video universe continues to unbuckle, Vimeo offers the ideal home for the next generation of premium video channels serving passionate global audiences."

"Adding our platform to Vimeo's massive com-

munity of creators and consumers means we'll be able to move faster, and help creators large and small succeed in the over-the-top streaming market," added VHX CEO Jamie Wilkinson, who will report to Trainor.

Vimeo launched a subscription VOD option last summer, but with the addition of VHX, the company claims it will provide a complete set of SVOD tools for individual creators, niche programmers and media partners. Vimeo now offers creators customer data and video analytics tools, and technology to rapidly launch or migrate SVOD channels in 4K adaptive streaming across mobile, web and TV

apps, along with industry-standard digital rights management.

The Vimeo and VHX teams plan to pitch the combined OTT solution to studios, agencies, TV networks in the US and internationally, and VOD subscription services looking for a lower-cost solution. VHX's 22 employees will all join Vimeo, which has a headcount of just under 200. Initially, VHX will continue to operate under the VHX name but eventually the platform will be incorporated under the Vimeo brand. Vimeo, founded in 2004, is owned by Barry Diller's IAC holding company and claims to have 280 million viewers and creators worldwide. — Reuters



DAYTONA BEACH: In this photo taken April 7, 2016, Jonathan Mossberg, whose iGun Technology Corp. is working to develop a "smart gun," poses with the firearm, in Daytona Beach, Florida. — AP

SEEKING HIGH-TECH SOLUTION TO MAKE FIREARMS SAFER

DAYTONA BEACH: Jonathan Mossberg is among a small number of pioneers looking to build a safer gun. But unlike many others, he was in the gun business when he started down that path.

His family is renowned for its premier line of shotguns treasured by law enforcement, hunters and the military. Mossberg already has spent more than a decade working to develop - and someday bring to the market - a firearm that the wrong person cannot fire. It is intended to work without fail in the hands of its owner in a life-or-death situation.

"We're gun people, so we know when you pick up a gun you want to shoot it," Mossberg said. "You don't want to swipe your finger. You don't want to talk to it. In an emergency situation, you want to pick it up and use it."

Mossberg's iGun Technology Corp., based in Daytona Beach, Florida, relies on a simple piece of jewelry - a ring - that "talks" to a circuit board imbedded in a firearm to let it know the user is authorized. The ring must be within centimeters of the gun for the gun to fire. The road to a safer gun has been long. Initial efforts encountered a public wary of the technology, but that has eased as iPhones, tablets and other smart devices have become common.

Mossberg isn't the only one attempting to bring a bit of James Bond to firearms. Others are exploring biometrics, like an iPhone lock that opens with your fingerprint. Some rely on radio-frequency identification, or RFID, technology, proximity sensors similar to the system Mossberg's company uses. Some use watches to send a signal to the firearm.

"They've had varying degrees of success, but none has been broadly marketed so far. On Friday, President Barack Obama announced new steps to curb gun violence, including by identifying the requirements "smart guns" would have to meet for law enforcement agencies to buy and use them.

"As long as we've got the technology to prevent a criminal from stealing and using your smartphone, then we should be able to prevent the wrong person from pulling a trigger on a gun," Obama said. The departments of Justice and Homeland Security said in a report Friday that they expect to

complete the work of identifying the smart-gun requirements by October.

"The technologies are a reality now," said Stephen Teret, a professor of health policy and management at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who studies gun violence and gun policies. "There are obstacles still in getting those technologies into guns and getting guns into the civilian marketplace."

Higher prices

Among them is cost. Modernizing gun manufacturing would mean higher prices for smart weapons. Then there's the politics. The industry is concerned that success with the technology would encourage the government to mandate it.

And the powerful gun lobby raises red flags about reliability. What happens if the firearm isn't syncing with the radio signal or the fingerprint isn't recognized? In a crisis, seconds are precious. "If you need it to protect yourself and it doesn't work, that's a bad outcome," said Larry Keane, senior vice president and general counsel for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which represents manufacturers. "Reliability is everything ... If your iPhone doesn't work, you're inconvenienced. You're not dead."

Mossberg's interest in smart-gun technology stemmed from a rise in police being killed with their own service weapons in the 1990s. Law enforcement didn't embrace the idea, preferring to use holsters that made it more difficult for a suspect to disarm an officer.

He switched gears and began developing a firearm for civilians, only to find resistance there, too. Many people in the focus groups he conducted around the country told him they wanted nothing to do with a gun that contained a circuit board.

But as personalized technology won greater acceptance - and after mass shootings in Columbine, Colorado; Newtown, Connecticut, and other places seized public attention - opposition faded. Mossberg said the shotgun his company is developing has been tested more than 3,000 times with no failures. The next challenge: shrinking the circuit board so it fits into a handgun. — AP

CHINA PROBES SEARCH ENGINE BAIDU OVER STUDENT'S DEATH

BEIJING: China's Internet regulator said on Monday it will send an investigation team to Chinese search leader Baidu Inc over the death of a university student, who had used the search engine to look for treatment for his cancer. Wei Zexi, 21, died last month of a rare form of cancer. He had turned to Baidu to look online for the best place for treatment, finding a department under the Second Hospital of Beijing Armed Police Corps which offered an experimental form of treatment that ultimately failed, according to state media.

Before dying, Wei had posted criticism online accusing Baidu of promoting false medical information, as well as the hospital for misleading advertising in claiming a high success rate for the experimental treatment, state radio said.

"Wei's family says they trusted the treatment because it was promoted by one of the military hospitals which are considered credible, and the attending doctor had appeared on many mainstream media platforms," state radio said.

The regulator said in a short statement Wei's case had attracted wide-

spread attention on the Internet. It, along with the health ministry and State Administration for Industry and Commerce, would investigate Baidu over the case and "handle it in accordance with the law" and publicize its findings.

Baidu said in a statement it deeply regretted Wei's death and sent its condolences to his family. "Baidu strives to provide a safe and trustworthy search experience for our users, and have launched an immediate investigation of the matter," it said.

The company added it welcomed the investigation and would fully cooperate. Reuters was not able to reach the hospital for comment. Baidu has been in trouble before for medical related issues. This year, it was criticized for selling management rights for an online forum related to haemophilia to an unlicensed private hospital, which then used the platform for self-promotion and deleted comments that challenged its credentials, the official Xinhua news agency said. In 2010, China's state-run television accused Baidu of promoting counterfeit drugs through its search engine. — Reuters

HTC EMPOWERS HAMAKI WITH THE POWER OF 10

ARAB MUSIC IDOL RECEIVES FIRST HTC 10 DEVICE IN MEA REGION

DUBAI: Mohamad Hamaki, Arab pop-culture icon and HTC social media brand ambassador, is the region's first recipient of the much-awaited flagship smartphone, the HTC 10. Hamaki's Topaz Gold HTC 10 combines some of the most advanced smartphone technology with professionally-designed and certified audio capabilities, to be the ideal, portable music playback companion for an iconic musician.

Mohamad Hamaki said: "It is a privilege to be the first Arab to receive the brilliant new HTC 10. A large part of my life is around interacting with people around the world on social media, and the HTC 10's camera and audio capabilities makes this a natural choice for me. I look forward to creating and sharing experiences widely, and strengthening my community engagement with the power of 10!"



Hamaki has spent time personalizing his HTC 10 experience, creating a unique smartphone experience from a range of visuals and themes, a fully-customisable freestyle layout, HTC Sense



Home to toggle between Work and Play modes, HTC BlinkFeed to customize content based on location, and much more.

Intricately crafted and sculpted to perfection, the Hi-Res Audio-certified HTC 10 is an audiophile's dream, with re-engineered HTC BoomSound(tm) Hi-Fi edition speakers bringing studio-quality music playback through a separately-amplified woofer and tweeter, or through the Hi-Res Audio headphones that come standard with the device.

The HTC 10 device is a series of firsts - Qualcomm Snapdragon 820 chipset, dual OIS cameras, chamfered edges seamlessly melding metal and glass, and much more.

HTC 10 is now officially launched in the Middle East and Africa, and will be available at leading retailers from the first week of May. Exclusive contracts will also be available from telecoms such as Etisalat (UAE) and STC (Saudi Arabia).

HTC recently announced the appointment of Mohamad Hamaki, as its social media brand ambassador. He will work with the consumer electronics brand to establish music and sound quality as the brand's defining competitive differentiator and also bring unique experiences to HTC users and enthusiasts across the MENA region, giving HTC and Hamaki fans the opportunity to create brilliant memories.

PHASE TWO OF EXOMARS MISSION DELAYED TO 2020

PARIS: The second part of a joint European-Russian mission to probe Mars for traces of life has been delayed two years, with a new launch date set for July 2020, officials said yesterday. In the first phase, the European Space Agency (ESA) and its Russian counterpart, Roscosmos, hoisted in mid-March two probes bound for the Red Planet.

The Tracer Gas Orbiter (TGO) will examine Mars' atmosphere, and a lander-dubbed Schiaparelli, after a 19th-century astronomer will settle on the planet's surface in a trial run. The planned second stage of the mission will dispatch a European rover capable of drilling up to two meters (about seven feet) into the Martian surface in search of organic matter.

Space agency officials had warned that the follow-on ExoMars mission, originally scheduled for launch in 2018, might be delayed due to technical problems and cost overruns. "Taking into account the delays in European and Russian industrial activities and deliveries of the sci-

entific payload, a launch in 2020 would be the best solution," both agencies said in a joint statement.

With its suite of high-tech instruments, the TGO aims to arrive at its destination on October 19 after a journey of 496 million kilometers (308 million miles). Launched on a Russian Proton rocket, the craft is designed to "smell" Mars' atmosphere for gassy evidence of life, past or present. Schiaparelli will test heat shields and parachutes in preparation for a subsequent rover landing, a feat the ESA said "remains a significant challenge".

The 2020 payload will also be lifted into space by a Russian rocket. The double ExoMars mission will complement the work of NASA's Curiosity rover, which has been criss-crossing Mars' surface for more than three years. Space has been one of the few areas of cooperation between Moscow and the West that has not been damaged or derailed by ongoing geopolitical tension in Ukraine, Syria and elsewhere. — AFP

YAHOO CEO MARISSA MAYER WILL REAP \$55 MILLION IF SHE'S FIRED POST-SALE

LOS ANGELES: Yahoo chief Marissa Mayer has a golden parachute worth \$55 million that kicks in if she's terminated within a year of the company being sold. Per Yahoo's amended 10-K filing with the SEC Friday, Mayer would receive \$3 million in cash severance, plus accelerated stock options and grants worth \$51.8 million.

Yahoo's board is currently evaluating bids from prospective buyers for the Internet company's core business. Verizon and private-equity firms are among the parties reported to have submitted acquisition proposals. Last month, Yahoo modified the terms of its employee severance plans to clarify that a change in control of the company applies to sale of "all or substantially all" of its operating businesses.

Mayer, who turns 41 later this month, received a total compensation package of \$36 million in 2015, according to the filing, a

decrease of 14.5% from 2014. That included \$1 million base salary, \$14.5 million in stock and \$19.9 million in options; in 2014, she received stock worth \$11.8 million and options worth \$28.2 million.

Yahoo also disclosed that it paid \$544,061 for personal security services for Mayer in 2015, which was in addition to security provided at business facilities and during travel. In addition, under the company's Invention Recognition Award program, which is open to all full-time employees, Mayer last year earned a bonus of \$1,125 for being among the inventors named in a pending patent application.

Other top Yahoo execs would receive multimillion-dollar severance packages in the event they lose their jobs post-sale. Chief revenue officer Lisa Utzschneider would receive \$19.9 million, CFO Ken Goldman would get \$16.1 million and general counsel Ron Bell would take home \$9 million in severance benefits. — Reuters

HOW AMAZON CONVINCED YOU TO PAY UP FOR SHOPPING

NEW YORK: Amazon is clearly entering its Prime. Meaning, of course, its \$100 annual membership program, now a decade old, which has accomplished the remarkable feat of convincing millions of people to pay an annual fee for the privilege of, well, shopping.

Prime is now central to Amazon's strategy of dominating the world of commerce. What started as a yearly fee for free two-day shipping now offers a sometimes bewildering array of perks, including household product subscriptions, one and two hour Prime Now delivery, streaming music and video, e-books, groceries (for an additional \$200 a year), photo storage and more.

"Prime has become an all-you-can-eat, physical-digital hybrid," Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos wrote in his annual shareholder letter in April. He wants the service to be such a good deal that you'd be "irresponsible" not to sign up, he wrote.

Profit surge

Why the emphasis on Prime? Simply put, members of the loyalty program shop more frequently and spend more money, analysts say. Prime shoppers helped drive Amazon's surprise profit surge in the first quarter. Shares of the e-commerce giant jumped in after-hours trading Thursday after it reported a 28 percent jump in revenue, to \$29.13 billion. Net income was \$513 million, compared to a loss in the year-earlier quarter. Amazon doesn't release detailed numbers on Prime, although Bezos wrote that Prime has "tens of millions" of subscribers. Wedbush Securities analyst Michael Pachter estimates

there are about 50 million Prime members.

Even a 25 percent price increase in 2014, the only one for Prime in 10 years, hasn't appreciably dampened enthusiasm for the program. Membership grew 51 percent last year, including 47 percent growth in the US, according to Bezos. Pachter estimates that Prime members spend about four times what others do, and account for about a third of all Amazon purchases. "That is why Prime matters," he said.

Tawnie Knight in Tuscon, Arizona joined Prime about two years ago for the convenience of free shipping. Since then Amazon has become



her default shopping site. "I call it the \$100 cart, because every time I go on there I spend about \$100," she said. "Before Prime I probably spend around the same amount, just with other retailers like Walmart."

Brandon Kraft joined Prime when it began 10 years ago to get cheap textbooks while in school. Now he finds it essential - with five kids ranging in age 17 months to 6 years at home - for ordering diapers and wipes and other household goods.

"I think it's fair to say we spend \$125 or \$150 a month at Amazon that we wouldn't have been

spending if we didn't have Prime," Kraft said. "We go to the Amazon site first when we need something, and if they don't carry it we start the actual shopping process of looking elsewhere."

80 percent

Of course, Amazon Prime is not for everyone. Those that shop infrequently online will not find the \$100-a-year fee worth it. With an estimated 244 million registered Amazon accounts, a large majority of Amazon shoppers - roughly 80 percent, in fact - have not signed up yet.

Amazon continues to add Prime offerings to entice more users. Last week Amazon started offering a monthly Prime subscription for \$11 a month, aimed at hooking shoppers during the holidays when the majority of Prime members sign up. In 2015, 3 million shoppers joined Prime in the third week of December alone. Amazon also introduced a standalone video service for \$9 a month, setting itself up to directly compete with other streaming services like Netflix.

Investors have long griped about Amazon's strategy of investing the revenue it makes into new offerings, leading to little or no earnings growth. But the first quarter results were the fourth in a row in which Amazon reported a profit, which some analysts interpret as a willingness to rein in costs when needed.

Chief financial officer Brian Olavsky, however, told reporters on a conference call that the company's profits stem mostly from strong growth in sales. The company isn't slowing its investments, he said, citing recent spending on logistics and original programming for its streaming video

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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



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www.met.gov.kw

DAY: Monday

02/05/2016

Issue Time 07:00

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Partly cloudy with light to moderate southerly changing to south easterly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain

BY NIGHT: Partly cloudy with light to moderate south easterly to southerly wind, with speed of 12 - 32 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	40 °C	28 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	42 °C	21 °C
ABDALY	41 °C	24 °C
BUBYAN	37 °C	23 °C
JAHRA	41 °C	25 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	37 °C	23 °C
SALMIYAH	35 °C	28 °C
AHMADI	34 °C	28 °C
JAL ALIYAH	37 °C	23 °C
QAROH ISLAND	37 °C	25 °C
UMM AL-MARADEM	37 °C	25 °C

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	MAX. TEMPERATURE	MIN. TEMPERATURE	WIND DIRECTION	WIND SPEED
Tuesday	05/03	Hot	41 °C	21 °C	SE	12 - 35 km/h
Wednesday	05/04	Hot + scattered clouds	43 °C	23 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 28 km/h
Thursday	05/05	Clouds to increase	43 °C	26 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Friday	05/06	Partly cloudy + dust+scattered rain	43 °C	26 °C	NW-N	20 - 45 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:39
Sunrise	05:05
Zuhr	11:45
Asr	15:21
Sunset	18:25
Isha	19:48

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	38 °C
MIN. Temp.	17 °C
MAX. RH	65 %
MIN. RH	12 %
MAX. Wind	W 43 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	00 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. UP.0

2016/05/02 10:42 UTC V1.00 T2.3 2-1/ع.خ.ت.ف



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-Mikhaizeem	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 Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupare	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. Abdalateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR. Mohammed 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	
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MONKEY BARS ALERT: PLAYGROUND CONCUSSIONS ARE ON THE RISE

CHICAGO: Playground concussions are on the rise, according to a new government study, and monkey bars and swings are most often involved. Most injuries studied were mild, but all concussions are potentially serious and the researchers say the trend raises public health and safety concerns.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study examined national 2001-2013 data on playground injuries to kids aged 14 and younger who received emergency-room treatment. Of almost 215,000 kids on average treated yearly, almost 10 percent - about 21,000 annually - had traumatic brain injuries including concussions. Only nonfatal injuries were included. Here are some key findings, published online Monday in Pediatrics:

Climbing Rates

In 2005, 23 out of 100,000 kids had traumatic brain injuries, a rate that jumped to 48 out of 100,000 in 2013. The rate declined in the previous years but increased steadily after that. By 2013, the annual total was almost 30,000 kids

treated for these brain injuries. The rise may mean parents are becoming increasingly aware of the potential seriousness of concussions and the need for treatment. It's also possible more kids are using playground equipment, the researchers said.

The Injuries

Only 3 percent of kids with concussions were hospitalized or transferred elsewhere for additional treatment; 95 percent were sent home after ER treatment. Half of the head injuries were in kids ages 5 to 9 and injuries were more common in boys. Symptoms weren't listed but signs of concussions after a blow to the head can include headaches, dizziness, confusion, nausea and vomiting.

Concussion Basics

Concussions are a type of traumatic brain injury typically resulting from a blow to the head that jostles the brain and temporarily disrupts brain function. Symptoms can last days or weeks and while

most kids completely recover, repeated blows to the head have been linked with brain damage - most notably in some retired NFL players.

Dr. Jeneita Bell, a CDC brain injury specialist who co-authored the study, said the results highlight "that sports is not the only important cause of concussions and other traumatic brain injuries for children."

Tips

Playground equipment most commonly involved in concussions included monkey bars and swings. The study lacked details on how kids got hurt but many concussions result from falls and the researchers' recommendations include using soft ground surfaces including wood chips or sand, rather than concrete.

The researchers said adult supervision is key to helping prevent these injuries. They also recommend checking to make sure playground equipment is in good condition. Bell also recommends reading playground signs "and using playground equipment that is right for your child's age." — AP



In this file photo, children take advantage of warmer weather, as they play on a playground at sunset in Armstrong Park, in Lafayette, Ind. Playground concussions are on the rise, a government study found, and monkey bars and swings are most often involved. Most injuries were mild, but the researchers say the trend raises public health and safety concerns. — AP

US LAB MONKEYS ESCAPE, ALL CAUGHT

YEMASSEE, South Carolina: Nineteen monkeys made a break from a compound on the South Carolina coast, but freedom was fleeting. Local media outlets report the monkeys escaped from the Alpha Genesis center Sunday afternoon and six hours later all had been recaptured. Alpha Genesis operates two facilities near Beaufort, South Carolina, where it has 5,000 monkeys, many sold for medical research.

Yemassee Police Chief Gregory Alexander says a broken or a loose cage door led to the escape. Alexander says it's not the first time it's happened, but generally the monkeys return to the compound because they know that's where there's food. US Department of Agriculture records show that two years ago 26 monkeys escaped. All were recaptured but two facility employees were fired. — AP



SEOUL: Ata Safdar, head of British firm Reckitt Benckiser Korea, bows during a press conference yesterday. British consumer goods company Reckitt Benckiser has apologized and accepted responsibility for selling deadly disinfectants that killed or injured about 180 people.



SEOUL: A relative of a victim in the British disinfectant case complains to Ata Safdar, head of British firm Reckitt Benckiser Korea, right, during a press conference yesterday. British consumer goods company Reckitt Benckiser has apologized and accepted responsibility for selling deadly disinfectants that killed or injured about 180 people. — AP photos

JAIL TERM FOR FOUNDER OF DEFECTIVE BREAST IMPLANTS

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, France: A French appeal court yesterday upheld a four-year prison sentence for the founder of PIP, the company that manufactured defective breast implants that caused a health scare across Europe and South America.

The court in the southern city of Aix-en-Provence confirmed the fraud conviction against Poly Implant Prothese (PIP) founder Jean-Claude Mas, 76. The court also upheld the 2013 trial's sentence that Mas must pay 75,000 euros (\$86,000) and be banned for life from working in medical services or running a company.

Mas also faces two other pending legal cases, one for involuntary manslaughter

and another linked to the financial implications of the scandal. The scandal first emerged in 2010 after doctors noticed abnormally high rupture rates in women with PIP implants.

It gathered steam worldwide in 2011, with some 300,000 women in 65 countries believed to have received the faulty implants. In France alone, 18,000 women had PIP implants removed because of a risk of rupture or because they had become uncomfortable. In the appeal, which had to be held in a congress centre to accommodate all the plaintiffs, Mas denied that the implants made by his company from industrial oil carried any health risk. — AFP



FRANCE: Poly Implant Prothese (PIP) founder Jean-Claude Mas (L) waits at the courthouse yesterday in Aix-en-Provence, prior to his appeal trial, after having been sentenced in an initial trial to four years of imprisonment for allegedly selling faulty breast implants that sparked global health fears. France upheld the jail term for Mas. — AFP

RECKITT BENCKISER KOREA APOLOGIZES FOR DEADLY STERILIZERS

VICTIMS STORM PRESS CONFERENCE, CALL FOR BOYCOTT

SEOUL: British consumer goods company Reckitt Benckiser apologized yesterday for selling deadly disinfectants that killed or injured hundreds of people, five years after the government ordered the company to remove the products from shelves for health risks.

Ata Safdar, head of the company's Korean division, said the company accepted responsibility and wanted to make amends. He spoke at a news conference, where he was interrupted by angry and tearful victims and family members who cursed and hit him.

A teenager with a big, green oxygen tank, and four other people who were apparently victims or their families, walked to the stage to confront Safdar. "Can you save the child? What are you going to do?" said a woman, in a scene broadcast live on television. "Why did it take so long?" a man asked.

Safdar said the company will come up with a plan to compensate victims. It will also provide 10 billion won (\$8.8 million) to a humanitarian fund for them, including 5 billion won it pledged two years earlier. He called the day "an important milestone in achieving progress for victims."

Apology rejected

But the victims and families rejected the apology, appealing to the South Korean public to punish Reckitt Benckiser with a boycott. In a press conference outside the prosecutors' office, victims and

campaigners lined up the products made by Reckitt Benckiser and asked the public not to buy them.

The apology came as South Korean prosecutors were investigating Reckitt Benckiser and about a dozen other companies for selling or manufacturing unsafe disinfectants. Earlier the company had refused to take responsibility.

In a separate statement after the press conference, civic groups representing the victims said they planned to file a complaint against Rakesh Kapoor, the British company's chief executive officer, and the company's seven other board members for failing to conduct safety tests before the disinfectant's launch in 2001 and until sales were discontinued in 2011.

The victims have already filed a complaint against 10 disinfectant manufacturers and 19 companies that sold the products. The health risks from the disinfectants came to attention in 2011 with mysterious lung ailments that killed pregnant women. Later that year, authorities said the chemicals PHMG and PGH in the disinfectants that many South Korean households used to cleanse humidifiers were to blame.

Nearly all households in South Korea use a humidifier during the dry winter season. Many victims were children and pregnant women who had the most exposure to the chemicals emitted by their home humidifiers.

Victims compensated

South Korea's government said it would compensate 221 confirmed victims, 95 of whom died. Another 309 people were denied government compensation on the grounds they had not proven their sicknesses were linked to the chemicals. Civic groups said the government tally understates the number of victims. They estimate that the disinfectants killed 239 and injured 1,289. Officials are investigating and expect more applications for compensation. Reckitt Benckiser sold millions of bottles of liquid disinfectant, called Oxy Ssak Ssak, containing the harmful chemicals for about a decade and was blamed for 100 deaths.

A report posted by the US National Institutes of Health says the chemical PHMG can pose "a critical health hazard when inhaled in the form of droplets." The NIH has also recorded acute toxic effects for both PHMG and PGH. An Australian court recently ordered Reckitt Benckiser to pay 1.7 million Australian dollars (\$1.3 million) in penalties after ruling that the company misled consumers about the effectiveness of a popular painkiller.

The Federal court ruled the company deceived Australians by selling Nurofen painkillers marketed as relief for specific ailments, such as back pain and period pain, when all of the products contained an identical amount of the same active ingredient, ibuprofen lysine. — AP

CLINIC

PAGE

248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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- 00:25 Rob Roy
02:40 Behind Enemy Lines
04:10 The Hills Run Red
05:40 Death Rides A Horse
07:35 The Night They Raided Minsky's
09:15 The Magnificent Seven
11:20 The Indian Fighter
12:50 One Summer Love
14:30 The Beast Of Hollow Mountain
15:50 The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course
17:20 Empire Of The Ants
18:50 The Man In The Iron Mask
21:00 Breaking Bad
22:00 Dracula 2000

- 12:30 Culture Express
13:00 Africa Live
14:00 News Update
14:30 Dialogue
15:00 News Update
15:15 China 24
16:00 News Update
16:15 Global Business
17:00 News Update
17:15 World InSight
18:00 Asia Today
18:30 Culture Express
19:00 News Update
19:30 The Heat
20:00 Africa Live
21:00 Global Business
21:30 Dialogue
22:00 News Update
22:15 China 24
23:00 News Update
23:15 World InSight

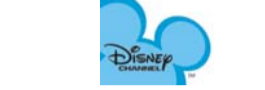
- With Morgan Freeman
10:23 Invent It Rich
11:08 How The Universe Works
11:53 Mega Builders
12:38 Mythbusters
13:23 Through The Wormhole
With Morgan Freeman
14:10 Ecopolis
14:57 Food Factory
15:20 Food Factory
15:44 How The Universe Works
16:31 Mega Builders
17:18 Ecopolis
18:05 Mythbusters
18:50 Secret Space Escapes
19:40 How The Universe Works
20:25 Through The Wormhole
With Morgan Freeman
21:15 Ecopolis
22:00 Secret Space Escapes
22:45 How The Universe Works
23:35 Mythbusters



- 00:45 Mountain Monsters
01:40 In Search Of The King
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Queens Of The Savannah
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 In Search Of The King
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 My Cat From Hell
08:15 In Search Of The King
09:10 Treehouse Masters
10:05 Tanked
11:00 My Cat From Hell
11:55 Bondi Vet
12:25 Bondi Vet
12:50 In Search Of The King
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Treehouse Masters
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Queens Of The Savannah
17:25 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
18:20 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Animal Cops South Africa



- 00:00 The Edge
00:30 The CNBC Debate
01:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
02:00 Asia Squawk Box
05:00 Asia Street Signs
07:00 Capital Connection
08:00 Squawk Box Europe
11:00 Europe Street Signs
12:00 Worldwide Exchange
13:00 U.S. Squawk Box
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 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 Binny 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 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
06:00 Mouk
06:00 Lolirock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:40 Jessie
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:20 Hannah Montana
09:45 Girl Meets World
10:10 Girl Meets World
10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:00 A.N.T. Farm
11:25 Jessie
11:50 Jessie
12:15 Whisker Haven Tales With The Palace Pets
12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
12:45 Fish Hooks
13:10 Austin & Ally
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Cars Toons
14:30 Liv And Maddie
14:55 Dog With A Blog
15:20 Dog With A Blog
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:10 Violetta
17:00 The Next Step
17:25 Alex And Co
17:50 Dog With A Blog
18:15 Best Friends Whenever
18:40 Liv And Maddie
19:05 Evermoor Chronicles
19:30 Violetta
20:20 The Next Step
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O
22:20 Binny And The Ghost
22:55 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:20 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



- 00:00 I Escaped My Killer
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 The Haunting Of...
03:00 Cursed: The Bell Witch
04:00 I Escaped My Killer
05:00 The Haunting Of...
06:00 I Didn't Do It
07:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
08:00 Crime Stories
09:00 Frenemies
09:30 Frenemies
10:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
11:00 The First 48
12:00 The FBI Files
13:00 I Didn't Do It
14:00 Crime Stories
15:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
16:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
17:00 The First 48
18:00 The FBI Files
19:00 I Didn't Do It
20:00 Crime Stories
21:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
22:00 Bill Cosby: The Women Speak
23:00 The Jail: 60 Days In



- 00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 You Have Been Warned
02:00 Troy
02:50 Superhuman Science
03:15 Superhuman Science
03:40 GI Dough
04:05 Storage Wars Canada
04:30 Auction Hunters
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 Fifth Gear
06:00 Outback Truckers
06:50 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 GI Dough
08:55 Storage Wars Canada
09:20 Auction Hunters
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Fifth Gear
10:35 You Have Been Warned
11:25 Troy



- 00:25 Eastenders
00:55 New Tricks
01:55 New Tricks
02:50 Silent Witness
03:45 Waking The Dead
04:40 Eastenders
05:10 Doctor Who
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Eastenders
07:30 Stella
08:15 The Paradise
09:10 Doctor Who
10:00 Doctors
10:30 Eastenders
11:00 Death In Paradise
11:55 Stella
12:45 The Paradise
13:40 Doctors
14:30 Doctors
15:00 Eastenders
15:30 Death In Paradise
16:25 Dickenson
17:15 Doctor Who
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:05 Death In Paradise
20:00 Hobby City
21:00 Stag
21:55 Silent Witness
22:50 Orphan Black
23:50 Doctors



- 00:00 Charlie Rose
01:00 Bloomberg West
02:00 First Up With Angle Lau
03:00 First Up With Angle Lau
04:00 Trending Business



BATTLESHIP ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

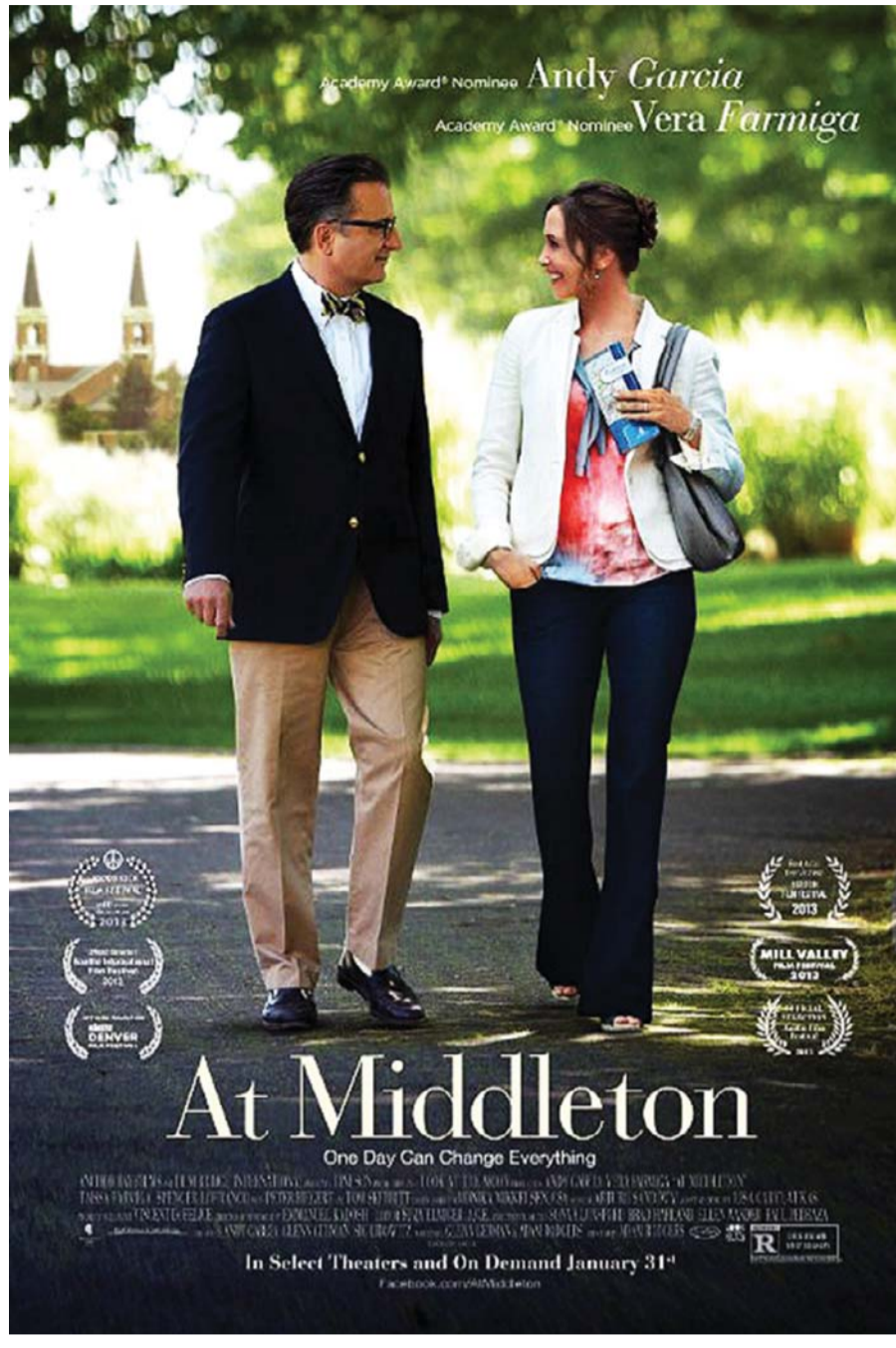
- 05:00 Trending Business
06:00 Asia Edge
07:00 Bloomberg West
08:00 Countdown
09:00 Countdown
09:30 On The Move
10:00 On The Move
11:00 The Pulse
12:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
13:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
14:00 Bloomberg Go
15:00 Bloomberg Go
16:00 Bloomberg Go
17:00 Bloomberg Markets
18:00 Bloomberg Markets: European Close
19:00 Bloomberg Markets
20:00 Bloomberg Markets
21:00 Bloomberg Markets
22:00 Bloomberg Markets
23:00 What'd You Miss?
12:15 Superhuman Science
12:40 The Carbonaro Effect
13:05 GI Dough
13:30 Storage Wars Canada
13:55 Auction Hunters
14:20 Outback Truckers
14:45 Wheeler Dealers
15:10 Wheeler Dealers
16:00 Fast N' Loud
16:50 Fifth Gear
17:15 How Do They Do It?
17:40 Salvage Hunters
18:30 For The Love Of Cars
19:20 What On Earth?
20:10 Storage Wars Canada
20:35 Auction Hunters
21:00 Salvage Hunters
21:50 For The Love Of Cars
22:40 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
23:30 Wheeler Dealers
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou
02:30 Loopidoo
02:45 Art Attack
03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 Calimero
03:35 Zou
03:45 Loopidoo
04:00 Art Attack
04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
04:35 Calimero
04:50 Zou
05:00 Loopidoo
05:15 Art Attack
05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
05:50 Calimero
06:00 Zou
06:20 Loopidoo
06:35 Art Attack
07:00 The Hive
07:10 Zou
07:25 Loopidoo
07:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
08:05 Sofia The First
08:30 Goldie & Bear
08:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
09:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
09:20 Doc McStuffins
09:35 Doc McStuffins
10:00 Sofia The First
10:30 Goldie & Bear
10:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons
11:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
11:25 The Lion Guard
11:50 Handy Manny
12:15 Jungle Junction
12:30 Special Agent Oso
12:45 The Hive
13:00 Sofia The First
13:25 Miles From Tomorrow



- 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
05:30 Dialogue
06:00 News Hour
07:00 Global Business
08:00 News Update
10:30 Sports Scene
11:00 Global Business
12:00 News Update



- 00:20 Through The Wormhole
09:20 With Morgan Freeman
01:08 Invent It Rich
01:55 How The Universe Works
02:42 Ecopolis
03:29 Invent It Rich
04:16 How The Universe Works
05:03 Mega Builders
06:37 How Do They Do It?
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:23 Mythbusters
07:30 Ecopolis
08:53 Mega Builders
09:38 Through The Wormhole



AT MIDDLETON ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 13:50 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
14:15 The Lion Guard
14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:10 Miles From Tomorrow
15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 Jungle Cubs
16:50 Aladdin
17:15 The Lion Guard
17:40 Goldie & Bear
18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
18:30 Sofia The First
19:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
19:30 The Lion Guard
20:00 Goldie & Bear
20:30 Sofia The First
21:00 Jungle Cubs
21:25 Aladdin
21:50 Gummi Bears
22:20 Lilo And Stitch
22:50 Zou
23:05 Henry Hugglemonster
23:20 Calimero
23:35 Zou
23:50 Loopidoo
18:00 El News
19:00 House Of DVF
20:00 Keeping Up With The
00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Chopped
02:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
03:00 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Chopped
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:30 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
09:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
11:30 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
12:00 Chopped
13:00 The Pioneer Woman
13:30 The Pioneer Woman
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Man Fire Food
15:30 Man Fire Food
16:00 Chopped
17:00 The Kitchen
18:00 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
18:30 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Guy's Grocery Games
21:00 Private Chef
21:30 Valerie's Home Cooking
22:30 Valerie's Home Cooking
23:00 Iron Chef America
00:10 Get Your Act Together
01:05 Coach Trip
01:35 Harry's South Pole Heroes
02:30 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
13:25 Emmerdale
13:50 Coach Trip
14:20 Coronation Street
14:45 The Jonathan Ross Show
15:35 The Queen's Worst Year
16:30 Black Work
17:25 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
18:20 Emmerdale
18:45 Coach Trip
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 The Queen's Worst Year
20:30 Black Work
21:25 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
22:50 Coronation Street
Emmerdale
Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
00:10 Brain Games
01:00 Cesar To The Rescue
02:00 SuperCar Megabuild
02:55 Secrets Of The King Cobra
03:50 Brain Games
04:45 24 Hours In A&E
05:40 Filthy Riches
06:35 Mega Factories
07:30 Showdown Of The Unbeatables
08:25 Building Wild
09:20 24 Hours In A&E
10:15 SuperCar Megabuild
11:10 The Yard
12:05 Dirty Rotten Survival
13:00 Building Wild
14:00 Showdown Of The Unbeatables
15:00 Megastructures
16:00 SuperCar Megabuild
17:00 The Yard
18:00 Dirty Rotten Survival
19:00 Mine Kings
20:00 SuperCar Megabuild
20:50 The Yard
21:40 Dirty Rotten Survival
22:30 Megastructures
23:20 Filthy Riches
00:10 Dream Cruises
01:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces



- 01:50 Top Tables, Top Cities
02:15 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
02:40 Tom's Istanbul Delight
03:05 Glamour Puds
03:30 Glamour Puds
03:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
04:20 Maximum Foodie
04:45 Maximum Foodie
05:10 Food School
05:35 Rustic Adventures Italy
06:00 Rustic Adventures Italy
06:25 Carnival Eats
06:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
07:40 Top Tables, Top Cities
08:05 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
08:30 Tom's Istanbul Delight
08:55 Glamour Puds
09:20 Glamour Puds
09:45 David Rocco's Dolce India
10:10 Maximum Foodie
10:35 Maximum Foodie
11:00 Food School
11:25 Rustic Adventures Italy
11:50 Rustic Adventures Italy
12:15 Carnival Eats
12:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
13:35 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure
14:30 Tom's Istanbul Delight
14:55 Glamour Puds
15:25 Glamour Puds
15:50 David Rocco's Dolce India
16:20 Maximum Foodie
16:45 Maximum Foodie
17:15 Grandma's Boy
17:40 Rustic Adventures Italy
18:10 Rustic Adventures Italy
18:35 Carnival Eats
19:05 Glamour Puds
19:30 Glamour Puds
20:00 David Rocco's Dolce India
20:25 Maximum Foodie
20:50 Maximum Foodie
21:15 Grandma's Boy
21:40 Rustic Adventures Italy
22:05 Rustic Adventures Italy
22:30 Carnival Eats
22:55 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces



- 00:20 Deadly Instincts
01:10 Man And The Wild
02:00 Africa's Creative Killers
02:50 I, Predator
03:45 Caught In The Act
04:40 Outback Wrangler
05:35 Africa's Creative Killers
06:30 I, Predator
07:25 Caught In The Act
08:20 Outback Wrangler
09:15 Race Of Life
09:40 Race Of Life
10:10 Nordic Wild
11:05 Animals Gone Wild
12:00 Monster Fish
12:55 Intimate Enemies
13:50 I, Predator
14:45 Caught In The Act
15:40 Dangerous Encounters
16:35 Race Of Life
17:00 Race Of Life
17:30 Nordic Wild
18:25 Animals Gone Wild
19:20 Caught In The Act
20:10 Dangerous Encounters
21:00 Race Of Life
21:25 Race Of Life



- 00:30 The Muppets
01:00 Breaking In
01:30 Comedians
02:00 The Big C
02:30 Louie
03:00 The Carmichael Show
03:30 Living With Fran
04:00 \$#!* My Dad Says
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 Suburgatory
06:00 The Bernie Mac Show
06:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 \$#!* My Dad Says
08:30 Suburgatory
09:00 The Carmichael Show
09:30 The Last Man On Earth
10:00 Playing House
10:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 Your Family Or Mine
12:30 \$#!* My Dad Says
13:00 Suburgatory
13:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
14:00 Living With Fran
14:30 The Last Man On Earth
15:00 Playing House
15:30 The Muppets
16:00 Breaking In
16:30 Your Family Or Mine
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 My Big Fat Greek Life
18:30 Living With Fran
19:00 Mad Love
19:30 Mad Love
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 The Muppets
21:30 Breaking In
22:00 Comedians
22:30 The Big C
23:00 Louie
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



- 00:00 Once Upon A Time
01:00 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.
02:00 The Flash
03:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow
04:00 Good Morning America
05:00 Once Upon A Time
06:00 Once Upon A Time
08:00 Prison Break
09:00 The Voice
10:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
11:00 24
12:00 Prison Break
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 Prison Break
19:00 Minority Report
20:00 The Flash
21:00 Blindspot
22:00 Empire
23:00 Mr. Robot



- 00:00 Psycho
02:00 Biker Boyz
03:50 Abandoned Mine
05:45 Battleship
08:00 The League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen
10:00 The A-Team
12:15 Age Of Dinosaurs
13:45 Battleship
16:00 Transit
17:45 The A-Team
20:00 R.I.P.D.
22:00 The Berlin File



- 00:00 A Million Ways To Die In The West
02:00 Sister Act
04:00 Pitch Perfect
06:00 Father Of The Bride Part II
08:00 My Father The Hero
10:00 Pitch Perfect
12:00 Sister Act
14:00 At Middleton
16:00 My Father The Hero
18:00 50 First Dates
20:00 Date Night
22:00 Let's Be Cops



- 01:00 One Last Look
03:00 Short Term 12
05:00 Foreverland
07:00 1911
09:00 The Truth About Emanuel
11:00 Foreverland
13:00 Short Term 12
15:00 Barefoot
17:00 The Truth About Emanuel
19:00 Nightcrawler
21:00 Blood Ties
23:30 Suite Francaise



- 01:00 Eight Below
03:00 Mulan
04:45 The Mighty Ducks
06:45 Oz The Great And Powerful
09:00 Ice Princess
11:00 Tinker Bell And The Legend Of The Never-Best
13:00 The Shaggy Dog
15:00 The Gabby Douglas Story
17:00 Merchants Of Doubt
19:00 Jersey Boys
21:30 The Sixth Sense
23:00 The Gabby Douglas Story



- 00:00 The People vs Larry Flynt
02:30 A Beautiful Mind
05:00 Boyhood
08:00 Belle
10:00 Evita
12:30 A Beautiful Mind
15:00 Dr. Strangelove
17:00 Merchants Of Doubt
19:00 Jersey Boys
21:30 The Sixth Sense
23:30 Jayne Mansfield's Car



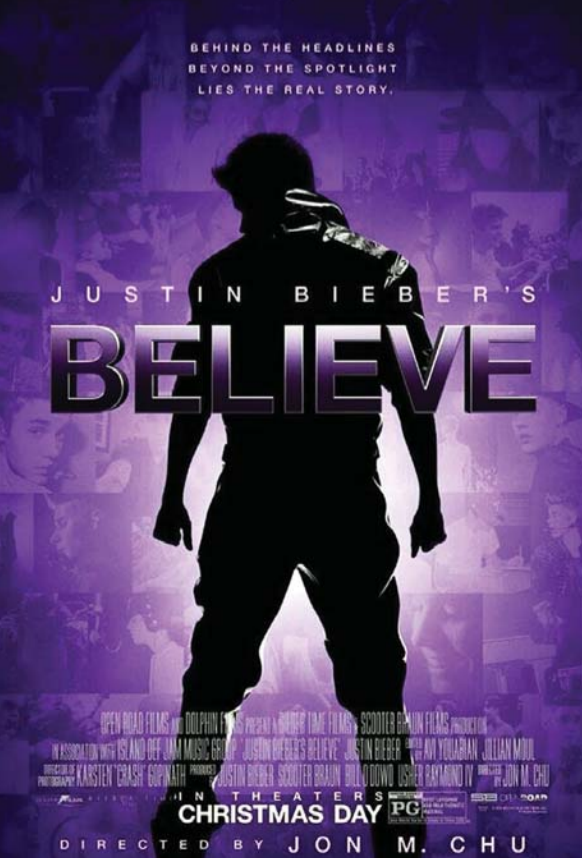
- 01:00 Life After Beth
03:00 The Single Moms Club
05:00 The Mark
07:00 From Up On Poppy Hill
09:00 Dolphin Tale 2
11:00 Not Safe For Work
12:30 Billy Elliot The Musical
15:15 Believe
17:00 The Two Faces Of January
19:00 A Royal Night Out
21:00 The Final Girls
23:00 Top Five



- 01:30 Mamma Moo And Crow
03:00 Marco Macaco
04:30 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
06:00 Miffy The Movie
08:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
10:00 Worms
11:30 Saving Santa
13:00 Marco Macaco
14:30 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
16:00 The Heart Of The Oak
18:00 Worms
20:00 The Adventurer: The Curse Of The Midas Box
22:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
23:30 The Heart Of The Oak



- 01:00 Premier League Darts
04:30 Golfing World
05:30 Live PGA European Tour
07:30 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
08:30 Inside The PGA Tour
09:00 European Tour Weekly
09:30 Live PGA European Tour
12:30 Golfing World
13:30 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
14:30 Inside The PGA Tour
15:00 Live Snooker World Championship
19:00 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
20:00 Inside The PGA Tour
20:30 European Tour Weekly
21:00 Live Snooker World Championship



BELIEVE ON OSN MOVIES HD

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (28/04/2016 TO 04/05/2016)

Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme
12:00 PM	SHARQIA-1 THE TRUST	12:00 PM	FANAR-1 THE TRUST	12:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
2:00 PM	THE TRUST	2:30 PM	THE TRUST	2:30 PM	THE TRUST
4:00 PM	MIDNIGHT SPECIAL	4:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	4:30 PM	THE TRUST
6:15 PM	THE TRUST	6:30 PM	THE TRUST	6:30 PM	MARINA-3 I AM WRATH
8:15 PM	THE TRUST	8:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	8:30 PM	I AM WRATH
10:15 PM	MIDNIGHT SPECIAL	10:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	10:30 PM	I AM WRATH
12:30 AM	THE TRUST	12:30 AM	THE TRUST	12:30 AM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
1:00 PM	SHARQIA-2 THE JUNGLE BOOK	11:30 AM	FANAR-2 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	11:30 AM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
3:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	1:45 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	1:45 PM	THE TRUST
5:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	4:00 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	4:00 PM	NO WED
7:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	6:15 PM	BAAGHI: A REBEL FOR LOVE - Hindi	6:15 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
10:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	9:30 PM	FAN- Hindi	9:30 PM	NO WED
NO WED	NO WED	12:15 AM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	12:15 AM	NO WED
12:15 AM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	12:00 PM	FANAR-3 GREEN ROOM	12:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
NO WED	NO WED	2:00 PM	MIDNIGHT SPECIAL	2:00 PM	THE TRUST
1:15 PM	SHARQIA-3 MOTHER'S DAY	4:15 PM	GREEN ROOM	4:15 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
1:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	6:15 PM	MIDNIGHT SPECIAL	6:15 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
FRI	FRI	8:30 PM	GREEN ROOM	8:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
3:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	10:30 PM	MIDNIGHT SPECIAL	10:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	12:45 AM	GREEN ROOM	12:45 AM	NO WED
7:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
9:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	12:15 PM	FANAR-4 THE JUNGLE BOOK	12:15 PM	THE TRUST
12:05 AM	MOTHER'S DAY	2:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	2:30 PM	THE TRUST
1:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	4:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	4:45 PM	THE TRUST
1:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	7:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	7:00 PM	THE TRUST
FRI	FRI	9:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	9:15 PM	NO WED
3:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	11:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	11:30 PM	NO WED
5:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	12:45 PM	FANAR-5 MOTHER'S DAY	12:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
7:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
10:00 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	5:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
12:05 AM	MOTHER'S DAY	7:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	7:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
12:15 PM	MUHALAB-2 THE TRUST	10:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	10:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
2:15 PM	THE TRUST	12:15 AM	NO WED	12:15 AM	MOTHER'S DAY
4:15 PM	THE TRUST	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
6:15 PM	BAAGHI: A REBEL FOR LOVE - Hindi	1:00 PM	MARINA-1 MOTHER'S DAY	1:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
9:00 PM	THE TRUST	3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	3:15 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
11:00 PM	THE TRUST	5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
1:00 AM	THE TRUST	7:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	7:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
1:30 AM	MUHALAB-3 HASAN WA BOQLOZ	11:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	11:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
1:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	1:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	1:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
3:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
6:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	5:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
8:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	7:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	7:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
10:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	9:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	9:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
NO WED	NO WED	11:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	11:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY
12:45 AM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	11:30 AM	MARINA-2 THE TRUST	11:30 AM	THE TRUST
NO WED	NO WED	1:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	1:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
NO WED	NO WED	4:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	4:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
6:30 PM	AVENUES-6 THE TRUST	12:30 PM	THE TRUST	12:30 PM	THE TRUST
8:45 PM	THE TRUST	2:45 PM	THE TRUST	2:45 PM	THE TRUST
11:00 PM	THE TRUST	5:00 PM	THE TRUST	5:00 PM	THE TRUST
1:00 AM	THE TRUST	7:15 PM	THE TRUST	7:15 PM	THE TRUST
12:15 PM	I AM WRATH	9:30 PM	THE TRUST	9:30 PM	THE TRUST
2:15 PM	I AM WRATH	11:45 PM	THE TRUST	11:45 PM	THE TRUST
4:15 PM	I AM WRATH	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
6:15 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
8:30 PM	I AM WRATH	11:30 AM	AVENUES-7 GREEN ROOM	11:30 AM	GREEN ROOM
10:30 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	1:45 PM	GREEN ROOM	1:45 PM	GREEN ROOM
12:45 AM	NO WED	3:45 PM	GREEN ROOM	3:45 PM	GREEN ROOM
NO WED	NO WED	5:45 PM	GREEN ROOM	5:45 PM	GREEN ROOM
NO WED	NO WED	8:00 PM	GREEN ROOM	8:00 PM	GREEN ROOM
NO WED	NO WED	10:15 PM	GREEN ROOM	10:15 PM	GREEN ROOM
11:30 AM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	12:30 AM	NO WED	12:30 AM	NO WED
1:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
4:00 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	1:15 PM	360- 1 THE JUNGLE BOOK	1:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
6:15 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	3:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	3:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
8:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	5:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	5:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
10:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	8:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	8:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
1:00 AM	NO WED	10:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	10:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
11:30 AM	MOTHER'S DAY	NO WED	CRIMINAL	NO WED	CRIMINAL
2:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	12:30 AM	NO WED	12:30 AM	NO WED
4:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	1:15 PM	360- 2 HASAN WA BOQLOZ	1:15 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
7:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	3:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	3:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
9:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	5:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	5:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
12:05 AM	MOTHER'S DAY	7:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	7:30 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
11:45 AM	MOTHER'S DAY	9:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	9:45 PM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
12:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	12:05 AM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ	12:05 AM	HASAN WA BOQLOZ
1:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	11:45 AM	360- 3 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	11:45 AM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	2:00 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	2:00 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	4:15 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR -3D	4:15 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
7:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	6:45 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	6:45 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
9:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	9:15 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR -3D	9:15 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
11:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	11:45 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR	11:45 PM	THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR
1:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	11:30 AM	AL-KOUT.1 THE JUNGLE BOOK	11:30 AM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	1:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	1:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	4:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	4:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
7:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	6:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	6:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
9:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	8:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	8:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
11:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
1:00 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	10:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	10:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
3:15 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	1:00 AM	GREEN ROOM	1:00 AM	GREEN ROOM
5:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
7:30 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
9:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED
11:45 PM	MOTHER'S DAY	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED	NO WED

CHANGE OF NAME

I Hafiz son of Fakhruddin and Salma bearing an Indian Passport No. Z1852600 residence of Marble Arch flora Co Op housing society, flat 5, 1st floor, Central Avenue, Santacruz west, Mumbai, India henceforth will be known as Hafiz Fakhruddin Chief for all purposes.

I Anis son of Fakhruddin and Salma bearing an Indian Passport No. Z2181848 residence of Nai Abadi, AT and PO Partapur, dist Banswara, Rajasthan, India henceforth will be known as Anis Fakhruddin Chief for all purposes. **3-5-2016**

Kanagamani Packirisamy son of Packirisamy and Saroja bearing an Indian Passport No. Z2443141 and having address A2K Vilavanapadugai, Kalam Pulivalam, Thiruvavur Dt, Tamil Nadu, India had embraced Islam and changed the name as Kamaludeen. **(C 5167)**

Balveni Dadala daughter of Dadala Pullaiah and Dadala Nagaratamma bearing an Indian Passport No. G0613666 and having an address D.No 2-13-3, Plot No. 10/2 Reddy buildings Venkat Nagar Kakinada, east Godavari Dt, Andhra Pradesh, India, had embraced Islam and changed the name as Ayesha. **(C 5167)** **25-4-2016**

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decent Indian Christian family or bachelor near Salmiya Garden, block 10. Contact 66884273, after 2 pm. **(C 5168)** **2-5-2016**

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PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	03:41
Shorook	05:07
Duhr:	11:45
Asr:	15:21
Maghrib:	18:24
Isha:	19:4

Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 3/5/2016

Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10
JZR	239	Amman	00:20
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15
KAC	418	Manila	02:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	354	BLR	08:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25
KAC	784	Jeddah	08:50
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
IRA	675	Lar	09:40
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
KAC	620	Doha	13:10
KAC	514	Tehran	13:45
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:50
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:55
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05
KAC	672	Dubai	14:05
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:10
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:15
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20

Departure Flights on Tuesday 3/5/2016

Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30
KAC	788	Jeddah	15:00
KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05
OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
RJA	640	Amman	16:00
FDB	051	Dubai	16:10
JZR	325	Al Najaf	16:15
QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
JZR	535	Cairo	16:20
CLX	784	SIN	16:30
NIA	251	Alexandria	16:50
KAC	680	Muscat	16:55
KAC	562	Amman	16:55
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	177	Dubai	17:45
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:50
QTR	1080	Doha	17:55
JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35
KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35
KAC	502	Beirut	18:35
KAC	742	Dammam	18:50
KAC	542	Cairo	18:55
SVA	510	Doha	18:55
FDB	070	Dubai	19:00
BAW	156	London	19:05
FDB	054	Dubai	19:05
KAC	171	Frankfurt	



JUMEIRAH MESSILAH BEACH HOTEL AND SPA LAUNCHES NEW LOOK, MENU AT ARABESQUE CAFE AND TERRACE

Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa welcomes guests to indulge in the newly refreshed Middle Eastern restaurant, Arabesque Cafe and Terrace. The cafe now boasts a new look with exquisite furniture and inviting decor for a comfortable dining experience, complete with a vast array of savory Middle Eastern favorites.

General Manager, Hakan Petek, said: "We are pleased to introduce a new dining experience to our guests with a fresh new look of distinguished Arabian style that seamlessly blends with a modern twist. Guests can enjoy a Middle Eastern inspired menu of unique delights with the warmth of Arabian hospitali-

ty, all of which are heightened by the relaxed ambiance and idyllic surroundings of our hotel."

Recognized for award-winning chefs and culinary talents, Arabesque Cafe presents specially curated menu items by the acclaimed Chef Sami, who has been featured on several Kuwaiti TV shows to share his savoury recipes.

Starting with the cold and hot mezze platters, options of assorted kebabs, koftas, shawarmas, and arayas can be enjoyed with a selection of salads, namely the popular sumac salad. Other Arabian picks are the delectable lamb stew and pitta bread paired with the restaurant's signature hummus. Guests can

complete their dining experience with freshly-prepared sweet treats complimented by servings of Arabic coffee.

Arabesque Cafe celebrates contemporary design with the traditional ambience of the Middle East. The restaurant also boasts a charming terrace where guests can relish their meal based around the finest ingredients and have the pleasure of trying culinary selections carrying authentic local flavors.

Arabesque is open daily for lunch and dinner from 13:00pm to 1:00pm.



NANMA MALAYALEE ASSOCIATION ELECTS NEW OFFICE BEARERS

Nanma Kuwait Malayalee Association elected its new office bearers and Executive Committee for the period 2016-2017.

The office bearers are: Salim M.A - President, Kalanjoor Radha Krishnan - Vice President, Parimanam Manoj - General Secretary, Joy Augustine - Treasurer, Girija Vijayan - Jt. Secretary, Amalan K.L. - Jt. Treasurer -Madhu A and Sherly Sukhu - Unit Co-Ordinator, Committee Members - Biji Thomas, Mini Krishna, Pradeep, Rosamma Joy, Surendran Nair, Valsala Mohan, Vijaya Kumar. Vijayan Karayil (Secretary - Indian Community School), is the new Advisory Board Chairman. Advisory Board Members are Hamsa Payanoor (CEO - Metro Medical Centre), Sathar Kunnil (Media Forum), B S Pillai (Social Worker), Adv Thomas Paniker (Social Worker), Koshy Alexander (President - Ananthapuri Association), Luis James (Social Worker), Ashraf U K (Social Worker), Sebastin Joseph (MD) -



Salim M A, President



Parimanam Manoj, General Secretary

International Kitchen Equipment Co) and Shobha Nair (Social Worker).

1. Salim M A, President
2. Parimanam Manoj, General Secretary
3. Joy Augustine, Treasurer
4. Kalanjoor Radha Krishnan, Vice President

Nanma Kuwait Malayalee Association is a charitable society formed for the welfare of Indian Emigrants, particularly Keralaite of Kuwait.

AL-THURAYA CITY LAUNCHES NEW AFTERNOON TEA AT SILK

Crowne Plaza Kuwait Al-Thuraya City announced details of the new afternoon tea served daily in its signature restaurant, Silk. Masterfully created by Executive Pastry Chef Daniel Jongsma and Culinary Director Alexander Kooijman, the afternoon tea comprises three layers. The first layer presents the finest selection of scones, served with clotted cream, strawberry jam, and blood orange marmalade. The second layer includes mini pastries, petits fours, macarons, and chocolate-covered strawberries. The third layer consists of light-as-air finger sandwiches filled with smoked salmon, egg, or cucumber.

The traditional afternoon tea is complemented by a heavenly chocolate fondue. Diners select their favorite chocolate (dark, milk, or white chocolate) and treat themselves to dipped marshmallows, brownies, and fresh fruit cubes. Tea lovers will appreciate the wide selection of loose-leaf teas: English Breakfast, Earl Grey, mint, jasmine - just to name a few.

Commenting on the new offer, Chef Kooijman said: "With the launch of our afternoon tea, we want to reproduce in Kuwait the authentic British tea-time experience. Whether you live in Kuwait or are visiting for a few days, we invite you to come and enjoy afternoon tea as much as we enjoy preparing it."



7TH EDITION OF 'SHAASTROTSAV' ON MAY 13

NSS College of Engineering Alumni, Kuwait Chapter in association with Indiansinkuwait.com, one of the leading portals in Kuwait, jointly host SHAASTROTSAV-2016, on 13-May-2016. The event is organized at Al-Zumerida Hall, Salwa. This is the 7th Edition of Shaastrotsav. The previous 6 editions were well accepted by the public in Kuwait and were successfully conducted at different venues in Kuwait.

Addressing a press conference, the organizers said the event would be officially declared open by Indian Ambassador for Kuwait Sunil Jain at 10 am. Thirteen Indian schools have confirmed participation in Junior and senior category of School Science Exhibition, in which around 100 participants would take part. Apart from schools, eight alumni of Kuwait Engineers Forum, the umbrella organization of engineering colleges in and outside Kerala will also participate.

Shaastrotsav-2016 also provides a platform for like-minded public with interest in science and technology to present their science related exhibits, under open category. The event provides, yet another opportuni-

ty for Rubik's cube enthusiast to showcase their Rubik's cube solving talent. As in yesteryears, there will be Animation Contest for creative animators.

The event includes Mind Power seminar to understand how fully utilize mind power for children and achieve the best, by Crawford Wilson D'Souza, professional certified mind trainer. Shaastrotsav-2016 will honor best students of various participating schools.

The evening program will start by 5:00 pm with the 'Tapping your inner potential', a scientific entertainment program, by Santhosh Babu, Managing Director of OD Alternatives, India. He is also a visiting professor to ISB, Hyderabad & Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS).

Award ceremony for the winners will follow after the evening program. Entry is free for all events and for visitors. The press conference was attended by N S S College of engineering alumni Kuwait Chapter president Muhammed Ashraf, Shaastrotsav-2016 convener Vinod A.P Nair. Different subcommittee conveners Justine Joseph, Santhosh Kumar and Sunil Jacob also attended the press conference.

WHAT'S YOUR LOCATION?' COMES TO CAP KUWAIT

'What's your Location?' Explores the question: What is more real? That which we see for the first time or what we know from experience? Is our memory of a subject more real than its description? What of the many representations of the world? Can we take them as substitutes for a deferred reality or the condition of the world itself? Originally shown in Porto Alegre, Brazil, the acclaimed exhibition 'What's Your Location?' is coming to CAP, Kuwait.

While working in Kuwait, Brazilian artist Antonio De Silva met and mingled with other artists here. De Silva received his MA degree in Fine Art from the Royal College of Art, England. He has done several solo exhibitions Brazil, UK and other countries. But in one day, he planned another solo in Brazil. Then, came up with the idea of combining the arts of the countries where he had lived in a group exhibition to represent them in Porto Alegre city, his birthplace, and that was in collaboration with his tutor, Steven Scott, his friend, Ruth Jones and Jassim Al-Nashmi.

"We first met in 2014 at CAP where we were taking a photography workshop. However, our relation ended after the workshop and we haven't picked up from each other since then. By coincidence, he saw my work exhibited ALMAKAN art hub and cafe. My brother is the chef, hence, he took my contact number from him and told me about his aim. Our first exhibition in Brazil was done by less artists and a smaller showroom than the one in CAP. The exhibition will be brought to London afterward" Al-Nashmi said.

In this exhibition, the Kuwaiti architect, Jassim Al-Nashmi developed photographs are usually blurred images of identifiable objects, this blurring is not from the lack of focus but from a double exposure or a leakage of light from the back of the camera, both which obscure the final photographs. Blurring an



Artist, Architect, Jassim Al-Nashmi



Artist Antonio De Silva

identifiable object dismantles the viewer's understanding of it, allowing them to see it in a new light and redefine it for themselves. "My camera is Lubitel Lomography camera, it's a modern camera from an original Russian design. The paradigm shift that occurred in my relationship with photography happened when I started drawing geometric lines and sabotage their form by pouring dye on them. I found out that the link between order and chaos in connection with the world is brain-waving" He added.

Da Silva, creates works that interrogate how we participate as active or passive observers in our environment and the social conflict that exists within society, but is denied. His project "Icarus" was made in collaboration with Khaled Nazar. Icarus, is the first "art" project that Khaled has worked on. This script-less, raw footage is visualized on the spot. Icarus takes the story of a man's journey of building a way out. The project is set on Failaka Island. An island inhabited

since 3000 B.C by Sumerian traders and eventually the home of the city named Icarus. As time has aged these ruins, a new 20th century civilization had planted its roots but only to be abandoned again. The Icarus project is essentially the never-ending life cycle of Failaka, meaning outpost.

Sixteen contemporary Kuwaiti and international artists are showing their latest work this year. Participating artists are Dana Aljouder, Jassim Al-Nashmi, Amira Ali Behbehani, Frederick Bell, Rommulo Vieira Conceicao, Antonio Da Silva, Mohamad Hafez, Ruth Jones, Gayle Chong Kwan, Judy-Ann Moule, Khaled Nazar, Farah Salem, Katia Salvany, Steven Scott, Muneera Alsharhan, Amani Al-Thuwaini. The artists range from Kuwait, Britain, Scotland, Brazil, Syria and Australia. Their work fall under three main groups, the city, the woman, and the films.





(From left) Hussein Al-Sayyed, Jacob, Abdulkareem Sobhy and Osama.



A group photo of officials at the event.

UNITED DANAH FISHERIES COMPANY HOSTS MEDIA IN SEAFOOD EVENING AT TASSYOURA RESTAURANT

The United Danah Fisheries Company, a subsidiary of United Fisheries of Kuwait, hosted the local media in an exquisite and authentic seafood evening in which an array of fresh and uniquely prepared seafood dishes were served as a thank you gesture to the media community for their endeavors in supporting the local industry and national products.

The evening was held at Tassyoura restaurant, which is owned by Al-Safat Dhiafa Company. The restaurant enjoys a unique view of the waterfront at Dhiafa Village next to Kuwait Towers. The restaurant offers a vast selection of popular, delicious and tasteful Kuwaiti cuisine dishes. The seafood evening was supplied by 'Danah' fish outlets, a leading company in providing seafood and in upholding the highest safety standards in the food

industry. In addition to the rich selection of seafood dishes, friendly conversations were on the menu between representatives of the executive management of United Danah Fisheries Company, during which products offered by 'Danah' outlets in the Kuwaiti market were presented.

'Danah' outlets are one of the leading seafood providers in Kuwait with a network of 28 high-end stores, equipped with the latest tools and decors. The brand provides home delivery and is the top-of-the-mind store to purchase fresh, frozen and canned seafood in Kuwait all-year-long thanks to the high quality standards in servicing customers. The products are also provided in local cooperative societies and supermarkets.

'Danah' representatives presented a number of seafood dishes and products offering a

variety of tastes. The presentation also included an overview of spices it offers for the preparation of seafood dishes.

Strong relation

Commenting during the seafood evening, Abdulkareem Sobhy, General Manager of the United Danah Fisheries Company said: "We are honored to have members of the local media present with us in the seafood evening hosted by Danah's chain of outlets. We have a strong relation with the press and we thank them for their vital role in supporting national products." Sobhy added: "We have ensured to always add value in what we provide to our market, by offering them high-quality products, modernizing our production lines, and constantly enhancing our quality policies. These rigorous strategies have enabled us to

acquire a larger market share and increase our customers' trust in our product. As we move forward, we will continue to work on providing the best products in the local market to exceed our customers' expectations."

Sobhy also said: "We are committed to quality in our production facilities which are equipped with the most modern machinery and packaging equipment. The facilities are located in both the Shuaiba and Doha areas. Our commitment has earned us the ISO certification for quality management as well the HACCP certification for food safety system. The facilities are equipped with the advanced fridges that allow us to store volumes of seafood products to ensure their safety and quality. We also control the quality of our products through specialized divisions and laboratories that inspect quality and ensure

we use provide consumers with the best quality seafood."

Speaking of the taste of seafood dishes presented by the 'Danah' brand during the evening, Sobhy explained that the brand prepares its seafood dishes using the best quality, rich and natural spices which are carefully picked to satisfy the variety of taste buds and preserve the natural fresh taste of our products. Concluding the evening, Sobhy said: "We invest all efforts to provide high quality seafood products that are up to the standards we've set to ourselves and exceed our customers' expectations. We do so by adopting sound and sustainable policies that aim to improve our market leadership and support local products."



(From left) Basel Humaidan, Osama Al-Sousi, Abdulkareem Sobhy and Hussein Al-Sayyed.



(From left) Rakan Al-Shemmari, Abdulhameed Anarah, Abdulkareem Sobhy, Hamad Al-Khalifa and Shathal Nampeer.



Media guests at the event.



The work team.



(From left) Osama Al-Sousi, Basma and Basel Humaidan.



Music played at the event.

MILLENNIUM HOTEL AND CONVENTION CENTRE KUWAIT ANNOUNCES NEW BUSINESS LUNCH MENU

Busy professionals have another reason to look forward to lunch following the announcement by Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre Kuwait of an all-new menu at Library Cafe's Business Lunch during a press event on April 28th.



Dani Saleh, Area General Manager of Millennium and Copthorne Hotels Kuwait

Business Lunch takes place daily from 12:30 pm to 3:00 pm at Library Cafe located on the ground floor. The new menu was developed by the hotel's award-winning culinary chefs, offering an exquisite two or three-course meal featuring a selection of soup or salad, a main course, and dessert. Guests may also select from a variety of high-end teas, coffees, and snacks while they enjoy Library Cafe's elegant atmosphere, first-class hospitality, and punctual service.

Dani Saleh, Area General Manager of Millennium and Copthorne Hotels Kuwait, highlighted Business Lunch as one of many initiatives aimed at solidifying the property as the country's premier business-minded hotel. "Business Lunch is yet another addition to our comprehensive set of attractions catered specifically to the needs of active professionals," explained Saleh as he addressed members of press. He added: "We have worked very hard to ensure a delightful, comfortable and memorable experience for those seeking to make the right impression, or simply to step away from the office environment."

In addition to Business Lunch at Library Cafe, guests may also consider LAMAR International Restaurant, located on the hotel's 1st floor where a large selection of international cuisine is prepared at live cooking station.





Scenes from IWG's Christmas event.

IWG'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS

By Ben Garcia

Relocating to another country holds expected and unexpected challenges, not only because of the weather and a new environment, but also customs, dialects and even lifestyles. For women to adjust in all aspects of life, they need the right support and connections with the right people and locals. Thus the International Women's Group (IWG) was created. The Queen of Denmark was the founder of this group and she remains the titular head of the international organization.

Most of the members and people involved in the group are wives of diplomats. In Kuwait, the International Women's Group (IWG) was formed in 1989. But months after its establishment, Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait and the group stopped briefly until regrouping again after the liberation in 1991. "The objective of creating this group is to care for diplomatic wives from other countries. They need help in understanding all about the country, places and people," said Narjes Al-Shatti, who joined the group in 1993 and became its official coordinator. From a few founding members, the

numbers have grown to over 150 and its activities span many events. IWG has held several activities since its inception, from lectures about culture and people to entertainment and visits to the most important places of interest. This year, according to Shatti, they invited a speaker from the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters to present a narrative on Kuwait being named the capital of Islamic culture. "We talked about the role of Muslim women in building the country. We invited ladies from other Islamic countries too to elaborate the role of women in their respective

countries. Last month, we also held a lecture about Islamic textiles and the role played by women," she said.

Ambassador's wives also promote their country's cuisines, dances, clothes and even the history of women. "They are doing the most wonderful job to promote their country and also build networks. At the IWG, we also give privileges to ambassadors' wives if they want to hold a special day for their country, and we provide the venue," Shatti added.

The main activity of the organization is the monthly general meeting of all members and

officers, and they hold an excursion. "Last month we traveled to Bahrain, which is part of our excursion program to introduce the ladies to many local spots, including palaces. IWG helps a lot in introducing these ladies to our culture," she said.

IWG's calendar of events this year includes Mexico, Jordan, Peru and Russia days, Christmas, New Year's Day and Mother's Day. In June, the organization will showcase the ghabqa, a Ramadan special by IWG.

—This is part 1 of the report, and part two will be published tomorrow



Pictures from IWG's Mexico event.



Pictures from IWG's Spanish event.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN GROUP'S FASHION SHOW



Kuwaiti Dress



Kuwaiti Women Musical group



Bahraini Dress



Qatari Dress



Omani Dress



Saudi Arabia Dress



Yemani Dress



Palastenan Dress



Sudan Dress



Iranian Dress



Indonesian Dress



Turkish Dress



Kyrgyz Dress



Bangladeshi Dress



Pakistani Dress

Gossip



Amy Schumer ok with 'nice' fan photos

Amy Schumer will still take pictures with fans. Although the 'Trainwreck' star claimed she will no longer pose for photographs with fans after she was recently frightened by a man who demanded a picture with her, she has taken to Instagram to assure her followers that it is not a complete ban. She explained: "Thanks for the kind words and support. I'll still take pictures with nice people when I choose to if it's a good time for that. But I don't owe you anything. So don't take if I say no (sic)." Amy, 34, originally took to the photo-sharing website to declare her ban on pictures because she is sick of strangers invading her space and was "scared" by the man who allegedly shoved a camera in her face. She said: "Yes legally you are allowed to take a picture

of me. But I was asking you to stop and saying no. I will not take picture with people anymore and it's because of this dude in Greenville." The actress managed to take a picture of the person who offended her - who she says had a little girl with him - and shared it with her four million Instagram followers. Alongside a photograph of the man dressed in a baseball cap and tee-shirt, giving her a thumbs up sign and grinning, she wrote: "This guy in front of his family just ran up next to me scared me. Put a camera in my face. I asked him to stop and he said 'no it's America and we paid for you' this was in front of his daughter. I was saying stop and no. Great message to your kid (sic)."

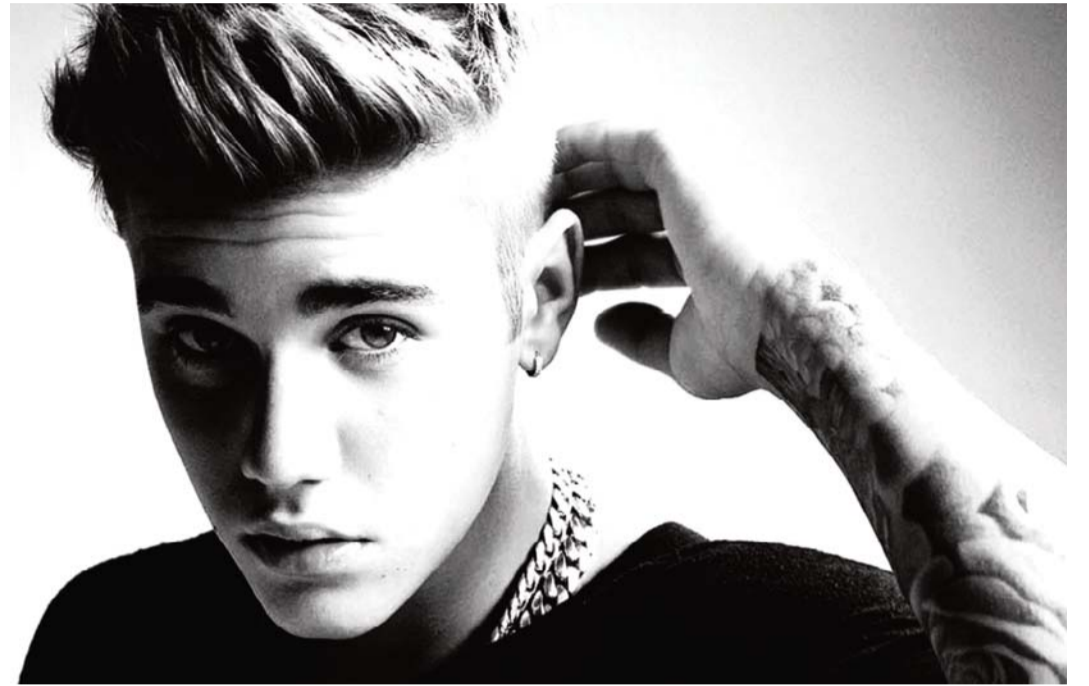
Tom Hanks happy and fabulous

Tom Hanks has the "greatest gig in the world". The Oscar-winning actor's lengthy career success means he is in a "fabulous" place where he can choose the roles he wants just because they interest him, and unlike some people with "twisted" motives, he only got into the movie-making business because he wanted to have fun. He said: "I'm at a fabulous place. I really have to be intrigued by a part. It is like saying, 'I'm going to give up, go off, from my repertory company in Cleveland, Ohio, and do plays I'd like to be in.' It's not unlike that and it's nice. Some people are in show business for twisted reasons. Power. They want to get laid. The money is good. But when I stumbled into this, I did it because it was fun and I'm no good at anything else. To get paid to make movies? This is the greatest gig in the world." The 59-year-old actor has admitted the roles he takes on have changed throughout his career and is happy to portray characters his own age as he doesn't think it would be realistic for him to do anything else. He told Sunday Times Culture magazine: "You carry with you the weight of your years and the experiences of your circumstances. I'm happy to get older in these roles. I'm going to be 60 in July, so I realize you can't try to play a 32 year old. You don't buy it. The other stories I've told are guys, my age, who look like me, who suddenly find themselves in circumstances that are extraordinary."



Alan Cumming over Good Wife

Alan Cumming is "over" 'The Good Wife'. The popular courtroom drama - in which he plays straight-laced political consultant Eli Gold opposite Julianna Margulies as Alicia Florrick - is coming to an end after seven seasons later this month, and while fans are devastated at its demise, the 51-year-old actor is relieved because he has grown "bored" of the role. He said "I'm over it. I was going to leave last year. I said, 'I'm bored. I do the same thing again and again. There's only so many ways I can raise my eyebrows.' I was talking to my team and said that I feel like all I do is come into the room and go, 'Alicia, what the hell is going on?' and literally the next day I got the script and the first line was, 'Alicia, what the hell is going on?'" However, the 'Spy Kids' star is aware of how much the show has transformed his career. He said "The show has changed both my perception and the world's perception of me as an actor. Because now I can play men in suits. I've become a grown-up." And Alan initially planned to turn down the show until his agent begged him to reconsider. He recalled to Observer magazine: "They said, 'We really think this could be good for you - they might ask you to do more.' 'I always think that's why you pay your agents and managers all that money, because sometimes they give really good advice.'"



Beiber marks dad's engagement

Justin Bieber celebrated his father's engagement over the weekend. The 22-year-old singer partied with his dad Jeremy Bieber, 41 and Jeremy's fiancée Chelsey Rebeo, 28, at the party which took place at a private art show at the residence of Dr. Rita Kilislian and Andy Curnew in Toronto on Saturday (30.04.16). Justin showed off his new buzz cut at the party as he posed for pictures with a tiger and various partygoers dressed up as superheroes. He took to Instagram to share a picture of himself petting the large tiger, which was on a chain at the bash. Jeremy proposed to Chelsey during a romantic getaway to St. Barts in

February and posted the proposal video on YouTube with the message: "On February 19th, 2016, I proposed to my best friend Chelsey Rebeo." The video showed Jeremy surprising Chelsey as produces a ring box during a romantic stroll before asking her to marry him. Justin's mother is Pattie Mallette, while Jeremy also has two children, Jaxon, six, and seven-year-old Jazmyn, from his seven-year relationship with Erin Wagner, which ended in 2014.

Comedian dates Playboy models

David Walliams has reportedly enjoyed a string of dates with a Playboy model. The 44-year-old comedian - who split from his model wife Lara Stone last year - enjoyed a brief romance with 24-year-old beauty Emily Agnes but she is said to be reluctant to take things any further. A source told the Sun on Sunday: "Emily was flattered when David approached her and was even more impressed by his charm and lovely manners. 'He made no secret of the fact he was very interested and asked her out straight away. They went on quite a few dates and Emily had a great time. But she was conscious that he recently ended his marriage.' David - who has a young son Alfred with Lara - was previously linked to former 'Made In Chelsea' star Ashley James after his split from the Calvin Klein model. A source said: "David made his feelings clear. He sent her a bunch of white roses and a card signed 'DW'." "They hang out in a group with other people and she has been to his house with other friends. 'They are both very flirty and it's clear there's a huge attraction there but David is quite cautious about entering into another relationship.'"



Seth Rogen, a Hollywood 'outsider'

Seth Rogen still feels like an outsider in Hollywood. Although he's one of the most successful comedy actors in the business, Seth - who has also written movies including 'Superbad', 'Pineapple Express' and 'The Interview' - admitted he feels left out when awards season comes around because comedies rarely receive nominations. He told Metro.co.uk: "Whenever awards season happens I sure feel like an outsider because no comedy ever gets nominated for any awards in any way, shape or form. 'There's a hierarchy in Hollywood and comedy's at the bottom of it.' However, Seth was delighted this year when his good friend, 'Anchorman' director Adam McKay won a Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar for 'The Big Short', calling it a "step in the right direction". He said: "It's nice that Adam McKay won an Academy Award. That was like a huge step in the right direction, I think, and that movie ['The Big Short'] is actually really funny, but I for sure feel like an outsider in a lot of ways because yeah I don't get invited to those cool parties."

Glee actress tracks family



Lea Michele says filming 'Who Do You Think You Are?' left her family in tears. The 'Glee' actress took part in the genealogy series and was overjoyed when she tracked down an Israel-based relative, who previously lived with her parents but hadn't seen them since 1983. She told Us Weekly: "That was incredible! I remember hearing that name growing up a little bit ... That's so incredible to know that there are people out there. It's not even that she was such a far generational gap between us. 'My dad cried when he saw her - so did my mom. It was really amazing, and I think

I'm going to have to plan a trip to Israel at some point to see the rest of my family.' Lea, 29, also revealed that looking into her roots with her father was a great "bonding experience" for them both. She said: "My dad and I had the best time doing this together, and it was really such a bonding experience for the both of us. My dad's like my best friend, so this was just such a great thing for us to do together."

Features



Hemsworth smitten with wife

Chris Hemsworth is still completely smitten with his wife Elsa Pataky. The 32-year-old actor married the Spanish actress, 39, in 2010 and the couple have three children - daughter India, three and two-year-old twins Tristan and Sasha - together and Chris gushed that he is constantly finding new things to love about her. He told TV Week: "Each week I find something different, more I love about her. "It continues to grow, which is a great thing." Chris and Elsa tied the knot just a few months after they started dating and he revealed he knew straight away that she was the one for him. He said: "It just made sense to both of us. There was an ease to it neither of us had had before." Chris and Elsa recently sold their Malibu and Santa Monica properties after relocating to Chris' native Australia and he previously admitted he never felt at "home" in Los Angeles. He explained: "LA, I loved it, it was great being there with the opportunities with work, [but] it didn't feel like home. "Instantly, when I get off the plane, I'm back. Which is I think is essential to what we want to give [the children]."



Skyfall actress 'taps'

Naomie Harris practices "tapping" to ease her nerves. The 'Skyfall' actress finds using her fingers to stimulate acupressure points helps her to relax before beginning work on a new movie or while she is preparing for a particularly heavy scene. She said: "I do something called EFT, which is emotional freedom technique, otherwise known as tapping, which really helps me. "I'll do that before a first day of filming. And if there's a particularly tricky scene I'm worried about, I'll do it before then as well." Despite training to work in theatre, the 39-year-old actress hates working on stage because she gets so sick with nerves. She said: "I'm not a theatre animal. It's not my thing at all. I went to the Bristol Old Vic theatre school, so I've trained to be a theatre actor, but in every performance I felt like I was going to throw up. "I don't think that level of nerves is particularly healthy. I suppose the challenge is to channel those nerves into energy, excitement, and things that help your performance, but I didn't manage to find a way to do that." Naomie can next be seen alongside Ewan McGregor in 'Our Kind of Traitor', in which they play an ordinary couple who get caught up with the Russian mafia while on holiday in Marrakech. And the British beauty admits she wouldn't cope well if she was involved in a similar situation because she is such a "scaredy-cat". She told Observer New Review magazine: "I'd react incredibly badly, I'm such a scaredy-cat, so I don't think I'd be going on any of those adventures. "I'd be like my character Gail, not wanting to go. That she goes along with it is solely because of her depth of love for Perry and I don't think I would be brave enough to do that for anyone."

Feud over artistic independence threatens biggest Asian film fest

The future of Asia's largest, most-awaited film festival is in question as South Korean filmmakers threaten to boycott the red carpet over what they view as government interference. Officials of the Busan International Film Festival say the feud between organizers and the host city of Busan, its largest financial sponsor, started two years ago when the festival's program displeased government officials.

Their biggest objection was over the film, "Truth Shall Not Sink With The Sewol," which excoriated South Korean authorities for botching rescue operations during a ferry disaster that left 304 people, mostly high school students, dead or missing.

Festival organizers defied Busan Mayor Suh Byung-soo's request they not screen the documentary, and "That's where all the problems started," Kim Ji-seok, its executive programmer, said in an interview.

Kim and other festival organizers and filmmakers say authorities retaliated, with the central government slashing its budget for the event last year by half. The city ordered an audit, which found misuse or unexplained uses of some of the festival's budget, and filed a complaint against festival director Lee Yong-kwan. Lee, whose term ended in February, is under investigation for allegedly providing 474 million won (\$416,800) as commission fees to brokers without proper documentation. The Busan festival premieres films from novice Asian directors and has often spotlighted major new talent, including Venice Film Festival Golden Lion winner Jia Zhangke. For the past 20 years, moviegoers and industry officials have watched Busan, hoping to discover Asia's next-generation Wong Kar Wai or Ang Lee.

The call to withdraw the movie was "a violation of freedom of expression," Kim said. "It's no different from censorship. It is unthinkable to censor a film festival." Officials say the screening of the ferry disaster film in 2014 was not the reason for the festival's audit, which they say will help ensure its long-term viability. The city approved a 6 billion won (\$5.2 million) sponsorship for this year's festival, level with last year.

Ahead of the Oct. 6-15 annual event, when they should be focusing on scouting new talent and viewing film submissions from around the world, city and festival officials are deadlocked over how to reform the festival's management.

The two sides are feuding over who should succeed the Busan mayor as the festival's executive chairman. Usually, the mayor gets that post due to the city's role as the event's biggest sponsor. But filmmakers want someone from the industry to be in charge.

Who gets to choose?

Each side has a big stake in the festival and wants greater control. Kim, a co-founder of the 21-year-old festival, says it cannot continue if financial sponsors and politicians meddle with the movie selections. In March, local film professionals issued an ultimatum, threatening to boycott the event unless the mayor

resigns and, among other things, unless the festival's rules are amended to ensure its independence.

"If the Busan city government still believes that they own' the festival just because they are the biggest sponsor ... none of the Korean film community will be attending this year's Busan International Film Festival," associations of Korean film producers and filmmakers said in a joint statement.

South Korean leaders view the entertainment industry as a lifeline for Asia's fourth-largest economy that can help offset the weakness of traditional economic heavyweights such as shipbuilders and steelmakers. The blockbuster success in China of "The Descendants of the Sun," a military romance Korean drama which ended in April, is viewed as a cultural exports success story.

But the authorities are less enthusiastic about allowing artists a free rein when it comes to contentious topics like the ferry catastrophe. Despite the growing economic and regional clout of the Korean entertainment industry, some worry that freedom of expression is being cramped under President Park Geun-hye, the daughter of a military dictator.

"It's easy to forget that South Korea is still a very young democracy. Creative freedom for artists and filmmakers has been mostly achieved over the past few decades, but it is still a work in progress that at times needs to be defended," said Darcy Paquet, a Seoul-based film critic.

While Park's government is championing "cultural enrichment," Nemo Kim, a film critic and lecturer of contemporary Korean culture at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, says the local theater scene is growing less diverse, with big conglomerates, or "chaebols," gaining influence.



Artistic independence

The Busan festival is one of the few places where South Korean moviegoers can watch both big-budget and small-budget movies, she said. "Several art-house cinemas have shut down mainly due to changes in government subsidy policies. Blockbusters produced and distributed by chaebol-driven companies are the mainstays at Korean theaters, most of which are multiplex chains also run by chaebol companies," Kim said. Many in the global film industry are concerned: In February, 114 cineastes including Cannes International Film Festival director Thierry Frémaux sent an open letter to Busan's mayor urging him to respect the film festival's artistic independence.

"Every year I can see about 100 world premieres in the festival, also from smaller countries in the region, films I would not have seen if I wasn't coming to BIFF," said Freddy Olsson, a programmer at Göteborg International Film Festival, the largest film fest in Northern Europe.

Olsson has introduced Asian films he discovered in Busan to European audiences, including an earlier work by South Korean filmmaker Yeon Sang-ho, whose latest movie, "Train To Busan," was invited to the Cannes Film Festival this year.

"With all my heart I really hope that the conflict can be solved and that I in October can visit the good old, independent Busan International Film Festival!" — AP

Minnesota court to begin process of unraveling Prince's fortune

Lawyers charged with untangling the multi-million dollar estate of music superstar Prince, who died with no known will, head to court yesterday for the start of what could be a years-long dispute over his fortune.

Six siblings or half-siblings of Prince, found dead at age 57 at his home in suburban Minneapolis on April 21, were listed as heirs in court documents filed in Carver County District Court in Chaska, Minnesota, where the hearing gets under way before Judge Kevin Eide.

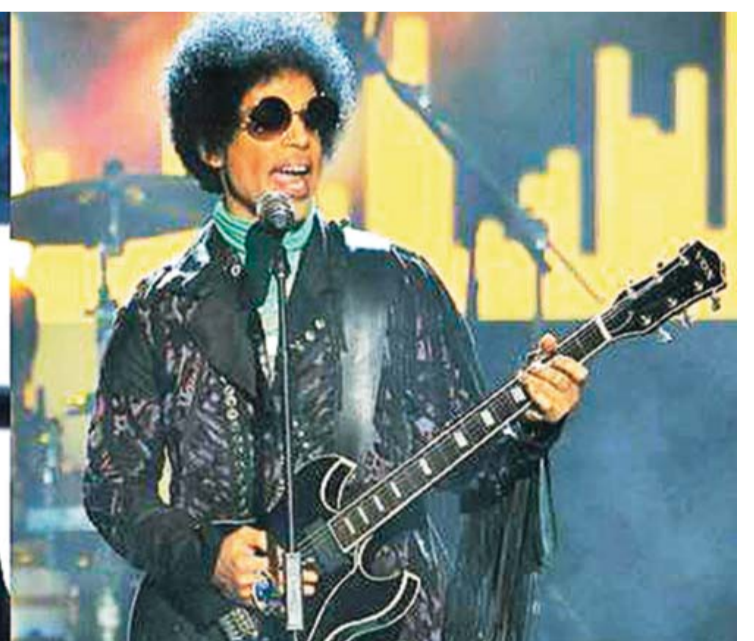
The exact value of Prince's estate has not yet been disclosed, but his music catalog alone has been estimated at over \$500 million. Bremer Trust, National Association, a bank where Prince conducted business for years, could play a key role as a special administrator to safeguard his fortune. The bank was appointed at the request of Prince's sister, Tyka Nelson, and Judge Eide was to hear objections yesterday, Minnesota courts spokesman Kyle Christopherson said. Creditors and inheritors also can file claims against the estate, he said. "We're not sure who's coming to sort of stake a claim," Christopherson said.

Destined for tax court
Born Prince Rogers Nelson, Prince,

whose hits included "Purple Rain" and "When Doves Cry," was married and divorced twice. He had no living children. Under Minnesota law, his assets are likely to be split evenly among the siblings, tax attorney Steve Hopkins said. Hopkins said the bigger the estate, the greater the likelihood there will be a dispute by claimants that could take years to settle. Prince's affairs seems destined for tax court, much like superstar Michael Jackson's estate, which is in a high priced skirmish with the Internal Revenue Service over the value of Jackson's name and image, Forbes reported.

Prince owned royalties from his more than 30 albums, regained ownership of his master recordings, and was said to have a cache of unheard recordings, including an album cut with late jazz trumpet great Miles Davis.

It could be weeks before results are released from an autopsy on Prince, whose body was found in an elevator at his home and studio complex called Paisley Park in a Minneapolis suburb. The cause of death remains undetermined. Prescription opioid medication was found on him, CNN and other media reported, citing law enforcement sources. Police have said they found no signs of suicide or obvious trauma in Prince's death. — Reuters



Prince family helped by George Lopez

George Lopez has reportedly been helping out Prince's family financially. The comedian was a close friend of the late musician - who passed away suddenly at his Paisley Park home last month - and George has advanced some family members \$20,000 "to cover living and travel expenses" while his estate is being divided up. Prince never created a will for his assets, reputed to be worth around \$300 million, and following his death some of his siblings, who he had been gener-

ous to during his lifetime, have now been cut off. George has reportedly given them money for living expenses to tide them over for now. Meanwhile, it was recently claimed that Prince's sister Tyka Nelson - who has been granted the right to be executor of the estate - stormed out of a meeting with the singer's siblings about his estate. Tyka, Prince's younger sister, met brothers Alfred and Omarr in Minnesota to discuss the singer's estate, but after a two-hour meeting in which Alfred

expressed his frustration at Tyka's decision to exclude him from Prince's memorial service, a row erupted. The brothers reportedly feel that Tyka believes she is entitled to a great proportion of Prince's assets. But under Minnesota law, all six of Prince's siblings are entitled to an equal share of his estate, which includes a musical catalogue of his work and potentially thousands of unheard songs.

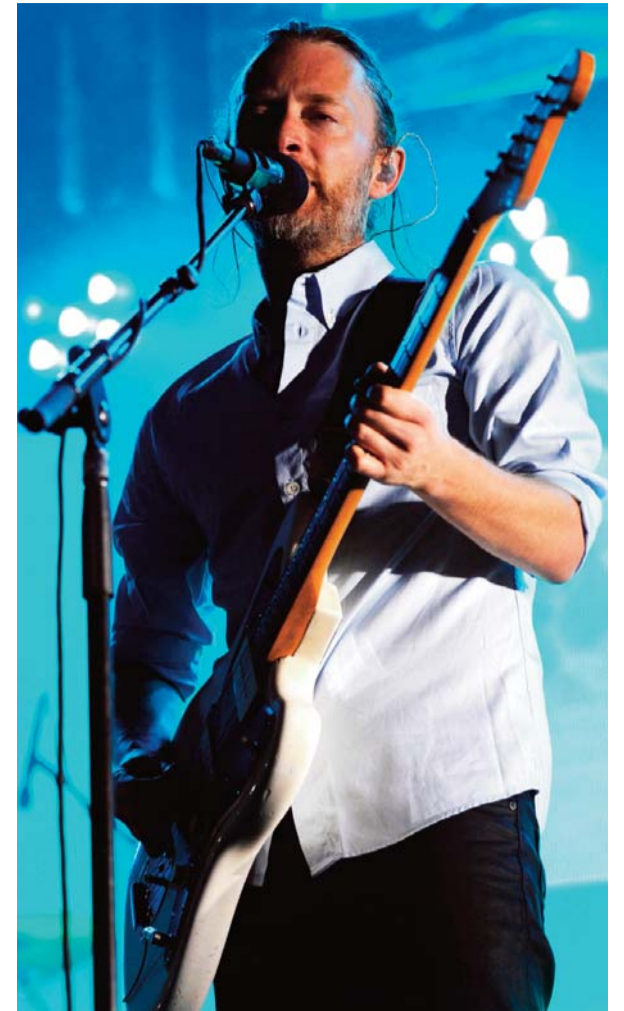
Dixie Chicks add dates to US tour



In this May 26, 2006, file photo, Dixie Chicks, from left, Emily Robison, Natalie Maines and Martie Maguire, wave to the crowd as they perform on ABC's "Good Morning America" summer concert series in Bryant Park, in New York. The Dixie Chicks are adding more concerts to their US tour that starts this summer 2016. — AP

The Dixie Chicks are adding more concerts to their US tour that starts this summer. The band announced yesterday that nine more dates in September are being added to their DCX MMXVI Tour, including stops in Louisville, Kentucky; Green Bay, Wisconsin; and New Orleans. The Grammy-winning country group starts the tour on June 1 in Cincinnati and wraps on Oct. 10 at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles.

Made up of Natalie Maines, Emily Robison and Martie Maguire, the Dixie Chicks have sold over 30 million albums, including the multiplatinum albums "Wide Open Spaces" and "Fly," and earned 13 Grammys. Their last album, "Taking the Long Way," came out in 2006. Tickets will go on sale May 7 for the new dates at LiveNation.com. — AP



Radiohead social media goes blank, raising album hopes

Radiohead's social media profiles went blank yesterday as speculation mounted that the British band was about to release a new album. All posts, pictures and details from Radiohead's Twitter and Facebook accounts were deleted, along with tweets by lead singer Thom Yorke.

Radiohead is to give a series of concerts in six cities around the world from May 20 and will play eight festivals later in the year. The band has not released any details of its next album other than to confirm it has been in the studio. The new album would be the band's ninth, following 2011's "The King of Limbs."

Radiohead has sold more than 30 million albums since releasing its first in 1993. In recent days, some Radiohead fans in Britain have received a mysterious leaflet in the post which said: "Sing The Song Of Sixpence That Goes Burn The Witch We Know Where You Live". It was embossed with a logo associated with the band. —AFP

LGBT inclusion in films static, diversity drops, study says

Hollywood films remained static in their inclusiveness of LGBT characters in 2015, but the racial diversity of those characters fell dramatically, according to the findings of GLAAD's annual study.

In a survey released yesterday by the advocacy group, 17.5 percent of last year's films from the seven major studios contained characters who were lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Though unchanged in total percentage from last year, the racial diversity of the LGBT characters has plummeted. Last year, 32.1 percent of the LGBT characters portrayed in the 126 films were people of color. This year, it's down to 25.5 percent.

Increased scrutiny of 'no diversity'

The revelation comes at a time of increased scrutiny around the inclusion of people of color in Hollywood films, following a second year of all-white Oscar nominees in the acting categories and a damning USC report about the "whitewashed" industry. Many times, too, the LGBT characters are used solely as a punchline targets, said GLAAD's President and CEO Sarah Kate Ellis.

"Hollywood's films lag far behind any other form of media when it comes to portrayals of LGBT characters," Ellis said. "The film industry must embrace new and inclusive stories if it wants to remain competitive and relevant."

While television continues to make strides with shows like "Orange is the New Black" and "Transparent," films are also missing the mark in their representation of transgendered characters.

Only one major studio film featured a transgender

character - the critically derided Reese Witherspoon and Sofia Vergara buddy comedy "Hot Pursuit." Even worse, it's an increase from last year.

For the four years that the study has been done, each of the seven major studios are given a grade of "good" "adequate" or "failing" for their slates. Lionsgate Entertainment, which had the most films with LGBT characters out of the seven, 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures, and Universal Pictures were all deemed adequate. Paramount Pictures and Walt Disney Studios, however, were given a failing grade because none of their 2015 films included LGBT characters.

The report provides LGBT-focused synopses on many of the films counted, and many which were not, giving explanations as to why portrayals were positive or negative, or lambasting films for "gay panic" jokes.

Going forward, an "adequate" grade will no longer be acceptable, according to the report. Next year GLAAD will hold the studios to a higher standard with the use of a five-star scale. The studios' art house divisions, like Focus Features and Fox Searchlight, fared better overall. Of the 46 films surveyed, 22 percent were LGBT-inclusive, up from 10.6 percent last year with releases like "The Danish Girl," "Grandma" and "Chi-Raq."

Notable 2015 films like the romance "Carol" and the transgender sex worker drama "Tangerine" were acknowledged in the report, but not included in overall percentages because they were from specialty and independent distributors and studios. — AP

Cosmo editor writing guide to modern love

Cosmopolitan Editor-in-Chief Joanna Coles is working on a "no-nonsense" guide to some very old subjects in a very new world: sex and intimacy. Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers said yesterday that it plans to release a book by Coles in 2018. The book currently is untitled. According to Harper, Coles will take on what she considers a "new sexual revolution" and offer advice for how to find "sustaining love" when all the rules have changed.

The 54-year-old Coles has been Cosmopolitan's editor-in-chief since 2012. She says in a statement issued through Harper that she is drawing upon hundreds of conversations with young women to "suggest some guidelines" that can be used "for surviving the digital disruption to our love lives." — AP



The Titanic and WWI inspire Brian Eno's 'The Ship'

Brian Eno combines ambient textures with droning vocals and a sterling cover of a Lou Reed tune on "The Ship," a powerfully challenging and gloomy recording that ends in bright revelation. Eno draws from what he sees as similar historical events, the sinking of the Titanic and World War I, and his idea that "the hubris of our ever-growing power contrasts with the paranoia that we're permanently and increasingly under threat."

The album's 21-minute title cut reflects the soundscape of the ocean's depth before Eno, singing like a Byzantine choir of foghorns, delivers the eulogy. Later, ghostly voices depict the aftermath, how it is now just "wave, after wave, after wave, after wave."

The second track, "Fickle Sun," has three sections. The transition from "The Ship" is initially smooth, the tragedy on the sea also enveloping the battlefields. Eno's register rises, his voice skimming the land where "all the boys are



going down, falling over one by one" and humans are "turning back to clay." Distortion and sound blasts evoke the combat and a horrified survivor repeatedly recounts "When I was a young soldier..."

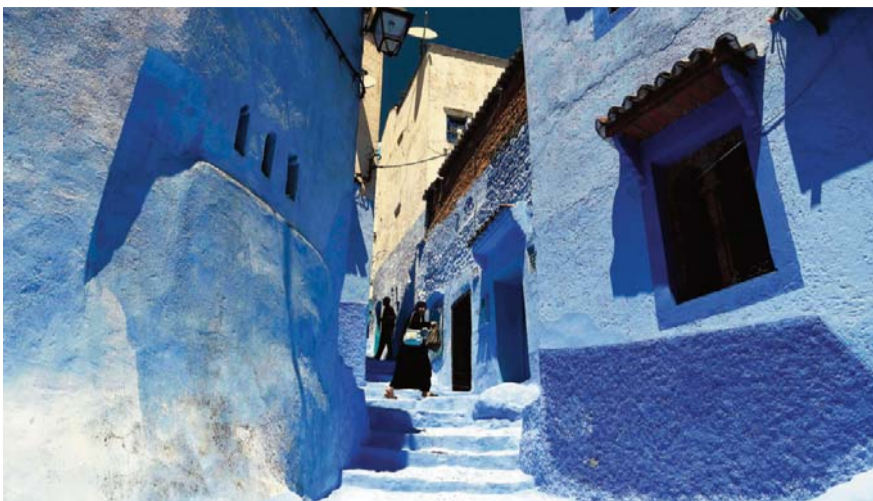
At the close, a bright light shines through the ocean and across the front - a sumptuous, harmony-drenched version of The Velvet Underground's "I'm Set Free." It's

about release, but it has a catch - "I'm set free to find a new illusion." Eno keeps us in the dark for most of "The Ship" and it's taxing. There's hope, however, that the chains of hubris and paranoia can be broken. — AP



Eddie Redmayne, Alicia Vikander

This file photo provided by Focus Features shows, Eddie Redmayne, left, as Lili Elbe, and Alicia Vikander as Gerda Wegener, in Tom Hooper's "The Danish Girl." Hollywood films remained static in their inclusiveness of LGBT characters in 2015, but the racial diversity of those characters fell dramatically, according to the findings of GLAAD's annual study released yesterday. The studios' art house divisions, like Focus Features and Fox Searchlight, fared better overall with releases like "The Danish Girl," "Grandma" and "Chi-Raq." — AP



Quick facts about Chefchaouen

1. Chefchaouen, also known as 'Chaouen', or 'Xauen' in Spanish, is a city located in the north of Morocco, North Africa, in the Rif mountains, and it sits approximately 660 m (2165 feet) above sea level.
2. The name 'Chefchaouen', meaning 'watch the horns' comes from the term 'chaoua' meaning 'goat's horns' in one of the tribal languages, in reference to the appearance of the mountains situated over the town, while the term 'chef' is translated as 'looks at'.
3. Chefchaouen is a popular tourist site, with around 200 hotels actively used to cater for visitors that come to experience the natural beauty, and history.
4. In 2004, Chefchaouen had a population of 35,709, which is around 7,000 people less than the census of a decade prior.
5. Chefchaouen is famous for its many buildings and objects, that have either been totally or partially painted a calming blue.
6. Chefchaouen was originally built as a fortress in 1471, used against the Portuguese in their invasion, and the city has been a safe-haven for Jewish refugees at least twice in its history.
7. Chefchaouen is notable for selling an extensive variety of textiles, handcrafts and goat cheese.
8. The blue painted buildings of Chefchaouen are a tradition that is believed to have begun in the 1930s.
9. Chefchaouen was under Spanish command from the 1920s to 1956, and it had been attacked by Spain prior to this occasion.
10. The blue buildings of Chefchaouen are typically repainted every two years to maintain the color.

— Tenrandomfacts.com

Among the World's Most Beautiful Cities

A woman walks along a small alley in the northern Moroccan town of Chefchaouen on May 1, 2016. According to the latest list of the 50 world's most beautiful cities released by Conde Nast Traveler, Morocco's northern city of Chefchaouen ranks sixth among the top 10 most beautiful cities, dethroning Paris, which remains in the top 10 in 7th place, followed by Cape Town (South Africa). — AFP

At Tony Award nominations, all eyes on stellar 'Hamilton'

One thing practically assured today is that the Broadway megahit "Hamilton" will get plenty of Tony Award nominations. The real question is how many. Lin-Manuel Miranda's hip-hop-flavored biography about the first US treasury secretary has already won the Pulitzer Prize for drama, a Grammy, the Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired by American History and a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant. Adored by critics and the public alike, "Hamilton" has raised the bar so high that earning a clutch of Tony nominations seems so likely fans will be seeing if it does more and makes Tony history.

"The Producers" and "Billy Elliot" share the record for the most Tony nominations, with 15 each. ("The Book of Mormon" got 14 nods in 2011.) "Hamilton" could very well shatter the record in the 13 categories that a new musical is eligible.

Nominations for best musical, best original score and best book are a foregone conclusion for "Hamilton," while Thomas Kail's direction of the show and Andy Blankenbuehler's choreography are also pretty likely.

Miranda, who plays Hamilton, and Leslie Odom Jr., who plays Aaron Burr, are both eligible for best actor in a musical. Phillipa Soo, who plays Eliza Hamilton, has been deemed eligible for best actress. The show is also a contender for the four design awards - costumes, sets, lighting and orchestrations.

What could put "Hamilton" over the top is its deep bench of candidates for featured actor and actress awards, including Renee Elise Goldsberry as Angelica Schuyler, Daveed Diggs as Thomas Jefferson/Marquis de Lafayette, Christopher Jackson as George Washington and Jonathan Groff as King George III.

"Hamilton" has burst through the Broadway bubble like few shows. Bloomingdale's now sells "Hamilton" merchandise, U.S. presidential candidates have tweeted about it, it has entered the debate over the nation's currency and the show has been referenced on "Saturday Night Live" and "Inside Amy Schumer."

"Things like 'Hamilton' start to give youth a better understanding of just how powerful not just theater but performance art can be and you can do it in different ways and people will love it in different ways," said Zachary Levi, former star of NBC's "Chuck" who is starring in the revival of "She Loves Me."

Thanks to shows like "Hamilton," Broadway has concluded one of its most diverse seasons, with non-white actors filling shows like "The Color Purple" revival, "On Your Feet!" "Hughie," "Allegiance," the reworked "Shuffle Along" and "Eclipsed."

history with an entirely female cast and creative team.

But most of the headlines coming from Broadway this year were for "Hamilton." That sometimes overshadowed some superb performances elsewhere.

Best leading women in a musical could include Cynthia Erivo of "The Color Purple," Jessie Mueller of "Waitress," Laura Benanti in "She Loves Me," Ana Villafane of "On Your Feet!" Audra McDonald of "Shuffle Along," Lea Salonga in "Allegiance" and Carmen Cusack



This image released by The Public Theater shows Lin-Manuel Miranda, foreground, with the cast during a performance of "Hamilton," in New York.



This image released by Boneau/Bryan-Brown shows Keala Settle, left, Jessie Mueller and Kimiko Glenn, right, during a performance of "Waitress," at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre in New York. — AP photos

"There's a hunger that I don't know that Broadway producers realized existed," said Liesl Tommy, who directed "Eclipsed," a play set in a Liberian rebel camp where four women are held as sexual captives. "The question of access is so important."

Waitress

Women, so often underrepresented in creative roles on Broadway, also had reason to cheer. "Waitress" was the first Broadway musical in history to have four women in the top creative team spots, and "Eclipsed" was the first show in Broadway

Some non-"Hamilton" candidates in the best actor in a musical category are possible for Benjamin Walker from "American Psycho," Danny Burstein of "Fiddler on the Roof," Alex Brightman of "School of Rock" and Austin P. McKenzie for "Spring Awakening."

The best actor in a play category might include Ben Whishaw in "The Crucible," Tim Pigott-Smith in "King Charles III," Mark Strong in "A View From the Bridge," Jeff Daniels of "Blackbird," Clive Owen in "Old Times," and James Earl Jones of "The Gin Game." Al Pacino could get a nod, though the David Mamet play he was in, "China Doll," was roasted by critics.

of "Bright Star" (Jennifer Hudson is eligible only for best featured actress for "The Color Purple.")

Best actresses in a play might include Lupita Nyong'o of "Eclipsed," Laurie Metcalf in "Misery," Cicely Tyson in "The Gin Game," Jessica Lange of "Long Day's Journey Into Night" and Michelle Williams of "Blackbird."

The awards will be handed out June 12, with James Corden playing host from the Beacon Theatre. — AP



A stork cares for its chicks in their nest at the Eekholt wildlife park near Grossenasppe, northern Germany, on May 2, 2016. — AFP photos

Stonehenge replica looks for new home

"Foamhenge," a life-sized plastic foam replica of England's famous Stonehenge monument, needs a new home more than a decade after it was installed in Rockbridge County as an April Fool's Day stunt. News outlets report that artist Mark Cline must move the monument before Aug. 1 because Foamhenge sits on property that will become part of the new Natural Bridge State Park.

The life-sized replica of Stonehenge, the configuration of huge, upright stones in Wiltshire, England, has served as a local tourist landmark since it was unveiled 12 years ago. Cline says he built the free attraction to entice travelers off the road and has been impressed with its enduring popularity. He wants to give away the replica to someone who is prepared to welcome a constant flow of curious visitors. — AP



This file photo taken on November 12, 2014 shows French soprano Patricia Petibon performing on stage during a gala at the Opera Comique to celebrate its 300th anniversary. The 10th edition of the "Tous a l'opera" (everybody at the opera) event, dedicated to the lyric art, will be held on May 7 and 8 with French soprano Patricia Petibon as sponsor. — AFP



This file photo taken on April 16, 2014 shows the Chaumont-sur-Loire castle and the garden at Chaumont-sur-Loire. The 25th edition of the International Garden Festival in Chaumont-sur-Loire starts tomorrow (May 4, 2016). — AFP

Princess Charlotte rakes in the gifts on her 1st birthday

She may be too young to appreciate it, but Britain's Princess Charlotte has received an extraordinary array of birthday gifts. Kensington Palace officials say she received letters and gifts from 64 countries on her first birthday yesterday.

Some were early birthday presents given during recent state visits by world leaders, including President Obama, who with his wife Michelle gave Charlotte a jigsaw puzzle and a soft toy modeled on Bo, the White House dog.

British Prime Minister David Cameron gave the princess Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales, and the prime minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, sent a snowsuit and a book.

New Zealand sent teddy bears, blankets and booties of native wool, the Chinese gave her a set of silk figurines and the president of Mexico sent a silver rattle. — AP



In this undated handout photo released on Sunday, May 1, 2016 by Kensington Palace, Britain's Princess Charlotte poses for a photograph, at Anmer Hall, in Norfolk, England. The princess celebrated her first birthday yesterday. — AP

Ready, Steady, Mow!

Lawnmower racing season kicks off

Behind a start line in a field in southern England, a group of drivers rev their engines, raring to open the throttle on noisy machines more used to cutting grass than racing across it. For a few dedicated motor sport lovers, Sunday marked the start of the British lawnmower racing season, in which participants drive laps around a track in slightly souped-up sit-down mowers

with the blades removed. The championship, dreamt up in a countryside pub in 1973, runs from May to October and features three categories: roller-driven mowers; wheel-driven mowers and wheel-driven lawn tractors.

"It's a little unusual, it's not like jumping in a car and turning the wheel and peddles and gears," said Dean Fuller, British Champion on the wheel-driven variety, at

the season's first meeting in Surrey. You have got to learn how you lean, how you brake, the different types of surfaces ... So it really does take three or four years before you get the hang of (it)." — Reuters

New book about US wildfire that killed 19 firefighters

It began as a routine assignment for the 20 men of the Granite Mountain Hotshots. Wielding picks, axes, shovels and chain saws, they set out to build a barrier to protect homes and people from an Arizona wildfire sparked by lightning.

Within hours, their mission ended in tragedy. Fifty mph winds set off by a powerful thunderstorm had changed direction, fanning a raging fire that raced down Yarnell Hill, cutting off the crew's escape route and trapping the men in a canyon. Nineteen of them perished, the bodies found in portable fire shelters that were no match for the 2,000-degree heat. The death toll of professional wildland firefighters was the largest in more than a century. The only survivor was the assigned lookout who barely escaped the flames.

In this riveting and poignant narrative, Fernanda Santos introduces the reader to a brave band of men, most of them in their 20s, who battle destructive wildfires that pose a mounting threat as developers in the West build vacation and retirement homes in areas where urban boundaries intersect with fire-prone woods and brush. Based in Prescott, Arizona, Granite Mountain was one of 107 elite Hotshot crews in the U.S. at the time of the 2013 fire and the only one run by a municipality.

Its members are deployed around the country, riding in 10-seat, diesel-powered "buggies" that transport them to the fires. Once there, their task is to fell trees, hack away brush and cut roots to build a fire line that can block the flames. It's a task that demands strength, endurance and teamwork. The pay is meager - rookies received \$12.09 an hour - and crew

members relied on long hours of overtime during fire season to make ends meet. Santos, the Phoenix bureau chief for The New York Times, covered the Yarnell Hill story and was taken with the stories of victims she admired but never met. She bonded with family members to learn about the lives of these fallen firefighters, some of them "second chancers" who saw the physical challenge and discipline of the job as a path toward overcoming earlier stumbles that ranged from alcoholism or drug addiction to minor crimes.

The author also walked the walk, taking two courses at a wildfire management academy in Prescott that many of the Granite Mountain crew had attended. She donned flame-resistant clothing, wielded the tools of the Hotshots' trade, cut fire line in the wild and even practiced deploying an emergency shelter that she carried along with a loaded backpack.

The product of her efforts is a gripping account of one of the nation's most deadly wildfires and an inspiring look at the men who put their lives on the line and the loved ones they left behind. The book is reminiscent of Norman Maclean's classic "Young Men and Fire" that told of the 1949 Mann Gulch fire in western Montana that killed 13 firefighters, and his son John's story of the 1994 South Canyon fire in Colorado that took 14 lives. Santos has turned out a worthy addition to the genre. — AP

