

Religious co-habitation brings together all communities



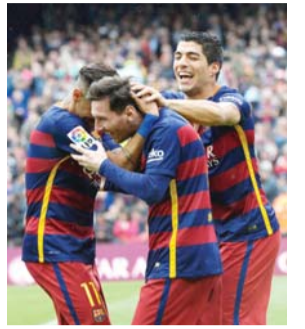
Lebanon holds local elections amid tight security



Alvarez KO's Khan to retain middleweight WBC title



Barca, Real set up final day showdown, Atletico beaten



YEMEN TALKS STRUGGLE AS AIR STRIKES SHAKE TRUCE

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WELL DONE, LONDON



By Badrya Darwish
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It was a big success for minorities this weekend. Electing Sadiq Khan as the mayor of London is no small thing. London is considered one of the greatest financial hubs in the world and attracts global tourism. As the capital of England and the UK, it is world renowned and incredibly powerful. I never imagined in my life to see a Muslim become the mayor of London.

But it happened thanks to the British system. This system does not discriminate according to religion, color, race or background, as long as you work hard. And it gives the opportunity to whoever earns it through merit. You don't need to be rich. You don't need to be affiliated to a royal family or an earl or a lord or a multimillionaire like Zac Goldsmith, etc. And that's the beauty of these types of Western systems.

Actually electing a Muslim mayor of one of the most visible cities in the world at a time when Muslims all over the world are discriminated against and branded as terrorists is beautiful. To know how bad it is, all you need to do is listen to Trump - the US presidential candidate - talk about banning Muslims from entering America. It is a time when Muslims all over the world are facing discrimination and unfair treatment.

Then to see London choose a Muslim mayor at this point in our history is amazing and might give a lesson to the rest of the world to be more tolerant and fair and just and to stop discriminating against people for their religion.

I hope our people in the Middle East can also learn a lesson from this and start changing some of their ruthless ways, which are actually anti-Islamic. Instead they should look at people as human beings and stop branding them by race, color or religion. We in the Middle East deny basic human rights to some people and each other in ways far away from what Islam intended.

Well done, London. And good luck to Mr Khan - you have a long and hard road before you.



KUWAIT: Qatari boy Ghanem Mohammad Al-Muftah takes a selfie with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 2)

KUWAIT: Yemen's Houthi movement accused a Saudi-led coalition of launching air strikes that killed seven people yesterday, shaking a truce that has largely held through more than two weeks of UN-backed peace talks in Kuwait. The Iran-allied Houthis and Yemen's Saudi-backed exiled government are trying to broker a peace through the talks in Kuwait and ease a humanitarian crisis in the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country.

The year-long conflict has drawn in regional powers and killed at least 6,200 people, according to the United Nations. "The aggressor's planes bombed various districts in the Nehm district, leading to the death of seven martyrs and wounding three," the Houthis said in a statement. Political sources from the Houthi group's rivals in Yemen's government say the bombing in the Nehm area east of the capital Sanaa was directed at Houthi forces that were massing in the area in violation of a ceasefire that began on April 10.

A spokesman for the mostly Gulf Arab military coalition did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment. As part of the peace talks, representatives of Yemen's warring sides formed joint political and security committees last week but have made little progress toward a full ceasefire or political transition plan.

The UN special envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed had earlier held talks with the warring parties in a bid to break an impasse, a day after the government pulled out of direct negotiations. Ismail held separate morning talks in Kuwait City with delegates, and plenary or committees' meetings were planned in the afternoon, spokesman for the UN envoy Charbel Raji said. But in a setback to talks after yesterday's events, Houthi representatives refused to attend the meeting with Ould Cheikh Ahmed, a statement from the office of Yemen's prime minister said. The meetings of the joint committees have as a result been indefinitely postponed, pan-Arab Al-Arabiya television reported.

Yemen's government on Saturday pulled out of direct negotiations with representatives of the Houthi rebels after there were no signs of any progress.

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SPEAKER HOPES TO PASS JUDICIAL REFORM LAWS

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said yesterday he was hopeful that the Assembly will pass a number of legislations for the benefit of the judiciary before the current Assembly term ends late next month. Ghanem said he is optimistic that all concerned sides will work to reach the optimal formula with regards to passing a number of draft laws that aim at preserving the independence of the judiciary and boost its status.

He said that consultations have been ongoing over a long time between the Assembly, the government and the judiciary to accelerate the approval of these laws. The speaker praised the status of the Kuwaiti judiciary, adding that it deserves all the hard work needed to approve the laws. The most important bill of the legislation is the judiciary independence law which makes the country's justice system more independent away from government's influence. If approved without major changes, the draft law will also guarantee financial independence for the judiciary. The Assembly is expected to close the current eight-month term before Eid Al-Fitr, which falls in the first week of July. The Assembly will then go into a four-month summer recess.

Meanwhile, MP Abdullah Al-Turajji yesterday submitted a draft law proposing the establishment of a public antidoping agency to control the use of illegal substances in sports and related activities. To carry out its objectives, the agency will propose bills to combat the use of banned substances and penalties for users in accordance with related international laws and regulations.

Also, Minister of Public Works Ali Al-Omair yesterday discussed with the Assembly's public utilities committees ways to implement recommendations passed by the Assembly after the grilling of former public works minister Abdulaziz Al-Ibrahim last year. Omair said after the meeting that "MPs presented new questions to the ministry and we promised to send the answers after one month."

MP Saadoun Hammad hailed the ministries of interior and foreign affairs for the efforts they exerted to secure the release of a Kuwaiti citizen who was abducted in Iraq since mid-March. Hammad congratulated the family of Khaled Al-Sarhan over his release and hoped he will return home very soon. The lawmaker said Sarhan was abducted by an Iraqi gang while following up some private commercial matters, which demanded a ransom of \$1 million to free him.



CAIRO: A picture taken in the early hours of yesterday shows a damaged vehicle following a gun attack on Egyptian policemen in Cairo's southern outskirts. — AFP

8 POLICEMEN KILLED IN CAIRO BY IS GUNMEN

CAIRO: Eight policemen were shot dead on Cairo's southern outskirts in an attack claimed yesterday by the Islamic State group, one of its deadliest in mainland Egypt. The interior ministry said four assailants in a truck intercepted a van carrying the policemen in the district of Helwan, just south of Cairo, and sprayed them with automatic rifle fire. It said those killed in the shooting overnight included a lieutenant and seven lower ranking policemen who had been on patrol in plain clothing.

In a statement circulated on social media, IS said "a squad of the soldiers of the caliphate" opened fire on the police van and then made off with their weapons. It said the attack was carried out in retaliation for "women imprisoned" in Egyptian jails. Interior Minister Magdy Abdel Gaffar sounded a defiant note as the slain policemen were laid to rest. "We hold our heads high, and won't bow them to any attempt to defeat our will," he told state television.

Jihadists have killed hundreds of policemen and soldiers in attacks, mostly in the Sinai Peninsula and also in and around Cairo, since the military toppled Islamist

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WOMAN FLEES KUWAIT AFTER KILLING HUSBAND BABY ABANDONED

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: An Egyptian woman allegedly killed her husband in Khaitan and fled the country, leaving her 8-month-old daughter with one of her neighbors, said security sources. Case papers indicate that the neighbor, an Egyptian woman, reported that the woman had left her baby with her claiming she had to go somewhere, but eight hours later, the mother texted her that she was in Egypt and that some other woman would pick the baby up the same or the following day. "You will know why I left, take care of the girl," the message said.

Police were called, who rushed to the woman's house, where they found a foul odor emanating from the apartment. Breaking into the house, detectives found the husband's body with a deep skull wound and blood all over the place. Initial investigations showed that the wife held a dependent visa sponsored by her husband, that she had three children and that two of them had already left the country three days earlier, but she had to leave her baby with the neighbors because the infant had no passport. The baby was handed to the Egyptian embassy. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress pending contacting Interpol and other relevant authorities.

73 KILLED IN AFGHAN ROAD CRASH INFERNO

GHAZNI, Afghanistan: At least 73 people were killed yesterday when two passenger buses and an oil tanker burst into flames in a head-on collision in eastern Afghanistan, health officials said, in one of the worst road accidents in the war-battered nation. Many of the dead, including women and children, were burned beyond recognition and dozens of others were left badly injured in the accident in Ghazni province, near the Afghan capital, one of the areas worst affected by the Taliban insurgency.

The vehicles were completely gutted and clouds of acrid smoke shrouded the scene of the crash on the Kabul-Kandahar highway, a major roadway linking Afghanistan's two largest cities. "The death toll has soared to 73," ministry

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GHAZNI: An injured Afghan man sits in an ambulance yesterday following an accident on the main Kabul-Kandahar Highway. — AFP



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Qatari boys Ghanem Mohammad Al-Muftah and Ahmad Mohammad Al-Muftah, as well as the 'Ghanem Around-the-World Tour' team, in the presence of Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

AMIR WELCOMES TWO QATARI BOYS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah welcomed at Bayan Palace yesterday Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah who introduced to him two Qatari boys Ghanem Mohammad Al-Muftah and Ahmad Mohammad Al-Muftah, as well as the 'Ghanem Around-the-World Tour' team. Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah attended the meeting. Ghanem Al-Muftah said he was very honored to meet 'the Humanitarian Leader' His Highness the Amir, adding that his visit came at the invitation of His Highness the Amir. Ahmad Al-Muftah said he was very proud and happy to see the Humanitarian Leader, His Highness the Amir.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem and Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, as well as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah kisses Ghanem Mohammad Al-Muftah. — Amiri Diwan photos

Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown

Prince also received Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. —KUNA



Minister of Information Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah is presented a memento at the ceremony.



RAMALLAH: Minister of Information Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah attends the opening ceremony of the 10th Palestinian International Book Fair in Ramallah, Palestine. —KUNA photos

KUWAIT'S INFORMATION MINISTER CONCLUDES VISIT TO PALESTINE

RAMALLAH: Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and the delegation accompanying him left Ramallah Saturday evening for Amman on their way to Kuwait after attending the opening ceremony of the 10th Palestinian International Book Fair. This is the second visit by a Kuwaiti senior official to Palestine after the one paid by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in 2014. Sheikh Salman, who doubles as Chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), had earlier on Saturday visited the holy city of Jerusalem, performed a prayer at Al-Aqsa Mosque and met a number of public figures in the city. Speaking before his departure, the minister said the visit to Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque was "an answer to my prayers." He said his visit, along with the delegation, to Jerusalem "left an indelible impression" on him and those with him, stressing his aspiration that the rights of the Palestinians be restored and that the city of 'Al-Quds' or Jerusalem becomes a city for "all people."

Steadfast support

In his address to the opening ceremony of the book fair which lasts until May 17, Sheikh Salman said Kuwait has remained steadfast in supporting the Palestine question since 1963. "When Kuwait made its official debut at the United Nations in 1963, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah - the then foreign minister, charted Kuwait's foreign policy which made the Palestine question a top priority and central issue for the Arab and Muslim nations," Sheikh Salman said.

"On behalf of Kuwait, the world center for humanitarian action and the capital of Islamic culture for 2016, I would like to convey to you the greetings of, and a message of solidarity from, His Highness the Amir - the Humanitarian Leader, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-

Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah," the minister told the gathering.

"Kuwait, a staunch supporter of the fair Palestinian question and seat of culture and humanitarianism, hosted the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and we are here to show the depth of the Kuwaiti-Palestinian ties in the political and cultural domains," he pointed out.

He noted that the visit of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to Kuwait in 2013 and the reopening of the Palestine embassy represented a new stage in the bilateral ties. "Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also paid a historic visit to Palestine in 2014 which gave momentum to the political and people-to-people relationship," he went on.

Sheikh Salman reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to moderate policy and opening up to the positive cultural interaction with the Arab and Muslim nations, while opposing the extremist ideology. He lauded the contributions of the Palestinian teachers to the promotion of the educational process and the cultural movement in Kuwait since 1930s.

Primary cause

In earlier press statements upon his arrival here, Sheikh Salman said his visit to Palestine attests to Kuwait's continuous support of the Palestinian cause, no matter what circumstances arise. "The Palestinian cause has always been a primary one in our collective conscience for which we have assiduously worked toward realizing the rights of the Palestinian people.

"We have come to let the Palestinian people know that we stand by them and hope that they surmount the difficulties in their lives. We are happy and proud to take part in the book fair along with our Palestinian friends and affirm the continuation of Kuwaiti-Palestinian relations under all circumstances, as the two peoples har-

bor love and respect for each other," said the minister. Referring to the city of 'Al-Quds' or Jerusalem, he said: "Undoubtedly, Al-Quds bears a significant Arab, Islamic, and worldwide cachet and is part of our collective Arab conscience and we never cease to support it in all ways and means and look forward to having east Al-Quds or east Jerusalem become the capital city of a Palestinian state."

Meanwhile, Mohammad Al-Asousi, NCCAL's Assistant Secretary General, said Kuwait's eagerness to effectively contribute to the book fair shows the strong bonds linking the two Arab nations. Palestine is always close to Kuwait's hearts and minds through the Palestinian cultural publications and productions, he said. The Kuwaiti participation at this cultural event for the first time embodies the country's support of the fair Palestinian cause and people, Asousi added. Sheikh Salman had a meeting with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Amman on Friday, before meeting with Prime Minister Rami Al-Hamad, the Secretary-General of the Palestinian Presidency Al-Tayyeb Abdulrahim who presented him a model of Al-Aqsa Mosque as a souvenir and Minister of Culture Ehab Bseiso.

The delegation included Deputy Chairman of KUNA Adnan Al-Rashed, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Arab Homeland Affairs Aziz Al-Dihani, Assistant Undersecretary of the Information Ministry Khaled Al-Rashidi, director of the technical office of the state ministry for youth Affairs Lana Abu-Eid, NCCAL Assistant Secretary-General Mohammad Al-As'ousi, NCCAL's advisor Walid Al-Seif and director of information minister's office Saad Al-Khaledi as well as several other intellectuals and media people. They were seen off in Ramallah by Al-Tayyeb Abdulrahim, Undersecretary of the Palestinian Ministry of Information Mahmoud Khalifa, and Kuwait Ambassador to Jordan Dr Hamad Al-Duaij who accompanied the delegation during the trip. —KUNA



SEOUL: South Korean Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Kang Hoin welcomes Kuwait's Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah upon his arrival in Seoul Air Base yesterday. —KUNA

KUWAIT'S PREMIER ARRIVES IN SEOUL

SEOUL: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation arrived in Seoul yesterday on a four-day official visit to the Republic of Korea, the third leg of an Asian tour that will also take him to Japan.

His Highness the Premier was received in Seoul Air Base by Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Kang Hoin and Kuwait's Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul, Kuwait's Ambassador to South Korea Jassim Al-Bedaawi and a host of senior officials. His Highness the Premier was given an official reception and greeted by an honor guard, and the national anthem of Kuwait was played.

In remarks to the media, His Highness expressed pride for visiting the Republic of Korea which has deep-rooted relations with Kuwait. He stressed Kuwait's keenness to enhance bilateral relations in vital and important sectors that would serve interests of both countries, especially in the technology, energy and investment fields.

He said that South Korea is a role model that Kuwait seeks to learn from to execute its 2035 vision. South Korea is Kuwait's largest trade partner and largest oil importer which amounted to over 400,000 barrels a day while it is the largest exporter to Kuwait, accounting for 70 percent of Kuwait's imports in 2013-2014. — KUNA



Kuwait's Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul welcomes His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

'KUWAIT AT FOREFRONT OF PHILANTHROPY INDUSTRY'

KUWAIT: Through its support and diligence, Kuwait is now at the forefront of the philanthropy industry, Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday. Those comments were made by Minister of Justice, Awwaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sanea, who was speaking on behalf of Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled at a two-day international forum on humanitarian work entitled 'Partnership for Strength and Sustainability'. Kuwait rightfully deserves to be an international humanitarian center, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said, adding that His Highness the Amir is fully deserving the title of 'Humanitarian Leader', conferred upon him by the United Nations (UN).

Kuwait, through hosting numerous conferences, has supported many conflict and disaster-stricken countries, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said. Moreover, philanthropic work is tantamount to a bridge that links nations victimized by deteriorating humanitarian conditions, the Foreign Minister noted. Humanitarian efforts will remain firm, in light of the surge in the number of refugees and the displaced, which has now surpassed 60 million people, he said. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also pointed out that 702 million people now live under the poverty line.

Precedent

Former Sudanese President Abdulrahman Suwar Al-Dahab said meanwhile that Kuwait has set a precedent for humanitarian work, noting that the country has always lent a helping hand to those less fortunate.

Continued cooperation amongst charitable organizations is of utmost significance, as a result of the growing number of obstacles facing them, Dahab added. Increased cooperation amongst those organizations is also imperative for increased development and prosperity, he added. Assistant Secretary General for

Humanitarian Affairs at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Ambassador Hisham Yousef said in the meantime that Kuwait has made substantial humanitarian efforts in recent years, most notably, its hosting of conferences in support of Syria. This forum is being held at a time of unprecedented challenges, Yousef noted, pointing to the conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Iraq, where new methods of torture have recently been used. "We face a growing number of war crimes that target innocent civilians," he added.

Fiercest conflicts

Chairman of Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Hilal Al-Sayer said that the development of humanitarian work in Kuwait is the result of God's guidance and a sage leadership. "Our Arab region is exposed to the fiercest conflicts, which behoove us as members of the international Red Cross and Crescent Society, to enhance cooperation with other organizations and facilitate dialogue with them," Sayer said. He also noted that he is hopeful that the forum would yield fruitful and productive strategies that would further conserve humanitarian values and international humanitarian laws. Secretary General of Rahma International charitable society Yahya Al-Ogaily said that Kuwait's hosting of the conference is a testament to the country's commitment to humanitarian and philanthropic causes, which is entrenched in the hearts of the people of Kuwait. The forum will witness a number of cooperation agreements to be signed by participating organizations, Ogaily revealed, adding that a planned segment will display some landmark humanitarian works handpicked by a specialized committee. The forum will also contain a number of workshops and sessions dedicated to humanitarian work, with participation of local and international specialists in that field. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Justice, Awwaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane (sixth from left) attends the international forum on humanitarian work. — KUNA



National Evangelical Church of Kuwait (NECK).



The National Evangelical Church's Diwaniya.



Rev Ghareeb points to gifts given to the diwaniya by his fellow Muslim friends.

RELIGIOUS CO-HABITATION BRINGS TOGETHER ALL COMMUNITIES IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: On Saturday evenings, Muslims and Christians, of different nationalities and backgrounds, nonchalantly sit together in the Diwaniya of the National Evangelical Church of Kuwait (NECK) to chat, laugh, and discuss current political, social or economic issues, while sipping teas and munching on snacks, said Kuwaiti Reverent Emanuel B Ghareeb.

"I only built this Diwaniya (a local term for reception hall) because my Muslim Kuwaiti friends asked me to have a place of my own for them to visit as an exchange of social courtesy to all the visits I paid to their Diwanis," the ever-smiling Pastor of NECK said.

"Religion was not an issue growing up. We played together, ate together, even napped together during pre-school years," the 66-year old Kuwaiti Reverend said while walking around the compound of his Church, whose land was first purchased by the American Mission to build a hospital for men in 1914. I remember my mother telling me that she wore 'Abbaya,' a black traditional loose over-garment when she came to the country back in 1945. My mother was not Muslim. However, she wore it out of respect and because she was part of that community,"



Kuwaiti Reverent Emanuel B Ghareeb

recalled Rev Ghareeb, whose Protestant Church was built in 1931. He reminisced that during Ramadan, the Muslims month of fasting, his mother used to cook food and send it over to her Muslim neighbors, as they were about to break their fast at the end of the day. The Muslims neighbors similarly reciprocated.

Coming together

The Reverend stressed that despite turbulences that have taken place in the country, making a reference to the Iraqi invasion of 1990 and the Shiite Mosque explosion of 2015, the Kuwaiti people always come together regardless of their race or religion.

He added that in order to build a stronger society against the odds, the Islamic Christian Relations Council was established in 2009. It consists of a number of Christian and Islamic figures to promote peaceful dialogue and enhance good Muslim-Christian relations.

On the other side of the spectrum, Wasatiya (Mediation) Center, an offshoot of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, was established in 2004 after an American soldier was murdered by a Kuwaiti youth.

"The center plays a mediator role among different religions. It strives to combat religious extremism and spreads religious tolerance and acceptance" Secretary-General of the center's higher committee Engineer Farid Emadi said.

The center addresses the youth; it encourages them to join workshops, cultural events and awareness campaigns that call for adopting moderate way of thinking and taking up a tolerant behavior towards the other, he added.

Religious intolerance has no room here because each individual, regardless of their backgrounds, plays an integral role in the development of this country. The Kuwaiti constitution itself guarantees religious freedom for everyone, he said.

Absolute freedom

Even though the Kuwaiti constitution stipulates that Islam is the state's religion and Islamic law is a main source of legislation, yet it "provides for 'absolute freedom' of belief. The constitution guarantees freedom of religious practice only if it is in accordance with established customs and does not conflict with public order or morals."

"There are no problems in the relationship between Christians and Muslims in Kuwait. They live together, work together and everyone is in his house with his family, and belongs to his own community ... I never heard a Christian cursing Muslims," the Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia's Bishop Camillo Ballin said.

He further said that Kuwaiti Christians are not discriminated against "socially nor politically." They enjoy every aspect of their social life as much as that of their political activities; they can vote and run for the National Assembly.



A remembrance sign on the Catholic Church of Kuwait.

The Christian life has kept moving forward and the number of Christians has kept growing to reach the thousands, yet "there is a problem," Bishop Ballin said alarmingly. "The number of the churches are the same of the past. Our churches were built 50 or 60 years ago, when the Christians were few."

The first Church of Our Lady of Arabia in Ahmadi was built in 1956 as a gift from Kuwait Oil Company. A year later, late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah granted the church a land to build a Cathedral in Kuwait City, where it still stands nowadays.

Of course, building communities and providing for their needs are not as easy as walking in the park. Nowadays, the Christians need "more space" to accommodate their need and activities, Bishop Ballin voiced out. There is an inadequate worship space and difficulties in securing lands for new facilities.

Christian figures

Being part of the main, it is inevitable to have some influential Christian figures that were and have been part and parcel in the development process of the county. Author Hamza Elayan named few of these Christian personalities in his book 'Christians in Kuwait'. He mentioned Saeed Yagoub Shamash, a Kuwaiti Christian, who was Kuwait's ambassador to few countries such as New York in 1963, Russia (or the Soviet Union back then) in 1967, France in 1969 and Kenya in 1972.

Another leading Christian figures were the Shuhaibers who played a major role in developing the country's security and health sectors. Ibrahim Dabdoub, is a banking figure that transformed National Bank of Kuwait from a local bank to a leading regional and international one, with the highest of profits. The book also highlighted the most unforgettable Christian figure in the history of Kuwait: the British Colonel administrator in the Middle East Lieutenant Colonel Harold Richard Patrick Dickson.

Dickson left a political and social imprint in the Kuwaiti society. He was nearest and dearest to the hearts of Kuwaiti people. Dickson learned the culture and the traditions; he became one of the member of his Kuwaiti community.

He was so influenced by the Kuwaiti culture that he named his son 'Saud' and his daughter 'Zahra', which are typical Kuwaiti names. His wife, violet, was given the honorific name of 'Umm Saud', the mother of Saud, and other times she was referred to as 'Umm Kuwait', the mother of Kuwait. Their house has become a heritage monument that still stands today.

Jews in Kuwait

Elayan also documented the existence of Jewish people in the Gulf country in a book that carried the title 'The Jews in Kuwait'. The first traces of the Jewish people life in Kuwait dated back in 1776. They were around 80 to 200 Jewish persons, their number varies year in and year out. They mostly came from south of Iraq and Iran.

They worked in vocations that were unfamiliar to the Kuwaiti society back then. They mostly worked in money exchange, fabric, leather and food markets. They built the first ice factory in Kuwait in 1912. They were an economic force to be reckoned with. They had a market named after them, 'the Jews' market,' Elayan pointed out in his book.

"The Kuwaitis were accepting of the Jewish people, as they were lenient to other religions," Elayan said. They had their own Synagogue, Jewish temple, downtown Kuwait City where they practiced their faith freely. Saturday was a sacred day for them. They didn't work that day. They also had their own Cemetery which showed that they lived there for a long time.

Consequently, the diversity of religions in Kuwait created an atmosphere of co-existence and accepting of the other. "Co-habitation and social tolerance is a sign of devel-

are provided with all means of safety and security.

No restrictions

As for religious groups not sanctioned in the Quran, such as the Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs, various statements from the Indian, Thai and Japanese embassies confirm the fact that there are no restrictions nor disrespect of their practices. "Thai Buddhists here do not practice faith openly mainly because there is no temple/monastery nor a delegation of monks coming," First Secretary at the Thai Embassy Pattarawan Nanakorn said. He added, "Thai Buddhists here are aware that Kuwait is a Muslim country so we do not practice religion out of respect, not by restrictions. In fact, I have not really heard there is official restriction. It is only advised through word of mouth that other believers should not practice religion too openly."



KUWAIT: The Holy Family Cathedral Parish in Kuwait. —KUNA photos

oped and cultured countries. The more diverse and cultured the people, the more tolerant they are to one another," Society for Human Rights (KSHR) Secretary Hussain Al-Otaibi said.

He added that, nowadays, being in the midst of a storm of sectarian conflicts, extremism and terrorism, Kuwaiti Government has strived to ride this storm by inducing a sense of solidarity, respect and acceptance to the different other. The Ministry of Interior has dedicated its time and personnel to provide safety for religious minorities to practice their faith freely and openly during their holidays, he said, adding that Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled has gone on field inspections himself to ensure that these religious groups

Similarly, Second Secretary of Political and Commerce at the Indian Embassy affirmed that Sikh, also, have "no difficulty in practicing their faith." Likewise, the Japanese in Kuwait can carry out their Shinto and Buddhist rituals, at home if they want to, Cultural Secretary at the Japanese Embassy Dana Zibar said.

According to the latest United States Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report for 2014, Kuwaiti Christians are estimated at more than 200 from eight different families. There are an estimated 600,000 non-citizen Hindus and approximately 450,000 Christians. Among non-citizens, there are also an estimated 100,000 Buddhists and 10,000 Sikhs. — KUNA

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LETTER TO BADRIYA

badrya_d@kuwaittimes.net

Madam,

Thank you for another great piece, and congratulations to Kuwait Times for giving yourself and your colleague, Ms Fuzai, front-page coverage to the excellent and challenging pieces you both write. As a Kuwait expat (with my wife and youngest son) of almost 10 years, we have great affection for this country... but the 'whole country', as per the phrase you use in your headline, which for all my family means, not only men and women, but Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis alike.

This brings me to the main point of my letter, which is to raise an issue that you yourself have written about on several occasions in the past few months... the growing antagonisms appearing between the two sectors of Kuwait society, a gap being driven, I have to say, by some very backward-looking people in parliament and implemented mainly by the Ministry of Interior.

Please remind your readership that for good or ill (and clearly many parliamentarians consider this 'ill'), Kuwait's population does comprise almost 70 percent expats. They are rarely mentioned in the papers (unless adversely, at sporting events, or national holidays) and have little or no voice in the running of the affairs of the country in which they live, and for a small minority, is the only country they have ever known.

These outsiders do not have the privileges of the minority Kuwaitis, the greatest of which is the privilege of citizenship. Kuwait clearly has every right to exert this privilege, but many do not realize that behind the 'shock/horror' headlines of expat behavior and illegal goings-on, there is a vast majority of the 2.8 million expats, who amongst other things:

* Do all of the country's very necessary dirty and back-breaking jobs.

* Earn very low wages, which according to the 2013 Central Statistical Bureau's Expatriate Labor Employment data means that 69 percent - about a million people - earn less than KD 240 per month.

* Live here on 'bachelor' status in great numbers (women as well as men), in order to provide for families back home in Syria, the Philippines, Bangladesh, or wherever.

* Live in poor, over-crowded conditions, in what amount to ghettos (what else is Jleeb?), enforced not only by income, but by laws of residence.

I am one of the privileged, very small expat subcategory, a well-paid, old, European professional, living here comfortably with my wife and youngest son, but even I have my complaints... I would quite like to retire here and buy my wife and I a retirement home down in Pearl City... but that privilege is not open even to me... oh Kuwait what you are missing... please wake up!

Apologies for the flippant last paragraph, but I do hope you will take these comments in the sincere way they are intended, and perhaps even give you thought for some future articles.

Keep it up!

Anthony Edwards



KUWAIT: MP Majed Mousa and others help Louis Rajan out of his wrecked vehicle following an accident near Andalus yesterday.

TRAVEL EXEC DIES AFTER CAR ACCIDENT

By Sajeev K Peter

KUWAIT: Louis Francis Rajan, 70, a travel executive and vice president of House of Travels, Kuwait, Cargo Division, died following a car accident near Andalus yesterday. According to reports, Rajan's car lost control and swerved into the pavement on King Faisal Road near Andalus as he was driving from his cargo division office in Dajeej to the Kuwait City office around 10:30 am yesterday.

On seeing the accident, MP Majed Mousa, who was passing by and a few bystanders took Rajan out of his car, but he was pronounced dead later. The car caught fire immediately after Rajan was evacuated. The cause of death could not be immediately veri-



fied. Rajan, who had been working with House of Travels for the last 25 years, is survived by his wife and two daughters.

PIC TO GAIN KD 116 MILLION FOR 2016 - 2017

KUWAIT: CEO of Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC) Mohammad Al-Farhood expected the company's profits to reach about KD 116 million for the fiscal year 2016-2017. The company was faced with multiple economic challenges due to the severe drop in international oil prices, which in turn led to a drop in the prices of PIC's products, the CEO said in an interview with 'Kimiya' magazine, issued by the company.

PIC has recorded profits of KD 431 million for the 2015-2016 time period, with a growth of 141 percent and a raise of KD 263 million compared to the previous

fiscal year, when it saw a raise of KD 168 million, said Farhood. He noted that this rise was due to the net profits that were enlisted as part of the company's performance for the fiscal year 2015-2016, as a result of EQUATE's full acquisition of MI Global company.

Meanwhile, he added that the company is working on expanding its petrochemical investments in Kuwait, Bahrain, India, Canada and several Asian countries. The Gulf states contribute to a large part of the international petrochemical industries' field, because they have an access to low-cost primary substances, said Farhood. — KUNA

MINISTRY ADDRESSES REBAR PRICE INCREASE

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Nezi

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry yesterday received a report made by a special committee it had formed to survey the local market concerning the reinforcing steel crisis. The ministry stressed that all needed measures would be taken to limit the phenomenal price increases of reinforcing bars, or rebar over the past months. Notably, rebar prices have jumped from KD 120 a ton to KD 220 despite the recent drop in oil prices that was supposed to lower shipping and transport costs of all goods.

Iskan Real Estate Development Company Chairman Abdullah Al-Osta said local markets have been witnessing a real 'war' in terms of steel prices that dramatically hiked prices despite flooding the market with imported steel a year ago, which made a local steel factory file an official complaint with the ministry. "There are many reasons behind this, including re-exporting steel to Iraq and hoarding stocks to increase profits," Osta added, explaining that steel prices had been fluctuating since



Sept 2015 although it was being imported from Spain, Qatar, Turkey, UAE, China and Ukraine.

Retirement

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih stressed that the ministry will continue referring

employees who have been in service for 30 years to retirement with no exceptions, so that younger generations and 'new blood' could take over and develop their creativity. Subaih also noted that all remarks made by the Audit Bureau were being taken into consideration to avoid any violations. In addition, Subaih stressed that thanks to the presence of auditors at

various co-ops, co-ops' profits increased compared to last year.

Nisf's ruling suspended

The court of appeal yesterday suspended a ruling made by the court of first instance ordering returning Sami Al-Nisf to his post as Kuwait Airways chairman and set another hearing to be held on Sunday to discuss the case. Notably, the court of first instance had annulled Communication Minister Essa Al-Kandari's decision to refer Nisf to retirement.

Repossession

Municipal Council member Meshaal Al-Juwaisri yesterday suggested that the government repossesses Kuwaitis' houses in Salmiya's blocks two, four and twelve because they are heavily populated by expats and have turned more into a commercial and investment area that is 'not fit anymore' for citizens' residence. Juwaisri added that citizens were becoming a minority in Salmiya and that their houses are surrounded by shopping malls and 'bachelors.'

GULF BANK'S RED ACCOUNT CUSTOMERS ENJOY DISCOUNTED TICKETS AT CINESCAPE

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank is announcing exclusive discounts for its red(tm) customers to watch the latest movies at all Cinescape for only KD 2 instead of the usual KD 3.5 rate seven days a week.

To benefit from the offer, red account holders need to just use their red(tm) ATM cards to purchase cinema tickets from ticket kiosks in all Cinescape cinema theatres

The new 2016 red(tm) account is designed for high school, college and university students aged 15 to 25 years old and offer them monthly cash draw prizes of KD 1,000 and quarterly car draws for lucky winners

to win a new 2016 Cadillac every quarter. There is no minimum deposit required to open the account or a minimum balance charge.

Gulf Bank is committed to providing its red(tm) customers with the right promotions that are tailored to meet their specific needs. For further information about the Red account and draws, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, or call Gulf Bank's Customer Contact Center on 1805805. General information about Gulf Bank's products and services can also be found at the Bank's website www.e-gulfbank.com.



AABB RENEWS RECOGNITION OF KUWAIT'S CENTRAL BLOOD BANK

KUWAIT: The US American Association of Blood Bank (AABB) has renewed its recognition of Kuwait's Central Blood Bank (KCB) completing 27 years of such recognition, the Director of blood transfer services in the health ministry, Reem Al-Radhwan said yesterday.

Radhwan further indicated that an inter-

national inspection team by the organization visited the Kuwaiti central blood bank for a period of three days for evaluation of quality and services and to renew its recognition, in addition to inspecting blood disease labs in the bank.

The recognition by the organization also approved blood types gene samples by the

Kuwaiti bank, making Kuwait the third country to obtain this recognition in terms of labs transfers based on US standards, Radhwan added.

Since 1957, AABB has been developing standards for blood banks and transfusion services. From the 1980s to the present, standards for Cellular Therapies,

Perioperative Services, Relationship Testing, Immunohematology Reference Laboratories, Molecular Testing and Patient Blood Management have been added to the standards library. The corresponding accreditation programs strive to improve the quality and safety of the activities covered by the standards. — KUNA

Legalees

LEGAL ISSUES REGARDING RESIGNATION

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Resigning can be such a hard decision to make, but when we are working for someone, we eventually have to leave. Some of us leave because we reached retirement age, or retirement goal, for health reasons, or maybe we are moving to somewhere new. Whatever the reason is, we all have to eventually leave.

Making the decision to leave your workplace has a lot of legal implications, and so I wanted to look at them closely. I know that the majority of my topics recently have been about issues that arise at the workplace, but this is because the majority of the questions I receive are work-related.

Probation period

Question: My understanding is that if I am still in the probation period, I can leave at any time. But I could not leave Kuwait because my employer was obtaining my visa for me and therefore my passport was not with me.

Fajer: Yes, the probation period is there for you to 'test' your job and see whether or not it is the 'right' job for you. When you are still in the probation period, you can leave without any legal implications. Some people just leave the country, without even telling their employer. But it is both more professional and courteous to let your employer know. You do not have to resign, but it is good to figure things out with your employer and communicate. You can simply ask for your passport.

Acceptance of Resignation

Question: My boss is not accepting my resignation - I have tried submitting it a few times. What can I do?

Fajer: If your direct boss does not want to accept your resignation in person, then I suggest (and I suggest this regardless) that you submit your resignation via email, fax or courier (like DHL, FedEx and so on). Get a receipt that you have sent your resignation letter. You can also try sending it to the HR department.

Reasons for Resignation

Question: I am resigning because I am not being treated well at work, because I am working overtime, I am not getting days off and so on. Do you think this is the right step?

Fajer: No, I see people making this mistake all the time. Instead of submitting the resignation to your employer, I would much rather you submitted your resignation at the Shoon (Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs) stating all the violations that your employer has done towards you. I usually give this advice to my clients because when you resign, you are legally letting go of your rights, and if your reason for resignation is not documented clearly, then you lose some of your rights, that depending on your years of employment, can be your termination indemnity.

Three Months' Notice

Question: As per my contract, I have a three-month notice that I have to serve to my boss. However, two different HR professionals have informed me that my boss has the right to tell me that my services are not needed and can ask me to stop coming without any notice and stop paying me thereafter. I was wondering if this is correct.

Fajer: Even though your boss has the right to tell you not to attend work during your three-month notice period before resignation, they do not have the right to withhold your three months' salary. Let me give an example - you submit your resignation and as per your contract, you have to serve three months. After one month, your boss asks you not to come in - that is legally okay, if you are paid for the two other months. Also it is important here to get this in writing from your boss, so you will not be accused of absconding.

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

WORKERS UNION HAILS OPIWC'S INITIATIVE

KUWAIT: Chairman of Kuwait Gulf Oil Company's (KGOC) Workers Union Faleh Hindi Al-Ajmi hailed the initiatives proposed by the Oil and Petrochemical Industries Workers Confederation (OPIWC) to Kuwait Oil Corporation (KPC), which stipulate cutting down expenses and combatting 'unnecessary spending on projects worth millions of dinars,' thus not jeopardizing workers' rights.



Faleh Al-Ajmi

In a statement issued by the union, Ajmi particularly commended the role played by the union's executive board, which launched an initiative that aims at saving millions of dinars in contractors' tenders, and to stop what he called 'contractors' manipulations.'

Ajmi also expressed surprise over criticisms made to the proposals 'without even studying or understanding it'. He argued that those criticisms are made out of 'election-related considerations, media shows and propaganda.' 'This initiative was set after consulting legal and auditing experts who studied previous reports made by the State Audit Bureau about millions spent as operational, non-operational, technical and non-technical cost for contractors,' he said, underscoring that oil sector workers are keen on Kuwait's greater good and supporting national labor.

NO INJURIES IN FIRES

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A car caught flames on King Fahad Highway near Fahad Al-Ahmad area's bridge. Firefighters tackled the blaze and no injuries were reported. Similarly, no injuries were reported in a fire that took place at a Salmiya house, as firefighters managed to evacuate residents and extinguish the flames within minutes. Meanwhile, firefighters headed to a house in Jabr Al-Ali following a report made on 3:21 pm on Saturday about a malfunctioned elevator. They were able to rescue a number of persons who were trapped inside, and no injuries were reported.

'OUR SCIENCES' EXHIBITS FEMALE STUDENTS' TALENTS

KUWAIT: The 'Our Sciences' exhibition was a great opportunity to encourage creative thinking when a group of female students displayed their scientific experiments and artistic projects, an official said yesterday. The one-day exhibition is part of 'Wathiq,' a self-induced confidence educational program, member of the program's higher committee Ahlam Bahbahani said. The event focused on students' talents in physics, chemistry, literature, art and caricature.

The program's media team chief Mohammad Al-Kandari, meanwhile, said that Wathiq has strived to highlight male and female students' achievements in an

environment that is full of motivation. Wathiq has left positive impact on students, teachers, school administrations and parents, he added.

Participating students unanimously agreed that their success was the product of team work and their teachers' encouragement. Wathiq program aims at building an ambitious young people. It is organized by three governmental bodies: Higher consultation committee for Islamic law at the Amiri Diwan, Ministry of Youth Affairs, and Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs have recently joined the program. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A scene from the exhibition. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Yemeni women attend a press conference yesterday to discuss the ongoing peace talks between warring Yemeni parties held in Kuwait. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

YEMENI WOMEN URGE WARRING PARTIES TO REACH SOLUTION

KUWAIT: A group of leading Yemeni figures held warring Yemeni parties accountable for not reaching a permanent peaceful solution yet. Nonetheless, they encouraged them to set-aside their personal interest and have a sense of responsibility to bring back peace to the country.

This remark was made by Rasha Jarhum, a scholar in sociology, who spoke on behalf of the group in a press conference yesterday. "The Yemeni parties engaging in the Kuwait-hosted and UN-mediated Yemeni peace talks should commit to resolutions made by UN Security Council,

the GCC initiative and the Yemeni National Dialogue." "Women and youth should be part of the solution," she stressed, adding that in order to create peace and stability in the country fighting should be stopped, humanitarian aid should be allowed entry, women and children should be protected. "Yemeni women have played a major role in politics." She said that they had an effective role in the Yemen's national dialogue conference where they formed 30 percent of the participants. "In this critical moment of history. We, women, were invited by UN Special Envoy to Yemen Ismail

Ould Cheikh Ahmed to participate in the Kuwait-hosted peace talks to reflect our point of view in the negotiations," Jarhum pointed out. "We are speaking out for Yemeni women and children. We will try to encourage the warring parties to reach a comprehensive peaceful outcome."

The seven Yemeni women arrived in Kuwait last week by an invitation from the UN special envoy. The Yemeni women expressed appreciation to Kuwait for hosting these talks and for playing a "positive role" in helping the Yemenis in their ongoing crisis. — KUNA

NBK SPONSORS CENTER 21 FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced sponsoring the Center 21 rehabilitation workshop for young adults with mental disabilities over the age of 21, as part of its commitment toward corporate social responsibility.

Nasser Al-Sayer, NBK's Chairman, Isam Al-Sager, NBK's Group Chief Executive Officer and Shaikha Al-Bahar, NBK Deputy Group Chief Executive Officer received Nabil Al-Nassar, Center 21 Chairman and Lamyia Al-Humaidhi, Vice Chair of Center 21 Board at NBK's Head Office.

"NBK's sponsorship is part of its ongoing drive to fulfill its corporate social responsibilities", said Sager. "NBK endeavors to shoulder its social responsibilities and share with the

various private and public sector institutions the burdens and responsibilities towards social advancement".

Sager added "NBK's support to Center 21 comes in line with the bank's customary and ongoing spirit of corporate citizenship as well as the vital role it plays in supporting all social and educational developmental issues."

Nassar expressed his appreciation for NBK's long tradition in corporate social responsibility and highlighted the importance of such dedication in social growth and development.

Nassar also explained the main role of Center 21 as a first of a kind initiative in Kuwait dedicated to serve and support young adults with mental dis-



KUWAIT: Abdul Mohsen Al-Rushaid, NBK Public Relations Manager receives Noriya Al-Amiri KALD's Executive Manager.

abilities over the age of 21.

Center 21 is the first facility of its kind in Kuwait to provide complete and sophisticated services for young adults above 21 years old. The center's activities varies from entertainment, field trips, development courses, rehabilitation sessions in addition to development services as physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy focus skills, nutritional counseling and encouraging self-reliance and independence.

NBK has a long tradition supporting social and community oriented activities. NBK's corporate social responsibility programs cover a range of education, environment, health, philanthropic, social and sports-related initiatives.

CHINESE DIPLOMAT TIES WITH KUWAIT PROGRESSING SMOOTHLY

DUBAI: A Chinese diplomat yesterday underscored the significance of Sino-Kuwaiti ties, saying ties between both nations are smoothly progressing on all fronts. China's Deputy Consul General in Dubai Ma Xiao Liang made the comments in a statement after participating in a workshop organized by Kuwait's Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA), with Kuwait's Consul General in Dubai Thiab Farhan Al-Rashidi in attendance.

Kuwait was the first Gulf nation to forge bilateral ties with China, Liang said, describing those ties as 'exceptionally friendly.' China values the investment opportunities provided by Kuwait to the country's businessmen, he noted. Moreover, the Chinese diplomat called Kuwait, "an integral member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)," saying that would contribute to enhancing Beijing's ties with GCC nations.

KDIPA's Assistant Director General of Development Affairs Mohammad Yaqoub said that the workshop has achieved its objectives of bringing to Chinese businessmen's attention, the ample investment opportunities available in Kuwait.

Kuwait is amongst a select few of nations that permit a foreign investor to fully own a national company, part of a revamped investment structure, Yaqoub said. "This has created an incentive for investors to select Kuwait as a primary investment hub," he added. — KUNA



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MR 5%

By Hassan Abdullah Jouhar

One of the proposals newly made to cover up for the government's financial deficit is to impose a five percent tax on the sums expatriates transfer back to their home countries. Such a proposal will surely create a new totally unjustified wave of criticism, not only because such a bill lacks real economic value, but also because of the considerable psychological and financial damage scores of thousands of poor helpless expatriate laborers might suffer. In addition, this project might pave the way for another moral corruption project, especially with the prevalence of corruption everywhere.

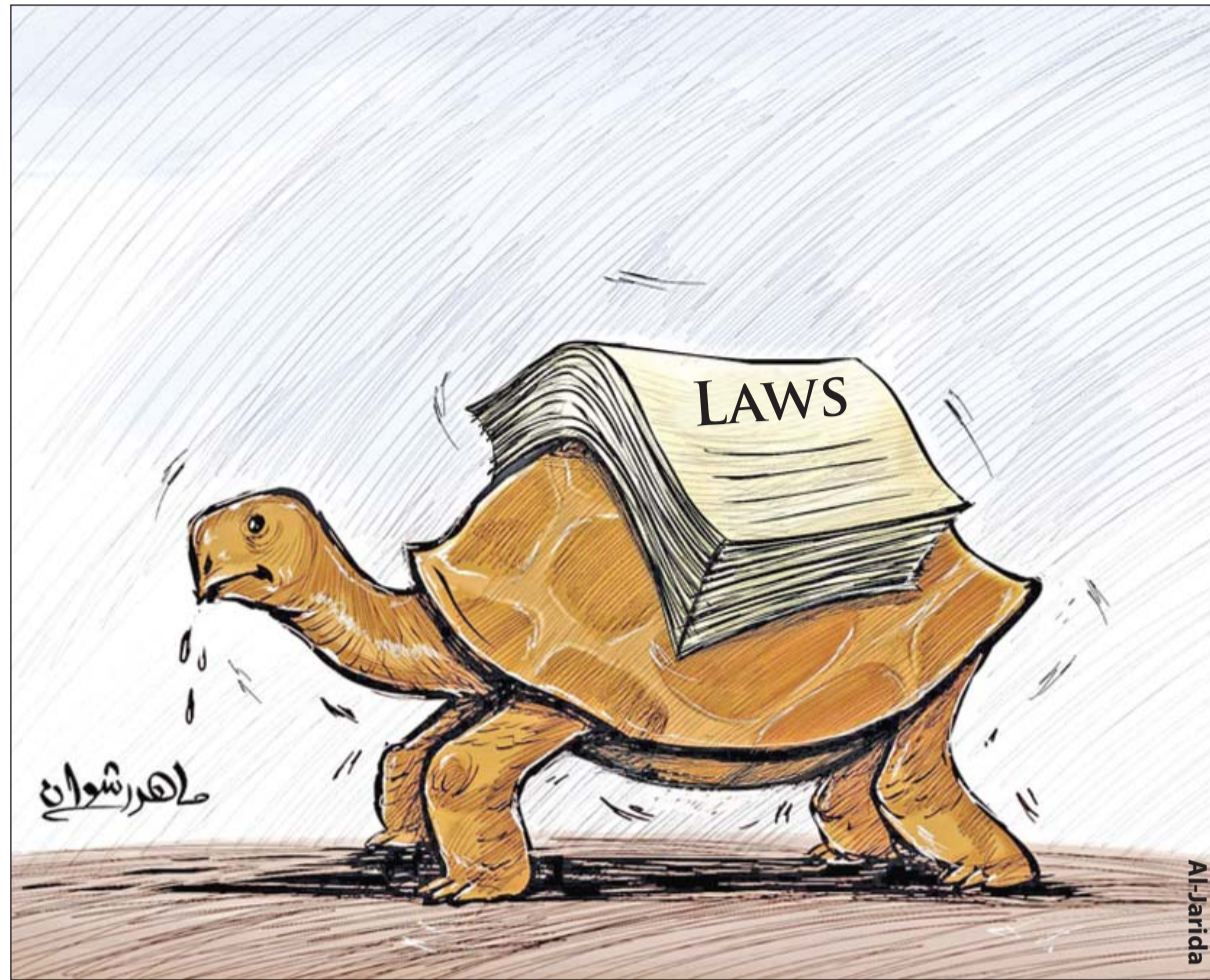
To start with, assuming that the average monthly salary an expat gets varies between KD 500-750, which is already much exaggerated because a vast number of them still get no more than KD 50 a month, the total monthly income of around 3 million expats would be KD 1.5 billion, and thus monthly transfer taxes would be KD 70 million a month and KD 700 million a year, which seems to be a large figure.

This added value can be used in a good way if it was allocated for real development projects, infrastructure or even developing the services expats themselves get, including accommodation and healthcare. But our Kuwaiti experience does not actually reflect such tendencies because employees will be the ones responsible to pay that tax one way or another while the services expats provide us with, starting with construction labor, tire technicians, barbers, tailors, beauticians, electricians, pipe fitters and all the way to doctors and engineers will be increased far beyond that percentage and simple citizens will end up as the only ones affected by this tax.

What is even more dangerous is that this proposal will create a new moral problem by creating a new type of 'financial transfer merchants', especially since Kuwait had already experienced utilizing human beings and the state's political and financial resources with patronage from the government itself through using 'hundreds' of standards in viewing similar situations. We had experienced very strange names such as 'visa traffickers', weapon traffickers and agency traffickers who had all benefited from handsome commissions they got for deals the state made to recruit foreign labor, government tenders or weapon deals. They looted considerable percentages from such trade and made easy and fast money that made them very wealthy.

The KD 700 million sum collected from transfer taxes might end up in those influential people's pockets and a few pennies might leak to ordinary citizens who might offer to transfer the money under their own names in return for fewer taxes than the official 5 percent. So many tricks will be used and it might not be strange if we see some ads offering money transfers for as low as one or two percent fees, which would be very tempting to many expats, leaving the government out of the equation with no benefit at all.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

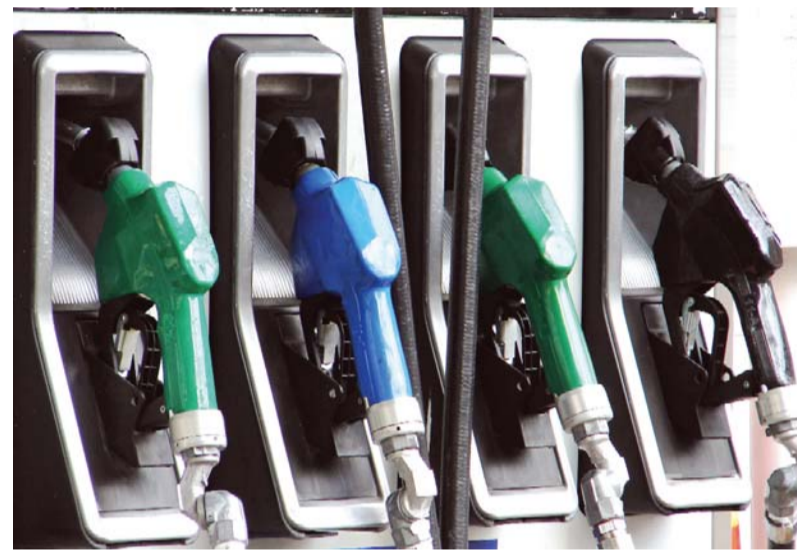


GOVT INTENDS TO LIFTING PETROL SUBSIDIZATION

KUWAIT: The government intends to go ahead soon with plans to reduce subsidies on petrol, as a cabinet-affiliated economic committee meets this week to study proposals presented on that regard.

The proposals, prepared by the Finance Ministry's subsidies review committee, calls for ending subsidization of 'ultra' gasoline, while keeping partial subsidization of the 'super' and 'premium' varieties. Studies have shown that ultra gas users in Kuwait are 'very limited' thus removing subsidies will not affect consumers in general, according to sources. Meanwhile, the studies recommend reducing subsidization of the super and premium varieties by 30-50 percent, while refocusing subsidization to premium gas which is preferred by a majority of consumers in Kuwait according to Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) studies.

These measures can help limit the 'inflationary pressures' that result from



lifting subsidies on petrol, thus preventing a wide scale increase in prices of products and services in Kuwait, the sources said, quoting the study.

The government has the authority to issue decisions to alter petrol prices without taking the parliament's approval. — Al-Qabas

KFH NAMES WINNERS OF BANKING CARDS CAMPAIGN'S FIRST DRAW

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) named seven winners of the first draw of the new banking cards promotional campaign themed 'Win Samsung Curved UHD 65" TV with KFH Cards' in an attempt to encourage clients to use KFH credit, prepaid and debit cards while making purchases in Kuwait and overseas.

The winners are: Norah Alhajri, Khaled Alkhaled, Tahani Alghonaim, Hani Abo Alaz, Samuel Bidakala, Amro Altarkait and Reem Alawadhi.

For every KD 10 spent on their KFH cards, clients will get a chance to enter a draw and win daily Samsung Curved UHD 65" TV for 50 days ending June 14th 2016. KFH Credit and Prepaid cards used in domestic and international retail spends and KFH Debit cards used in international retail spends are eligible for the daily draw.

KFH strives to continuously offer its clients new promotions and discounts in order to distinguish them among peers, not to mention to further bolster bank's leading position in the field of banking cards.

KFH marketing campaigns play a significant role in underlining KFH's principles that include boosting sales, and benefitting clients and merchants.

This new campaign is part of KFH's efforts to reward its clients and grant them additional value; thus achieving customer satisfaction and boosting their confidence. The campaign also aims at enhancing the bank's presence especially that it dominates the largest market share in the field of banking cards.

It is worth noting that KFH has won several awards in the field of banking cards which reiterates its success and efficiency in banking cards market. KFH enjoys high confidence and leadership in the market in addition to high quality products which have enabled it to achieve growth in cards market and increase the number of customers. KFH occupies the leading position as the issuer of banking cards and one of leading banks at the GCC level.



AHLI UNITED BANK HOLDS COURSES ON 'ISLAMIC FINANCING TRANSACTIONS'

KUWAIT: The Sharia Supervision Department at Ahli United Bank recently organized, in cooperation with Human Resources Department, a series of training visits to branches. These visits were intended to emphasize and illustrate to Bank staff the aspects relevant to the sharia adaptation of products in accordance with the highest banking standards compliant with Islamic sharia provisions. The Bank is committed to develop the expertise and knowledge of Retail Banking staff in all aspects of sharia related to the products offered to customers.

Ahli United Bank is keen to spread awareness of sharia compliant banking amongst the Bank's customers, both present and future having staff well trained and capable of illustrating the sharia aspects pertinent to those products requested by clients. This also serves to meet Central Bank of Kuwait's requirements with regard to the protection of customers and transparency in providing and explaining the various

aspects of financial products and services. These courses were presented by the sharia Supervisory Assistant Manager at Ahli United Bank, Abdullah Tareq Al-Shuaib. The training addressed the sharia adaptations to current accounts, investment savings accounts, deposits, credit cards, and murabaha sale. In addition, the training dealt with differences between Islamic and conventional banking in each of the above products.

Commenting on these training courses, Abdullah Al-Shuaib said "We are currently offering this training course at the various branches of the Bank. I was greatly pleased with the high level of knowledge of Islamic financial culture amongst Ahli United Bank's employees, which is a source of pride to the Management and the Fatwa and Sharia Supervisory Board at the Bank. This is an added incentive for us to offer more advanced courses in the future."

Shuaib added: "The enthusiasm and

interaction showed by the branch staff during training courses is the best evidence we have of the sound selection of such employees. I was impressed with their awareness of the necessity to pursue their learning and to be aware of all details of Islamic financial transactions compliant with the Islamic Shari' principles.

Also commenting on the issue, Naqeeb Amin, Head of Human Resources at Ahli United Bank, clarified that the Bank has consolidated its status as a pioneer in providing financial services conforming to Islamic Sharia'. He said "We have invested heavily in training and developing our employees to help them offer the best banking services". Furthermore he stated that such training on Islamic financing products and services upgrades the skills of our staff and it embodies the importance of investment in developing human resources thereby benefiting customers and the Bank alike.



BURGAN BANK SPONSORS 'MARKET DAY' AT IDEAL EDUCATION SCHOOL

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank recently sponsored 'Market Day', which is an event organized especially for the people with disabilities and which took place at the Ideal Education School in Sharq.

The aim of this event was to assist those in the community who have special needs and who want to overcome their disabilities. It also focused on increasing their self-confidence and encouraging them to become

productive members of the society.

The event took place on April 27th, 2016, where students, parents and different representatives from different embassies took part in the event, while the bank was there to show its solidarity and support for people with special needs in Kuwait. The event included face painting, games, as well as other recreational activities in addition to displaying the special

needs students' handmade articles and crafts which they have been working on during the year. During the event, the participants and their families were also offered meals to accommodate the joy of the day.

It is worth mentioning that Burgan Bank's support to this initiative falls under its recently launched full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together

to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural, social and health initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.

Crime

Report

Citizen beaten by husband

KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti citizen who was beaten by her Syrian husband and she suffered extensive injuries including a broken nose. A security source said the citizen had a dispute with her husband that became heated, then he beat her. She obtained a medical report from Adan Hospital and lodged a complaint at Ahmadi police station. Detectives are investigating.

Ex-con caught

An ex-convict was arrested following a chase in Sabahiya area when he attempted to avoid a checkpoint. The Kuwaiti man was found to be wanted for four felonies and misdemeanors. He was sent to criminal detectives.

Negligence charge

A citizen was charged with negligence when her six-year-old son fell and injured his head. A security source said the child fell from the stairs of the apartment the woman lives in and injured his head. The woman took her son to Adan hospital, then after treatment, the investigators informed Fintas police station, and the woman was charged with negligence.

Drug arrest

Police arrested a Kuwaiti citizen who was in the parking lot of a school in Al-Naseem area using drugs. A security source said Jahra patrol officers noticed the car in the parking lot and when they approached it they saw the man using drugs. The man was arrested and seven joints, and 115 tablets were found on him. The suspect was sent to Drugs Control General Department. — Al-Rai

News

in brief

182,397 travel ban orders last year

KUWAIT: A total of 147 complaints were filed against state officials for failure to implement court orders last year, Ministry of Justice statistics show. These include 53 complaints filed against ministers, which the Attorney General has received and then referred to the relevant investigation authorities. Meanwhile, the recent statistics show that a total of 182,397 travel ban orders were issued last year against individuals who failed to implement court orders made against them. — Al-Jarida

Public funds

KUWAIT: More cases of violations against public funds were filed against the Ministry of Electricity and Water compared to any other state department in the past few months, according to statistics released recently by the Ministry of Justice. Out of 199 cases filed against 21 state departments from August 1, 2015 to January 31, 2016, 74 were filed against the Ministry of Electricity and Water. Meanwhile, the Public Prosecution is investigating in 68 cases filed during the same period. — Al-Qabas

Treatment in South Korea

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health plans to send Kuwaiti patients to South Korea as part of the state's government-sponsored overseas treatment program, Al-Anbaa reported yesterday quoting sources. A health cooperation agreement that was set to be signed yesterday between Kuwait and South Korea includes an arrangement to send patients for cancer treatment, organ transplant and plastic surgery to the Asian country, the sources added. — Al-Anbaa

Retirees rewarded

KUWAIT: Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) will pay special bonuses to retired personnel who were recalled to fill in for employees during a labor strike that took place on April 17 - 19, 2016. — Al-Anbaa

Cables replaced

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Electricity and Water replaced wood poles of overhead lines with ones made from steel in a bid to fight the theft of power cables in the country, Undersecretary Assistant for Planning and Training Dr Meshaan Al-Otaibi said. The ministry is also replacing copper cables with ones made from aluminum, Otaibi added. Thieves often steal copper cables then extract copper from inside to sell as junk metal. — Al-Anbaa

Prices monitoring

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has formed special committees to monitor prices in anticipation of potential price increases ahead of Ramadan. Members of the committees were given authorities to close shops, prosecute and order shop owners to pay fines in case fabricated price increases were detected, sources said, adding that an emergency center has been allocated to receive consumers' complaints. — Al-Anbaa

Foreign bonds

KUWAIT: The Finance Ministry started preparing to put up treasury bonds in foreign currencies, in parallel with the Central Bank's monthly releases in Kuwaiti dinar, in order to prevent shortages in foreign exchange reserves in the Central Bank. Last month, the Central Bank offered local banks the opportunity to participate in covering general debt bonds and tawaruq tools with an estimated total value of KD 400 million. — Al-Rai

EGYPTIANS' REMITTANCES RETREAT BY \$1 BILLION

KUWAIT: Egyptian Central Bank's Governor Tareq Amer recently told Kuwaiti officials that remittances of Egyptians working in Kuwait retreated by \$1 billion since the recent 'Dollar Crisis' started in Egypt, well-informed sources said.

Amer made a quick visit to Kuwait last week during which he met with officials from Kuwait Central Bank and Kuwait Investment Authority, the sources said. He explained to them that the main reason behind the retreat was that a large segment of those remittances were made outside the banking system, making use of the huge difference between official rates used in banks and lower ones offered by money exchangers and non-official remittances. "Unofficial remittances have negatively affected Egyptians' remittances, which form a major source for hard currency in Egypt, because the difference between official rates and that paid by currency dealers varies between 15 and 20 percent," Amer explained according to the sources. — Al-Rai



Kim Jong Un says North Korea won't use nuclear weapons first

RESHUFFLE SHOWS SAUDI DETERMINATION TO CHANGE



FORT MCMURRAY: In this image released by the Alberta Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), members of the RCMP monitor the Fort McMurray wildfire on Saturday. — AFP

CANADA WILDFIRE TO BURN FOR MONTHS

FORT MCMURRAY, Alberta: The images are ones of devastation - scorched homes, virtually whole neighborhoods burned to the ground. It rained a little yesterday morning in Fort McMurray, but Canadian officials say they expect to fight the massive wildfire that has destroyed large parts of Alberta's oil sands town for months. There's fear the growing wildfire could double in size and reach a major oil sands mine and even the neighboring province of Saskatchewan.

The Alberta government said the massive blaze in the province will cover more than 200,000 hectares by yesterday and continue to grow because of high temperatures, dry conditions and high winds. Chad Morrison of Alberta Wildfire said it's not uncommon to fight such an inferno in forested areas for months. Morrison said the fire was burning away from communities this weekend. He expected cooler temperatures along with the rain yesterday, but significant rainfall is needed to put out the flames.

The Rural Municipality of Wood Buffalo, which includes Fort McMurray, tweeted a picture of the rainfall and wrote: "It was only for a few minutes but the sight of rain has never been so good." Alberta Premier Rachel Notley retweeted the picture and wrote "Here's hoping for much more!" Officials had hoped to complete the mass evacuation of work camps north of Fort McMurray on Saturday. Thousands of displaced residents got a drive-by view of some of the burned-out neighborhoods as convoys continued. No deaths or injuries have been reported since the fire started last Sunday.

Notley said about 12,000 evacuees have been airlifted from oil sands mine air fields over the past two days, and about 7,000 have left in highway convoys escorted by police. She said the goal was to complete the evacuation from northern work camps by yesterday. The fire could reach the

edges of the Suncor oil sands facility, about 25 km north of Fort McMurray. Non-essential staff have been evacuating and efforts to protect the site were under way. Notley, however, said that the facility was highly resilient to forest fires. Oil sands mines are cleared and have no vegetation. Morrison said the fire wasn't expected to reach the oil sands mines north of Suncor.

The fire and mass evacuation has forced a quarter or more of Canada's oil output offline and was expected to impact an economy already hurt by the fall in the price of oil. The Alberta oil sands have the third-largest reserves of oil in the world behind Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. Its workers largely live in Fort McMurray where some neighborhoods have been destroyed. Police said many parts of smoke-filled Fort McMurray are burnt and visibility is low. Officers wore masks as they checked homes to make sure everyone was out.

More than 80,000 people have left Fort McMurray in the heart of Canada's oil sands, where the fire has torched 1,600 homes and other buildings. Gas has been turned off, the power grid is damaged and water is not drinkable. Officials said there is no timeline to return residents to the city, but the Alberta government has begun preliminary planning, though it stresses fighting the fire is still the first priority.

About 25,000 evacuees moved north in the hours after Tuesday's mandatory evacuation, where oil sands work camps that usually house employees were used to house evacuees. Officials are moving everyone south where it is safer. Syncrude, a major oil sands mining company, also shut down operations and evacuated. The company said in a statement that while there is no imminent threat from fire, smoke has reached its Mildred Lake site. — AP

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AUCTION NO: MAA-0052015/ SALE OF SCRAP/SURPLUS MATERIALS AT MAA Refinery

Kuwait National Petroleum Company announce the issuing of auction No. MAA-0052015/, and invite bids in sealed envelopes for the sale of Scrap/Surplus Materials at MAA Refinery.

Documents can be obtained from the Tendering Committee at Head Office 1st Floor, Room # IA-046 during the official working hours i.e. 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM against the official fee of KD 10/- (non-returnable), starting from Monday, 09 / 05 / 2016.

Note: Please arrange to provide us with an official letter from the Company authorizing their representative to collect the documents.

The dates of view and inspect the offered items and preliminary meeting will be on Wednesday, 182016/05/ at 09:00 AM at MAA Refinery.

The last date of accepting the bids in 12:00 PM on Tuesday, 072016/06/. A Bank Guarantee equivalent to 10% of the total offered value valid for 60 days will be attached with the bids and to be inserted in the ITC special box and offers shall be valid for 60 days from the bids opening date.

For enquiry and to obtain permission for the materials viewing, please contact - Team Leader Maint. Zone-3-MAA, Tel No: 23881288 / 23881882, Mobile No.: 97200873, Fax No. 23881565 and Email Id. h.qabazerd@knpc.com or w.dawre@knpc.com

AUSTRALIA PM CALLS ELECTION FOR JULY 2

CANBERRA: Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull yesterday called an election for both houses of parliament on July 2 as he seeks his own mandate with the public just eight months after deposing predecessor Tony Abbott in a party coup. The widely expected announcement was the latest chapter in the turbulent world of Australian politics, where a revolving door of leaders saw multi-millionaire former banker Turnbull, 61, become the fourth prime minister in just over two years when he ousted Abbott in September.

"The governor-general has accepted my advice to dissolve both houses of parliament effective tomorrow morning, and call an election for both houses, a double dissolution, on 2 July," Turnbull said at a press conference in Canberra as he announced one of the nation's longest-ever election campaigns. "Australians will have a very clear choice - to keep the course, maintain the commitment to our national economic plan for growth and jobs, or go back to Labor, with its high-taxing, higher spending, debt and deficit agenda. "I will be seeking a mandate from the Australian people as the prime minister of this country to carry out this (economic) plan."

Labor opposition leader Bill Shorten, a 48-year-old ambitious former union chief, is aiming to add his name to the prime ministerial list when he takes on the Liberal Party's Turnbull in what is tipped to be a tightly contested vote. The latest opinion polls published by News Limited newspapers on Sunday showed the coalition and Labor neck-and-neck at 50-50. Turnbull ruled out a snap poll after he assumed the top job but stayed true to his threat last month to call early general elections by using the trigger of a double dissolution - where all seats in both houses of parliament are contested - after deadlocked legislation failed to pass the upper house Senate.

The suave ex-barrister and journalist, a moderate on social issues who supports gay marriage and making Australia a republic, came into power with high personal ratings. But support for him and the ruling Liberal-National coalition has slipped over the past few months, according to successive opinion polls, amid poorly handled debates about tax and other reforms and internal party divisions fuelled by discontent from Abbott's conservative supporters. — AFP

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RESHUFFLE SHOWS SAUDI DETERMINATION TO CHANGE

RIYADH: With a major government reshuffle, Saudi Arabia's King Salman and his powerful son have shown their determination to move the kingdom's economy away from oil, experts say. A series of royal decrees announced on Saturday merged various ministries to reflect new priorities under the wide-ranging Vision 2030 plan announced two weeks ago by the king's son, Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. "It only shows they're serious," a veteran banker in the kingdom said of the government shuffle. "It's all going in the right direction. They are trying to change."

The world's largest oil exporter had long talked of economic diversification but plunging oil revenues over the past two years have accentuated the effort, pushed by the 30-year-old Prince Mohammed, who heads the main Council for Economic Affairs and Development. At the root of Vision 2030 is the sale of less than five percent of state oil giant Saudi Aramco in what officials say will be the world's largest-ever Initial Public Offering.

Proceeds from the sale will help create the

biggest government investment fund in the world, with a value of \$2 trillion, whose profits can provide an alternative to oil revenues. "Aramco's role is key," an oil industry source said, noting that the government chose the oil company's chairman, Khaled Al-Falih, to head a new super ministry of energy, industry and mineral resources. "I think he got this position because of his performance," the source said.

From 2009, Falih was Aramco's president and chief executive officer. Last May he joined the cabinet as health minister while at the same time holding the Aramco chairmanship. Falih replaced Ali Al-Naimi who headed the now-defunct ministry of petroleum and mineral resources for about two decades.

A European diplomat said the new broader ministry reflects the government's desire to develop other sources of energy besides petroleum. The desert nation has potential for solar and wind power. It also wants to boost industry - from petrochemicals to defense - while mining is expected to take on a greater role in the economy.

'Hard to Turn Ship Around'

Falih last month became chairman of Ma'aden, the Saudi Arabian Mining Company, which is partially listed on the kingdom's stock market. "I think that people are expecting a lot from him," the diplomat said. Among other changes, the ministry of water and electricity was replaced with a ministry of environment, water and agriculture. With essentially no local water resources, the desert kingdom has been trying to obtain access to farmland overseas.

"Definitely there will be more agricultural development abroad," the diplomat said, in keeping with Vision 2030's call for "strategic partnerships with countries blessed with natural resources." In another merger, the ministries of labor and social affairs have been combined. The kingdom, which employs millions of foreign workers, is trying to improve the skills of its own citizens and create more jobs for them.

The ministry of commerce and industry was also renamed the ministry of commerce and investment, as the kingdom seeks to woo foreign funds

while becoming a global force for investment itself. The government also appointed Ahmed Al-Khulaifi as central bank governor. "I think it's very promising the way this vision has been structured," said Salah Saleh Sultan, head of wealth management at Muscat Capital in Riyadh.

But he said that more details are needed on how it will be implemented. The restructuring program seeks a streamlining of government, and greater accountability, but the veteran banker who spoke to AFP said that overcoming bureaucratic intransigence will be the plan's biggest obstacle. "It's hard to turn a ship around," the banker said, expressing optimism that the efforts will nonetheless succeed. The European diplomat cited other challenges including a lack of educational institutions to train Saudis who can replace skilled foreigners by 2030, and an over-reliance by Saudis on government largesse. Prince Mohammed has put forward "a very modern vision" for the country, the diplomat said. "He's very determined to make a change and he doesn't accept people not working," he said. — AFP



BEIRUT: Lebanese former prime minister Saad Hariri, whose Future Movement usually dominates elections in the capital, raises his inked finger as he leaves a polling station after voting in the municipal elections yesterday. — AFP

GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGN TACKLES ENTRENCHED LEBANON PARTIES

LOCAL ELECTIONS HELD AMID TIGHT SECURITY

BEIRUT: Lebanon headed to the polls for the first time in six years yesterday for municipal elections including in Beirut, where a new grassroots campaign is taking on entrenched parties. It is the first election of any kind in Lebanon since the last municipal polls in 2010, in a country that has not had a president for the past two years nor voted for a parliament since 2009. Voters trickled to polling stations in Beirut and in two provinces of the Bekaa region in the first stage of a vote to last until May 29 in five other provinces.

Security was tight in the country as authorities took strict measures to guarantee that the vote passes without trouble. Lebanon was hit by a wave of bombings in recent years that killed scores of people and Syria's civil war has spilled over in the past.

In Beirut, an unlikely alliance of citizens is for the first time challenging traditional politicians like former prime minister Saad Hariri, whose Future Movement usually dominates elections in the capital. Beirut Madinati, or Arabic for "Beirut is my city", emerged after civil society gained momentum in protests last summer over a political crisis that saw trash pile up on streets.

Coming out of a polling station in Beirut, a 43-year-old voter who gave his name only as Elie was enthusiastic. "Even if just one candidate from Beirut Madinati gets in, it'll be a victory for civil society," said the employee of a money transfer company, who in 2010 had vot-

ed for the Hariri-backed list. "We're fed up with this corrupt political class."

'Fed Up' with Corruption

The 24-candidate list of independents includes teachers, fishermen and artists such as famed actress and film director Nadine Labaki. But 40-year-old Mariam said she had voted for the Hariri list because "it represents the people of Beirut". Five hours into the voting, however, the turnout in Beirut remained low with only six percent of voters showing up to cast ballots, the authorities said.

In the Bekaa area, which is dominated by Shiite movement Hezbollah, turnout varied between 11 and 15 percent. Since the end of the Lebanese civil war in 1990, lists in the municipal polls every six years have traditionally been pulled together by a handful of parties often formed along sectarian lines and led by former warlords. Beirut Madinati faces the formidable challenge of breaking through that established political class in a bid to win all 24 seats in the Lebanese capital's municipal council.

Only about 470,000 voters are registered in the capital despite almost four times more people living there. According to the country's electoral law, Lebanese are automatically registered to vote in the birthplace of their ancestors. Lebanon has been without a president since May 2014, when the mandate of Michel Sleiman expired, because the country's

Christians, Sunni and Shiite Muslims and Druze cannot agree on a candidate.

'Uncontested' Hezbollah Lists

The country's political scene is deeply divided, with the government split roughly between a bloc led by Hezbollah - backed by Iran and neighboring Syria - and another headed by Hariri - supported by Saudi Arabia and the United States. These rivals have joined forces against Beirut Madinati for the municipal polls in Beirut, however. Yesterday, posters of the traditional candidates were plastered on the city's walls, while Beirut Madinati supporters took to social media to convince friends and acquaintances registered in Beirut to get out and vote.

Lebanese suffer from poor infrastructure and public services, as well as water and power shortages. Beirut Madinati's program to attract frustrated voters includes plans to improve public transport in the traffic-ridden city, introduce more green spaces, make housing affordable and implement a lasting waste management solution. Hezbollah is expected to win in the Bekaa region - except in the town of Zahle, where a list of candidates from an influential family backed by Hariri is vying against another supported by traditional Christian parties. In Beirut and the Bekaa region, another grassroots movement called Citizens in a State, led by former minister and economist Charbel Nahhas, is taking part in the polls. — Agencies

SPAIN JOURNALISTS HOME AFTER SYRIA KIDNAPPING

MADRID: Three Spanish journalists who had been held hostage in Syria by an Al-Qaeda-linked group returned yesterday to Madrid where they were welcomed by overjoyed family members after nearly a year in captivity. Antonio Pampliega, Jose Manuel Lopez and Angel Sastre were flown on a Spanish defense ministry jet from Turkey to Torrejon air base near Madrid where they were greeted by Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria.

The three men could be seen smiling as they descended from the plane as officials held up umbrellas to shield them from driving rain, in a video released by the government. Pampliega kissed his sister Alejandra on the forehead and gave her a hug after she ran to greet him. "Crying from joy falls short," she said on Twitter on Saturday when the news broke that the three experienced conflict zone reporters had been released and were in good health.

The release was "possible thanks to the collaboration of allies and friends especially in the final phase from Turkey and Qatar", the Spanish government said Saturday, without giving further details. Pampliega's mother Maria del Mar Rodriguez Vega said she planned to cook her son's favorite dish to celebrate his return - spinach with bechamel sauce. "He had the same voice as always, from when he was a child, he repeatedly asked me for forgiveness for what he made me go through," she said in a statement released by the Spanish branch of media rights group Reporters Without Borders, known by its French acronym RSF.

'Collaboration of Allies and Friends'

The three journalists were kidnapped by armed men on July 13 while they travelling together in a small van in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo where they had been reporting on fighting for various Spanish media. They were held by Al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate, the Al-Nusra Front, government sources told AFP. The trio appear to have been treated better than three other Spanish journalists who were released in March 2014 after being held for six months in Syria by the Islamic State group, Al-Nusra's rival which has executed

many of its hostages, the sources added.

When news of the kidnapping broke, a week after the journalists went missing, the families of the hostages asked the media to keep quiet. The case was handled by Spain's National Intelligence Agency which tried to follow the kidnapped journalists' movements in Syria and get signs that they were alive and well, according to government sources. The kidnapers sent media outlets videos showing the Spanish journalists, including one in late April intended as "a way to increase the pressure on Madrid at a particularly sensitive time" in the talks for their release, diplomatic sources said. The Spanish journalists shared part of their time in captivity with Japanese freelance journalist Jumpei Yasuda, who went missing in Syria in the middle of last year, according to Spain's Europa Press news agency, which did not cite any sources. Last month a video emerged of Yasuda, apparently asking for Tokyo's help in securing his release.

Experienced Journalists

Lopez, born in 1971, is a prize-winning photographer who contributed images to AFP from several war zones, including from the Syrian conflict up until 2013 and Iraq in 2014. Pampliega, a freelance war correspondent born in 1982, contributed to AFP's text coverage of the civil war in Syria for a period up to 2013. A passionate reporter who tended to focus on human interest stories, he also contributed to AFP's coverage in Iraq. Sastre, 35, has worked in trouble spots around the world, including Syria, for Spanish television, radio and press.

RSF in 2015 ranked Syria as one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists along with Iraq. It says 139 journalists died in Syria, where various armed factions have been battling President Bashar Al-Assad's regime and each other since 2011. In Aug 2014, Islamic State murdered US journalist James Foley, who was taken hostage in northern Syria in 2012. The following month, the group killed fellow US journalist Steven Sotloff. In 2015, militants from the group beheaded Japanese war correspondent Kenji Goto. — AFP



MADRID: Spanish freelance journalists Angel Sastre (third left), Jose Manuel Lopez (second left) and Antonio Pampliega (right) arrive at Torrejon military airport yesterday. — AFP

BIBI CRITICIZES GENERAL OVER HOLOCAUST SPEECH

JERUSALEM: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday criticized the deputy head of Israel's armed forces for remarks appearing to compare contemporary Israeli society to Nazi Germany. "The comparison drawn in the words of the deputy chief of staff regarding events which characterized Nazi Germany 80 years ago is outrageous," said Netanyahu. "They do injustice to Israeli society and cause a belittling of the Holocaust," the Israeli leader added. "The deputy chief of staff is an outstanding officer, but his remarks on this issue were utterly mistaken and unacceptable to me."

In an address delivered Wednesday on the eve of Israel's Holocaust Remembrance Day, Major General Yair Golan said the commemoration "must bring us to reflect deeply on the nature of man, even when that man is ourselves". "If there is something that frightens me with the memory of the Holocaust, it is identifying horrifying processes that happened in Europe, and specifically in Germany, 70, 80 and 90 years ago, and finding testimo-

ny to them amongst us, today, in 2016," he said. "There is, after all, nothing easier and simpler than hating the foreigner... arousing fears and terrifying," he said.

The chief-of-staff, Lieutenant General Gadi Eisenkot, angered politicians in February with remarks warning young soldiers not to use excessive force in subduing suspected Palestinian assailants. A wave of unrest that erupted in October has so far killed 203 Palestinians and 28 Israelis. Most of the Palestinians killed were carrying out knife, gun or car-ramming attacks, Israeli authorities say.

Rights groups have called on Israel to stop using "lethal force" against attackers, and Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom has accused the Jewish state of carrying out "extrajudicial executions". In March an Israeli soldier was caught on video shooting to death a wounded Palestinian assailant, an incident condemned by a senior United Nations official as "gruesome, immoral and unjust". The soldier, an infantry sergeant, has been charged with manslaughter. — AFP

ISRAELI ISLAMIC CLERIC STARTS PRISON TERM

BEERSHEBA, Israel: Israeli Arab Muslim leader Raed Salah started a nine-month prison sentence yesterday for allegedly fomenting riots at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque. Salah was accom-

panied by about 100 well-wishers, including Israeli Arab lawmakers, as he arrived at the prison in the city of Beersheba in southern Israel's Negev desert, an AFP journalist said. At a farewell

rally earlier in his home town of Umm al-Faham, in the north of the country, he exchanged hugs with supporters, local news agency Q-Press, considered close to the Islamic Movement, reported.

"It is an honor for me to enter prison to defend and protect Al-Aqsa and Jerusalem," it quoted him as saying. "I enter prison by the will of God, not the will of Netanyahu." Salah leads the radical northern wing of the Islamic Movement in Israel, which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered banned last year after accusing it of encouraging violent protest that contributed to the October outbreak of a wave of unrest that has so far killed 203 Palestinians and 28 Israelis. Most of the Palestinians killed were carrying out knife, gun or car-ramming attacks, Israeli authorities say.

Salah has previously spent time in Israeli prisons for offences ranging from incitement to spitting on a policeman to funding Palestinian Islamist militant group Hamas. His latest jail spell comes after the Israeli Supreme Court last month denied him leave to appeal against convictions for incitement to violence and racism. The convictions stem from a 2007 rally against Israeli construction work near the Al-Aqsa compound, in which he urged "all Muslims and Arabs (to) start an intifada (uprising) to support holy Jerusalem and the blessed Al-Aqsa mosque". — AFP



BEERSHEBA: Arab-Israeli Sheikh Raed Salah, the leader of the radical northern wing of the Islamic Movement in Israel, bids farewell to his mother Laqia as he arrives at the Eshel prison in this southern Israeli city to begin a nine-month prison sentence yesterday. — AFP



BARNET, NORTH LONDON: (L-R) Ambassador of Israel Mark Regev, The Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, Holocaust survivor Ben Helfgott and Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis of the United Congregations of the Commonwealth pose for a photograph ahead of the Yom HaShoah Commemoration, the UK Jewish community's Holocaust remembrance ceremony yesterday.—AFP

LONDON'S NEW MUSLIM MAYOR CONDEMNS 'TRUMP-STYLE' ATTACKS

KHAN JOINS HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

LONDON: London's new Muslim mayor Sadiq Khan accused Prime Minister David Cameron on Sunday of using "Donald Trump playbook" tactics to try to divide communities in a bid to prevent his election. The day after being sworn in with a promise to be "mayor for all Londoners", the Labour lawmaker condemned Cameron's Conservatives for trying to link him to Islamic extremists during the election campaign. "They used fear and innuendo to try to turn different ethnic and religious groups against each other—something straight out of the Donald Trump playbook," Khan wrote in The Observer newspaper. "Londoners deserved better and I hope it's something the Conservative party will never try to repeat." Khan won 57 percent of the vote in Thursday's mayoral election, securing 1.3 million votes to see off multimillionaire Tory Zac Goldsmith and making history as the first Muslim mayor of a major Western capital.

The 45-year-old, the son of a Pakistani immigrant bus driver, hailed his victory as a triumph of "unity over division" after weeks of Tory criticism over his past appearances at public events alongside radical Muslims. A number of Conservative politicians criticized the tone of the campaign, but Defense Secretary Michael Fallon said the questions raised had been legitimate.

Khan had admitted representing some "pretty unsavoury characters" during his previous job as a human rights lawyer but said their views were "abhorrent". "Both candidates were asked questions about their backgrounds, their personalities, their judgment, the people they associate with," Fallon told BBC radio. "That's the nature of our democracy and the rough-and-tumble of politics."

Clinton sends congratulations

Khan broke from convention by taking his

oath of office in a multi-faith ceremony at Southwark Cathedral, promising to represent "every single community, and every single part of our city, as mayor for all Londoners".

Hillary Clinton, who as the likely Democratic nominee will face presumptive Republican nominee Trump in the race for the US presidency, led international congratulations. "Son of a Pakistani bus driver, champion of workers' rights and human rights, and now Mayor of London. Congrats, @SadiqKhan. -H" she tweeted.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio said he was looking forward to working with his "fellow affordable-housing advocate" while Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo tweeted that Khan's "humanity (and) progressivism will benefit Londoners".

In Pakistan, Bilawal Bhutto, leader of the opposition Pakistan People's Party and son of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, and rival opposition leader Imran Khan also tweeted their congratulations. Former Conservative minister Sayeeda Warsi, herself a daughter of a Pakistani bus driver, hailed Khan's victory and condemned her party's attacks against him. "Our appalling dog-whistle campaign lost us the election, our reputation and credibility on issues of race and religion," she said.

Cameron's former adviser, Steve Hilton, said Goldsmith had brought back the Conservatives' "nasty party label".

Labour losses elsewhere

Khan broke the eight-year hold of the Conservatives on City Hall and succeeds the charismatic Boris Johnson in a prestigious post that has responsibility for transport, housing, policing and promoting economic development.

His success is a boost for Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn, a veteran socialist who has been battling a row over anti-Semitism and growing crit-

cism from the moderate wing of his party since his election in September. But Corbyn was conspicuously absent from Khan's signing-in ceremony and in his article, the new mayor appeared to criticize the way Labor was being run.

The party "only wins when we face our voters... and engage with all voters", Khan wrote, adding: "It's crucial for the whole country that the Labor party becomes a credible government-in-waiting." Labor fared less well in other elections held Thursday. The party was beaten into third place in Scotland, once a Labor stronghold, as the Conservatives became the official opposition to the Scottish National Party (SNP), which won a third term in office.

Labor maintained control of the Welsh assembly and lost only a handful of local council seats in England. But critics said it should have done better against a government that has lost support over welfare reforms and is deeply divided ahead of the referendum on Britain's membership of the EU on June 23.

Sadiq Khan joins Holocaust memorial

Yesterday Khan made an appearance at a north London ceremony following a racially charged election campaign during which Conservative Party opponents sought to portray him as an apologist for Islamic extremism and to highlight cases of alleged anti-Semitism within the ranks of Khan's Labor Party.

The event inside a rugby stadium brought together thousands from London's Jewish community, including more than 150 Holocaust survivors and a combined choir from five Jewish elementary schools. London's previous Labor mayor, Ken Livingstone, was suspended last month from the party after he claimed that Adolf Hitler supported the Zionist aim of establishing Israel.—Agencies

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN WORKS TO IMPROVE RACIAL CLIMATE

MADISON: University of Wisconsin graduate student Michael Davis says he feels isolated, excluded and afraid as a black student on the predominantly white campus, where he's been called a racial slur multiple times. "It hasn't been a positive experience at all," Davis said. Davis is among an increasing number of students at the flagship.

Madison campus demanding the administration make changes for inclusivity's sake. They also join college students around the US who've expressed growing frustration with discrimination and racism on predominantly white campuses, especially in the wake of protests at the University of Missouri in November and the growing Black Lives Matter movement. In response, UW administrators have agreed to cultural competency training, have added student support hours and are asking students how to improve the climate, but activists say the response is inadequate and intend to get some outside help. "That's going to be our focal point, is organizing people in the city of Madison to help bring outside pressure to hold the university accountable," said Davis, who's pushing for community control of university police.

Universities nationwide have conceded to various demands from protesters, including resignations of administrators at the University of Missouri. But it's still unclear how many of the requested changes will be carried out. At the University of Kansas, plans for a multicultural student government are in doubt after the chancellor recently vetoed a proposed student fee meant for it.

There is usually no accountability for delivery on the promises administrators make, said Shaun Harper, a professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania. "I've seen college presidents and other senior leaders

skillfully sort of get students to calm down," Harper said. "Students are starting to see that some of the assurances made to them are not real." At the University of Wisconsin, a series of racially charged incidents fueled the students' pressure for change: photos of swastikas posted on a dorm room door, stereotypical war cry sounds shouted at a Ho-Chunk tribal elder and graffiti using other Nazi symbols.

For many students of color, though, it's the smaller instances. Betty Nen, a freshman whose father is from Papua New Guinea, said a guy started touching her hair at a party to see what it would feel like. Nima Cheraghi, also a freshman, said a girl called him Aladdin because of his Iranian descent. "I believe that many, especially white, students just don't understand the privileges they're given," said Cheraghi, a spokesman for Associated Students of Madison, the student government. About 76 percent of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's undergraduate population is white, making it the second-whitest campus among the 14 universities in the Big 10 conference. It also has the smallest percentage of black undergraduate students, at just over 2 percent. Sergio Gonzalez, co-president of the Teaching Assistants' Association and a doctoral student in history, said people are realizing they don't have to put up with discrimination just because they're in the minority. "I think that what's happened is students have just gotten fed up," said Gonzalez, whose parents are from Mexico.

UW students have interrupted Board of Regents meetings with lists of demands and have aired grievances and stories of discrimination on social media using #TheRealUW hashtag. Hundreds also protested the in-class arrest of a 21-year-old senior for anti-racist graffiti, such as "White supremacy is a disease," painted around campus.—AP

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MEXICAN VET DEFENDS TORTURE

MEXICO CITY: The Mexican military veteran recalls overseeing interrogations during which his men beat suspects, wrapped their faces in plastic bags to cut off their oxygen and jolted them with electric shocks.

Although the screams still haunt the retired service member long after he left the military, he remains unapologetic about using torture to find drug lords and rescue kidnapping victims. It was the only way to break the code of silence of criminals who would otherwise refuse to speak, the 30-year veteran told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"The information obtained in those interrogations becomes intelligence," said the former official, who asked that his rank, military branch and location be omitted in order to speak freely about the torture sessions he witnessed. The rough interrogations gave criminals "the same dose (of torture) they give" captured government forces, he said. The stark admission comes as President Enrique Pena Nieto's government faces torture scandals against troops and police amid a decade-long drug war.

When he took office in December 2012, the authorities were investigating 287 torture cases at the federal level, according to figures from the attorney general's office obtained by Amnesty International.

In 2014, the figure soared to 2,403 investigations. Last week, a general was sentenced to 52 years in prison for ordering the torture of a man who died and whose body was incinerated by troops. Last month, foreign experts investigating the disappearance of 43 college students said there was evidence the authorities tortured at least 17 suspects. And in mid-April, the defense minister issued a rare apology after a video emerged showing soldiers and police putting a plastic bag over a woman's head to cut off her oxygen as they interrogated her.

Following orders?

The military veteran, who was deployed in some of the country's most dangerous regions near the US border, said he was "following orders" from above to torture suspects.

The army and navy did not respond to requests for comment about his claims. Many service members suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome, he said. "You think I'm going to sleep calmly for four hours while hearing the screams? Screams from torture?" he said.

Although he feels guilty "spiritually speaking," he is sure "all of them were criminals." The torture would begin with a "punch" when a suspect claimed to know nothing, the veteran said. Then a plastic bag would be placed over the head.—AFP

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TALEBAN ATTACKS END LULL IN COMBAT IN AFGHAN PROVINCE OF HELMAND

LASHKAR GAH, AFGHANISTAN: Taliban insurgents attacked police checkpoints on the outskirts of Lashkar Gah, the main city of the southern Afghan province of Helmand early yesterday, ending weeks of relative calm during the annual opium harvest.

Helmand has been one of the main targets of the Taliban, which has forced government security forces to pull back from several districts and concentrate around Lashkar Gah and the main highway that runs through the province.

The attack in the Babaji area of Lashkar Gah, during the early hours of

the morning, set off a three-hour gun battle during which the Taliban said they overran two checkpoints, destroyed an armored personnel carrier and captured a large amount of equipment.

Reports of casualties varied. Helmand police chief Abdul Rahman Sarjang said 14 Taliban fighters were killed and another 22 wounded before the insurgents were driven off, with four police killed and another seven wounded.

The Taliban said 15 police, including a police commander, were killed and several others wounded, while only one Taliban fighter was killed and another

two wounded. After months of heavy fighting in Helmand over much of the winter, a lull in combat had been seen over the past few weeks, according to Afghan and NATO officials.

However there has been continued heavy fighting in other parts of the country including Kunduz in the far north, Uruzgan, which neighbors Helmand and the central province of Ghazni. Brigadier General Charles Cleveland, the main spokesman for NATO's Resolute Support mission in Kabul, told reporters last week that many fighters had been working in the

Helmand opium fields, which provide one of the Taliban's main sources of income. However he said that the end of the annual spring harvest in Helmand, which accounts for the biggest share of Afghanistan's opium production, would probably lead to an increase in fighting, possibly as early as this week.

The insurgents, fighting to drive out the Western-backed government in Kabul, now control much of the province and have long operated in Babaji, just to the north of the centre of Lashkar Gah. The decision to pull security forces back from districts in the north

and centre of Helmand was announced in February as a tactical maneuver to concentrate strength before launching attacks on the Taliban. However so far there has been little sign of the long-promised offensive.

"We are well equipped and well prepared but we are waiting for an order from the defense and interior ministries to attack the Taliban," Sarjang said. Afghan special forces have launched some targeted operations and, in one attack last week, freed around 60 prisoners from a Taliban jail in Naw Zad district in the centre of the province. — Reuters



KARACHI, PAKISTAN: Mourners carry the coffin of slain activist Khurram Zaki for a funeral yesterday. — AP

PROMINENT PAKISTANI ANTI-MILITANT ACTIVIST SHOT DEAD IN KARACHI

KARACHI, PAKISTAN: Gunmen shot dead a prominent Pakistani rights activist, known for his outspoken stance against the Taliban and other radical Islamist groups, in the southern port city of Karachi late on Saturday night, police said.

The police said Khurram Zaki was killed at an outdoor cafe in central Karachi, while a companion was wounded. A faction of the Pakistani Taliban, the Hakeemullah group, claimed responsibility for the attack in a phone call to Reuters, saying Zaki had been targeted for his stance against radical cleric Abdul Aziz.

The police could not verify the Hakeemullah faction's claim, and said the group has previously taken responsibility for attacks it did not carry out in Karachi, a teeming metropolis of 20 million people that is known for its complex mix of ethnic, sectarian and political violence. "Zaki was sitting at a cafe where he was target-

ed by four armed men arriving on two motorcycles," Muqadas Haider, a senior police official said yesterday.

Zaki was known for his outspoken stance against the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a Sunni Muslim sectarian militant group, the Pakistani Taliban, and radical cleric Abdul Aziz.

In December 2015, Zaki led street protests against Aziz, demanding the cleric be arrested and charged with hate speech for allegedly justifying attacks, such as the Peshawar school massacre where 134 schoolchildren were killed in 2014.

In 2007, Aziz and his followers were engaged in an armed standoff with government forces at his mosque in the capital Islamabad, culminating in an eight-day military operation that saw Pakistani commandos raid the mosque.

Aziz has since been exonerated of all criminal charges by Pakistani courts, but still calls for

the overthrow of the government and for a strict version of Islamic sharia law to be imposed. Zaki had confided to friends that he was on several militant "hitlists", Jibril Nasir, a fellow activist who was also involved in protests against Aziz, told Reuters yesterday. Nasir said that Zaki did not specify which groups specifically had threatened him. According to a statement released after Zaki's death by a website he helped run, the activist had been "a target of a systematic hate campaign" by an Islamist political leader and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.

Targeted killings are common in Karachi, although violence has declined significantly since the launch of a paramilitary operation in the city almost three years ago. Rights activists are increasingly among those targeted in Karachi. In April last year, prominent activist Sabeen Mahmud was shot and killed while travelling in her car. — Reuters

20 KILLED, MOSTLY CHILDREN, BY RWANDA LANDSLIDES

KIGALI: At least 20 people, many of them children, were killed overnight by devastating landslides in northern Rwanda triggered by torrential rainstorms, the disaster management ministry said yesterday. "Up until now we have counted at least 20 dead in landslides that buried homes in the district of Gakenke," the ministry's spokesman Frederic Ntawukuriryayo told AFP. "Most of the victims were children," Ntawukuriryayo added, without specifying how many were minors.

The landslides occurred at the peak of Rwanda's rainy season, affecting homes on hillsides and in valleys. "It's a huge catastrophe," the spokesman said, adding that res-

cuers had managed to pull some survivors out of the disaster area.

The hilly, densely populated central African nation is frequently hit by landslides and the government has been moving people out of the most at-risk areas in a bid to limit the casualties. But "this year, the incidents and number of victims is rising," said Ntawukuriryayo, blaming the El Nino weather phenomenon.

At least 67 people have been killed in such incidents across Rwanda from January to April this year, 12 of them on a single night in the suburbs of the capital Kigali, where 1,500 homes were damaged during rainstorms. — AFP

FRENCH PRESIDENT HOLLANDE LEADS WWII COMMEMORATIONS IN PARIS

PARIS: French President Francois Hollande yesterday led low-key commemorations in Paris marking the end of World War II in Europe. Under a basking sun, Hollande began the proceedings by laying a wreath at the statue of Charles de Gaulle, the former president and leader of the French WWII government-in-exile.

In his last Victory in Europe Day ceremony before next year's presidential election, Hollande observed a minute of silence before a rendition of the French national anthem. He then shook hands and chatted with General De Gaulle's grandson, Yves. A cortege followed Hollande up to the Arc de

Triomphe war memorial at the Place de l'Etoile. The French president laid another wreath at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where another moment of silence was held. The Arc de Triomphe has a special significance for WWII since Adolf Hitler marched his Nazi troops through the iconic monument when Germany took over France in 1940. It was also the site where Allied troops celebrated victory over Germany 71 years ago.

Victory in Europe Day is celebrated on May 8 to mark the date in 1945 that WWII ended in Europe following Nazi Germany's surrender of its armed forces. — AP



PARIS: French President Francois Hollande, left, and French Prime Minister Manuel Valls walk during commemorations at the Arc de Triomphe marking the 71st anniversary of the end of World War II yesterday. — AP



KABUL: One of the six nooses prepared for men sentenced to death at a jail. Afghanistan has hanged six men convicted of terrorism, signaling a tougher approach toward the Taliban. — AP

AFGHANISTAN EXECUTES 6 MILITANTS, SIGNALING TOUGHER POLICY

KABUL: Afghanistan yesterday hanged six men convicted of terrorism, signaling a tougher approach toward the Taliban. President Ashraf Ghani's office said he "approved executions of six terrorists who perpetrated grave crimes against civilians and security personnel."

The executions were the first approved by Ghani since he took office in 2014 promising to end the war. His efforts to revive peace talks with the Taliban have failed, and the fighting has escalated.

A suicide attack in Kabul last month killed 64 people. The Taliban claimed the attack, which was one of the deadliest since the US-led invasion in 2001 drove the extremist group from power. Soon after, Ghani pledged in a speech to parliament to "deal severely with those who shed the blood of our innocent people and soldiers," and "show no mercy when punishing them."

Deputy presidential spokesman Dawa Khan Menapal said the executed men had been involved in high-profile attacks, including the 2011 killing of Burhanuddin Rabbani, a former president and the head of the High Peace Council, and an attack on a Kabul supermarket that left eight people dead that year. All had been charged and tried according to the law, he added. The executions would "change the behavior of other terrorists," said independent analyst Maulana Farid, "because now they know that if they are caught they will face the same fate."

The Taliban said earlier this year they would not participate in face-to-face dialogue with the Kabul government, effectively scuttling hopes for reviving a peace process begun last year. Afghan and US officials expect a fierce fight throughout the summer, as the Taliban appear to be on the offensive. — AP

MEXICAN DRUG LORD 'EL CHAPO' TRANSFERRED TO JAIL NEAR BORDER

MEXICO CITY: The Mexican authorities transferred the notorious drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman to a prison in Ciudad Juarez on the US border Saturday morning in a surprise move, officials said.

Despite speculation, Guzman's transfer had "absolutely nothing" to do with his possible extradition or deportation to the United States—where he faces extradition requests by courts in California and Texas for homicide and drug trafficking—Eduardo Sanchez, spokesman for the president's office, told AFP.

The authorities said they moved Guzman to prevent any escape attempt during construction to strengthen his maximum-security prison in Altiplano, 90 kilometers (55 miles) from the capital Mexico City. Considered one of the world's most powerful drug bosses, Guzman has staged two dramatic escapes from maximum-security prisons, including from Altiplano. He arrived at the airport in Ciudad Juarez at dawn, heavily guarded by some 150 federal police officers who had arrived earlier in three planes.

Mexico did not warn the US authorities before Guzman's transfer, a US government official told AFP. The move "surprised everyone," he said, adding that the transfer had nothing to do with the extradition process. Guzman's lawyer Jose Refugio Rodriguez said the move is "illegal" because his defense team has launched "processes to stop him being transferred from one place to another."

Secure Jail

A helicopter transferred Guzman from the airport to a prison in the south of Ciudad Juarez, across the border from El Paso, Texas. Although not classified as a maximum-security prison, it has a section for highly dangerous prisoners that is "one of the safest," a National Security Commission source said.

Military soldiers guard the prison, and the road leading to the facility is under especially heavy protection, Mexican media reported. The former leader of the Sinaloa drug cartel—one of

Mexico's most powerful—Guzman staged a spectacular jailbreak in July 2015, when he escaped through a hole in his jail cell's shower that led to a 1.5-kilometer (one-mile) tunnel leading outside.

He was captured in January after months on the run in a colorful episode involving a Mexican soap opera actress and the US film star Sean Penn, who met with the drug boss in hiding. In 2001, Guzman is believed to have hidden in a laundry basket when he escaped from another maximum security prison in Puente Grande in western Jalisco state, where he was imprisoned since 1993.

The authorities began the process of deporting him to the United States shortly after his capture in January. President Enrique Pena Nieto has said the extradition would take place "as soon as possible." Guzman fought the process until March, when he asked his lawyers to stop their efforts because conditions at his prison were intolerable.

He is willing to plead guilty to charges in the United States in return for a lighter sentence and confinement at a medium-security prison, his lawyer Rodriguez said. Earlier this year, Guzman's lawyers said he was being held incommunicado and that guards were preventing him from sleeping more than two hours at a time, but said more recently that conditions had markedly improved.

The prison authorities in Altiplano had already made improvements at the facility, reinforcing points of access and perimeter security, adding cameras and monitoring command centers and prison conditions. Guzman is accused of crimes including smuggling tons of drugs into the United States by boat, submarine, airplane and an extensive network of tunnels under the border.

A number of US jurisdictions, including New York, are vying to prosecute him. Mexican officials have said the extradition process may take a year or more. — AFP



CIUDAD JUAREZ, CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO: Federal Police personnel block one of the roads to the penitentiary on Saturday. — AFP

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MALAYSIA'S RULING PARTY SWEEPS STATE POLLS DESPITE SCANDALS AROUND PM NAJIB

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's ruling coalition secured a landslide victory in the Borneo state of Sarawak on Saturday after a campaign led by the prime minister, who is facing a financial scandal involving a state-owned fund.

The Barisan Nasional (BN) alliance expanded its majority to 72 out of the 82-seat state legislative assembly, a result that Prime Minister Najib Razak is likely to use as an endorsement of his tumultuous leadership. But the coalition's win is largely credited to the popu-

larity of Sarawak's Chief Minister Adenan Satem, who took over the reins in 2014.

Sarawakians have rallied behind Adenan, who is seen as a Najib's ally, after the state leader brokered greater autonomy for the resource-rich state and dealt with long standing issues such as recognition of native land rights. "As BN chairman, I thank the voters for their trust," Najib said in a statement after the poll results. His party would not squander the mandate of the people, he said.

Najib's critics have said that the

Sarawak polls are not a measure of the support for Najib or the ruling party as they are fought on local issues. Najib has for months faced calls for him to step down after news broke that \$681 million were deposited into his bank account before the 2013 national election, and over his handling of a multi-billion dollar scandal linked to state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB).

The prime minister has denied any wrongdoing and consolidated power by sacking dissenters within his party, the

United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), and using a controversial sedition law to clamp down on other critics. The strong showing by the BN coalition was also helped by a breakdown in the opposition alliance, the Pakatan Harapan. The ethnic Chinese-dominated Democratic Action Party (DAP) - which had a sizeable haul of 12 seats in the last state polls in 2011 - was left with just seven seats this time around, while the People's Justice Party (PKR), the party of jailed opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim,

retained three seats. Saturday's win, however, comes with its fair share of controversy as federal opposition leaders cried foul over the state government's decision to bar entry to most of them over the two-week campaign period ahead of the polls. Immigration remains a sovereign right of the state. The opposition also accused Najib and his ruling BN of abusing government powers during the election campaign by promising some 3.5 billion ringgit in projects and investments for the state.—Reuters



MANILA: Philippine policemen stand guard outside a school to be used as polling station ahead of the presidential election yesterday.—AFP

SECURITY FORCES ON ALERT AHEAD OF TENSE PHILIPPINE ELECTIONS

DUTERTE HAS A CLEAR LEAD

MANILA: Security forces fanned out across the Philippines yesterday on the eve of national polls, following a vicious and deadly election campaign dominated by presidential favorite Rodrigo Duterte's threats to kill thousands of criminals.

Surveys show Duterte, mayor of the southern

city of Davao, has a clear lead in today's presidential elections as millions of voters embrace his threats to unleash security forces in an unprecedented crime spree, and shut down Congress if lawmakers oppose him.

President Benigno Aquino, who is limited to a single six-year term, has likened Duterte to Nazi

leader Adolf Hitler and warned of a looming dictatorship, with the presidential tensions fuelling an already volatile and violent political culture.

"Their rhetoric is quite vicious, and this is a signal to a lot of supporters to up the ante and be more aggressive," Eric Alvia, head of the watchdog group, National Citizens Movement for Free Elections, told AFP. "This campaign has been divisive and its polarizing a lot of people. They (feel they) can do whatever they want." Duterte has accused Aquino's administration of planning "massive cheating" to ensure that his preferred successor, former interior secretary Mar Roxas who surveys show is trailing in second place, wins. His followers have warned of a "revolution" if Duterte loses, while military-linked figures have threatened a possible coup attempt if he wins. Alvia said that the violence was largely taking place on the local levels, but with the leaders' angry rhetoric fuelling matters. At least 15 people have died in election-related violence this year, according to national police statistics.

In the latest suspected case, a grenade blast killed a nine-year-old girl behind the house of a powerful political warlord in the strife-torn province of Maguindanao late on Saturday, said Chief Inspector Jonathan del Rosario. Her death has not yet been included in the tally although it likely will be, according to del Rosario, spokesman for a police election-monitoring taskforce in Manila. "This looks like it is election-related but we have a process we have to follow," del Rosario told AFP.

Security, vote buying

In the wake of the blast, armored vehicles could be seen patrolling the streets of the town while soldiers in camouflage stood guard on vital chokepoints. Del Rosario said 90 percent of the nation's police force, or about 135,000 officers, were already on election-related duty and had been authorized to carry their assault rifles.

The military has said their forces are also on election duty. Del Rosario said policemen were guarding polling and canvassing places and manning road checkpoints and were even acting as election officials in a few towns that have been identified as "election hotspots," due to the heated rivalry between politicians.

With more than 44,000 people running for 18,000 positions ranging from president to town councilor, the competition has also resulted in a surge of vote-buying. "The strategies have changed. We've seen... a shift from just pure money to other things of value, like pigs, livestock," Commission on Elections spokesman James Jimenez told AFP. "We are receiving stories like people giving away things that are contained in (plastic) dippers, with names of candidates. Sometimes, they give out pails with groceries inside."

Jimenez said politicians had been increasingly forced to resort to buying votes as other tricks, like manipulation of vote tallies, could no longer be applied since elections had largely been automated since 2010. Election watchdogs said the sums paid for a vote could be as low as a hundred pesos (\$2.10) for a post like town councilor with higher amounts for higher positions.

Such small gifts are an effective, if illegal, way for politicians to win support in a nation where roughly one quarter of its 100 million people live below the poverty line. In response, the commission has banned cell phones from polling places to prevent voters from photographing their ballots so they can get paid when they present proof that they voted the right way.—AFP

KIM JONG UN SAYS PYONGYANG WON'T USE NUKES FIRST

PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said during a critical ruling party congress that his country will not use its nuclear weapons first unless its sovereignty is invaded, state media reported yesterday.

Kim also said he is ready to improve ties with "hostile" nations in a diplomatic overture in the face of international pressure over its recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch. He also called for more talks with rival South Korea to reduce misunderstanding and distrust between them and urged the United States to stay away from inter-Korean issues, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

"Our republic is a responsible nuclear state that, as we made clear before, will not use nuclear weapons first unless aggressive hostile forces use nuclear weapons to invade on our sovereignty," Kim said in a speech carried by the KCNA.

He said that North Korea "will sincerely fulfill its duties for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and work to realize the denuclearization of the world." The North is ready to improve and normalize ties with countries hostile to it if they respect its sovereignty and approach it in a friendly manner, Kim said. At the congress, Kim also announced a five-year plan starting this year to develop the North's dismal economy and identified improving the country's power supply and increasing its agricultural and light-manufacturing production as the critical parts of the program, the KCNA said. Analysts have anticipated Kim would use the first Workers' Party congress in decades to propose talks with rivals to exploit what he considers to be increased leverage as a nuclear power.

North Korea carried out its fourth nuclear test in January and followed with a satellite launch in February that was seen by outside governments as a banned test for long-range missile technology, earning worldwide condemnation and tougher UN sanctions.

The North responded to the punitive measures, and also the annual US-South Korean military drills in March and April, by firing a series of missiles and artillery into

the sea. It also claimed advancements in developing nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, and combined them with threats of pre-emptive nuclear strikes on Washington and Seoul.

Analysts said that the North's belligerent stance might have been intended at rallying North Korean people around Kim ahead of the congress and also promote military accomplishments to the domestic audience to make up for the lack of tangible economic achievements to present at the party meeting.

South Korea has taken a hard-line approach to North Korea following its nuclear test and long-range rocket launch, shutting down a jointly-run factory park in a North Korean border town that had been the last remaining symbol of cooperation between the rivals and slapping Pyongyang with its own economic sanctions.

Seoul has also been in talks with Washington on deploying a sophisticated US missile defense system in South Korea. North Korea had spent the past months resisting talks with the South and threatening attacks against it, but Kim spoke with a different tone at the conference. He said "fundamentally improving" inter-Korean relations was an urgent matter for his government and also called for the South to "hold hands" with the North as a "companion" for unification, the KCNA said.

However, Kim stressed that the South must first employ practical measures to improve ties and throw out laws and institutional systems that have hampered them. He also said that the United States should no longer be involved with matters in the Korean Peninsula, and that if enemy forces "ignite the fire of war," the North was ready to mercilessly punish the aggressors and accomplish the "historical feat" of unification. North Korea has long decried the 28,500 US troops stationed in South Korea as a buffer against possible aggression.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry said ahead of the North's ruling party congress in Pyongyang that the priority of any future talks with the North would be its denuclearization.—AP



PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA: In this image made from video by North Korean broadcaster KRT, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un speaks at the party congress on Saturday.—AP

FILIPINOS SET TO VOTE: SLOW REFORM OR PROMISE OF BIG CHANGE?

MANILA: Thirty years after emerging from a brutal dictatorship, Filipinos will face a dilemma when they pick a new leader today: Should they choose a sharp-tongued mayor with an audacious promise to wipe out crime and corruption within months, or back reformists who aren't regarded as a threat to democracy?

It's a make-or-break decision with plenty at stake for the Southeast Asian nation, which has turned around under President Benigno Aquino III with one of the highest growth rates in Asia but remains fragile with its massive poverty, inequality and insurgencies.

One of America's closest allies in Asia, the Philippines is in the dead center of long-seething territorial conflicts with China and four other governments that threaten to boil over as the new president takes office on June 30.

"We were called the sick man of Asia before, but are Asia's rising tiger now," Aquino said last week on a trip to campaign for the candidate he's backing, Mar Roxas, a former Cabinet member who has pledged to continue his "straight path" style of reformist presidency.

"We have begun to walk and surely that would be followed with a run. But we couldn't sprint forward if we step back... if we take a U-turn back to the style of martial law," Aquino said as he criticized presidential front-runner Rodrigo Duterte's threats to close down Congress or establish a revolutionary government should he face impeachment or stonewalling legislators.

In final campaigning Saturday, Aquino warned voters that Duterte could be a dictator in the making and cited the rise of

Hitler as an example of how a despotic leader can gain power and hold on to it without public resistance.

Filipinos have been hypersensitive to potential threats to democracy since they rose in a 1986 "people power" revolt that ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who faced allegations of plundering a crushing-poor country and condoning widespread human rights violations by state forces. In 2001, a similar uprising forced Joseph Estrada from the presidency over alleged large-scale corruption.

Aquino's parents, who are revered democracy champions, played a central role in the anti-Marcos resistance movement. Aquino triumphed in 2010 elections with a landslide victory on a promise to fight corruption and poverty. After introducing new taxes, more accountability and reforms, including in the judiciary, and cracking down on tax evaders, the Philippines posted average GDP rates of 6.2 percent from 2010 to 2015 to become one of the world's fastest-growing economies at a time of global economic slowdown.

The country earned an investment grade from credit rating agencies and economic upswing fostered the rise of a stronger middle class.

Although the government has reported that more than 7 million Filipinos have been lifted from poverty under Aquino, more than a quarter of the country's 100 million people remain poor. Annual debt payments, some of them dating back to the Marcos-era years, and limited funds stymie infrastructure improvement and public services, including law enforcement, fueling frequent complaints.—AP



PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA: North Korean men gather at the Taedonggang Beer shop on Saturday.—AP



Mist covers meadows near Nesutychi village at sunrise, 140 km west of Minsk, Belarus, early yesterday. — AP

TRUMP BLASTS HILLARY AS AN 'ENABLER' OF BILL'S INFIDELITY

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump has launched a bitter broadside against Hillary Clinton depicting her as an "enabler" of Bill Clinton's past infidelities - the latest nasty and deeply personal turn in the US presidential campaign. Trump, who has all but locked up the Republican nomination, made the bizarre allegation while on the stump this weekend in an apparent bid to undercut his Democratic rival's appeal to women voters.

"Hillary hurt many women - the women that he abused," Trump told a rally in Spokane, Washington late Saturday - reiterating past criticism of Clinton over her handling of the former president's affairs. "And just remember this, she was an unbelievably nasty, mean enabler, and what she did to a lot of those women is disgraceful. Some of those women were destroyed not by him, but by the way that Hillary Clinton treated them after everything went down." The likely Republican nominee charged that Bill Clinton had "abused women more than any man that we know of in the history of politics." "Bill Clinton was the worst in history, and I have to listen to her talking about it?" he thundered.

Trump has accused Clinton, the presumptive Democratic candidate in November's presidential election, of using her gender to her political advantage - playing the "woman's card" - and says she would not be seen as a qualified candidate if not for her sex. His remarks recalled one of the most

contentious eras in American politics, when the nation was simultaneously riveted and revolted by the Monica Lewinsky sex scandal. Clinton at first denied, but later acknowledged an affair with the White House intern, a scandal that ultimately led to his impeachment and deepened the partisan divide between Republicans and Democrats.

Trump's latest attack, reprising the sordid scandal, seemed designed to inoculate himself against anticipated charges of misogyny from the Clinton camp. On and off the campaign trail, the tycoon has used crass and abusive language - "bimbo", "dog", "fat pig" and other epithets - to denigrate women he dislikes. The twice-divorced billionaire, who was celebrated for decades as one of New York's most sought-after bachelors, has also admitted to cheating on his first wife with the woman who became his second.

Clinton signaled in an interview broadcast yesterday that attacks against Trump over his stance on women will definitely be part of her campaign battle plan. "When he says, 'women should be punished for having abortions,' what does that mean? And how would he go about that?" the former first lady said on the "Face the Nation" program, referencing comments made by Trump earlier in the primary season.

'Ugly Race'

Over the past few days Trump has engaged in a Twitter

war with US Senator Elizabeth Warren - tipped by some as a possible Democratic running mate - trading a stream of barbs and insults. The former first lady said she would not engage in the mudslinging that helped her Republican rival vanquish his challengers for the nomination. "I'm not going to run an ugly race. I am going to run a race based on issues," Clinton said. "I don't really feel like I'm running against Donald Trump. I feel like I'm running for my vision of what our country can be, and to knock down all the barriers that stand in the way of Americans getting ahead."

But Clinton has labeled Trump a "loose cannon" for his

erratic policy pronouncements, while he nicknamed her "crooked Hillary" in an allusion to the scandal over her use of a private email server as secretary of state. Questioned by CBS over reports the FBI was expected to interview her as part of its probe into her email use, Clinton said she had not been approached. "No one has reached out to me yet," Clinton said, adding: "I made it clear I'm more than ready to talk to anybody, anytime." She went on to press for the real estate mogul to show similar transparency and release his tax returns ahead of the election. "So what's there?" Clinton asked. "He owes it to the American people." — AFP

YEMEN TALKS STRUGGLE AS AIR STRIKES SHAKE...

Continued from Page 1

A source close to the government delegation said the talks had reached a delicate stage after "the rebels backtracked to the starting point". "That has complicated the situation," the source told AFP, requesting anonymity. The rebels and their allies have demanded the formation of a consensus transitional government before forging ahead with other issues that require them to surrender arms and withdraw from territories they occupied in 2014. The rebels have also demanded

the withdrawal of a small US force operating in the south of the country against Al-Qaeda militants.

A civil war in Yemen escalated when an armed push by the Houthis pushed the government into exile on March 26 last year. Seeing the group as a proxy for its Gulf rival Iran, Saudi Arabia mustered an alliance of mostly Gulf Arab countries to push the group back. But the coalition still appears far from forcing the Houthis out of Sanaa. If confirmed, the air attack would be the deadliest single incident since the cease-fire began. — Agencies

8 POLICEMEN KILLED IN CAIRO BY IS GUNMEN

Continued from Page 1

president Mohamed Morsi in 2013. Militants had carried out a previous attack in Helwan, killing a policeman standing guard outside a museum in June 2015. IS jihadists, who are based in the sparsely populated Sinai Peninsula bordering Israel and the Palestinian Gaza Strip, have repeatedly tried to make inroads into the capital, where police have had more success in quelling them than in Sinai.

They have claimed several attacks in Cairo, including the bombing of the Italian consulate in July 2015. More recently militants have conducted hit-and-run attacks on policemen in Cairo and small scale bombings. They often claim their attacks are in retaliation for a bloody police crackdown on Islamist supporters of Morsi, which has killed hundreds of protesters and imprisoned thousands. They have also targeted foreigners.

In October, the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for bombing a Russian airliner carrying holidaymakers from a south Sinai resort, killing all 224 people on board. The group said it smuggled explosives concealed in a soda can on to the plane at Sharm El-Sheikh, a popular Red Sea resort in south Sinai. That attack prompted Russia to suspend all

flights to Egypt, and has lost the country hundreds of millions of dollars in tourism revenues.

The bombing came two months after IS militants abducted a Croatian oil worker near Cairo and beheaded him. Police later tracked down the top IS operative in Cairo, who was linked to the Croat's murder, and killed him in a shootout. But efforts to crush the insurgency in Sinai have floundered despite a massive army campaign. In March, IS gunmen killed 15 policemen at a checkpoint near El-Arish, the provincial capital of North Sinai.

The extremist group declared a "caliphate" nearly two years ago in areas under its control in Iraq and Syria. The Sinai branch pledged allegiance to IS in Nov 2014, and since then its attacks have grown more sophisticated. The military says it has killed more than 1,000 militants, occasionally publishing pictures of their bodies. The statements are difficult to verify, with reporters having little access to the north of the peninsula. Hundreds of multinational forces soldiers are based in Sinai to monitor a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, and Washington has indicated it would cut its troops over the jihadist threat. The Pentagon said last month it remained "fully committed" to the mission but wants to use drones to assume some of the riskier work. — AFP

73 KILLED IN AFGHAN ROAD CRASH INFERNO

Continued from Page 1

spokesman Ismail Kawoosi told AFP, warning that the toll was expected to rise still further. "Most of them are completely burned." Kawoosi gave a sharply higher toll than other officials. Ghazni's Governor Mohammad Aman Hamimi earlier reported seven fatalities but his own spokesman gave a death toll of 50.

Bloodied, dazed and badly burned, many of the survivors streamed into Ghazni's main provincial hospital, while many others were rushed in ambulances to health facilities in southern Kandahar city. The Kabul-Kandahar highway passes through militancy prone areas and many bus drivers are known to drive recklessly at top speeds so as not to get caught in insurgent activity. "Our driver was at fault - he was driving too rashly," said Esmatullah, one of the few lucky passengers who survived yesterday's crash with minor injuries. "Most bus drivers on the highways are known to smoke hashish, opium and other drugs. They are completely out of control."

Afghanistan has some of the world's most dangerous roads, often in dilapidated condition and traffic rules are seldom enforced. Many in the country rely on old and rickety passenger vehicles, meaning that high casualty road traffic accidents are common. At least 18 people were killed in May last year when a minivan overturned in the western province of Badghis. And in April 2013 a bus hit a wrecked fuel tanker in the southern province of Kandahar, killing 45 people.

The World Bank in November signed off a \$250 million grant to upgrade roads crossing Afghanistan's Hindu Kush mountains, crucial trade links that are often closed in winter by snow. Insecurity is growing around Afghanistan as the Taliban press on with their 15-year insurgency against the Western-backed Kabul government. The Islamists, who have been waging an insurgency since being toppled from power in 2001, announced the start of their spring offensive on April 12, dubbed "Operation Omari" in honour of founding leader Mullah Omar, vowing large-scale attacks across Afghanistan. — AFP



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Washington Watch

SOFTWARE SECURITY
SUFFERS AS UPSTARTS
LOSE ACCESS TO DATA

By Joseph Menn

A number of young technology security companies are losing access to the largest collection of industry analysis of computer viruses, a setback industry experts say will increase exposure to hackers. The policy change at the information-sharing pioneer VirusTotal takes aim mainly at a new generation of security companies, some with valuations of \$1 billion or more, that haven't been contributing their analysis. Older companies, some with market valuations much smaller than the upstart rivals, had pressed for the shift.

Alphabet Inc's Google runs the VirusTotal database so security professionals can share new examples of suspected malicious software and opinions on the danger they pose. On Wednesday, the 12-year-old service quietly said it would cut off unlimited ratings access to companies that do not share their own evaluations of submitted samples. Analysts and executives at several companies said the changes will leave some services more likely to mistakenly classify legitimate software as malicious and less able to protect their customers from real threats, at least in the short term.

"If they no longer have access to VirusTotal, their detection scores will drop," said Andreas Marx, chief executive of security software evaluation firm AV-TEST. With detection rates down, hackers will find easier entry. Some security companies rely completely on the database, essentially freeload, said executives on both sides of the divide, and did not want to share their analysis for fear of being found out.

VirusTotal did not name any companies to be cut off. But several people familiar with the matter told Reuters the move would affect high-profile California firms Cylance Inc, Palo Alto Networks Inc and CrowdStrike Inc, as well as some smaller companies. Cylance said it gave up access to the ratings two weeks ago after deciding not to share its technology. Chief Research Officer Jon Miller said Cylance had not suffered but that others had. "Many next-generation products are simply not functioning right now," he said, declining to say which. He said the loss of VirusTotal could help spur the companies to invest in their own innovation to catch viruses.

Asked whether it had been kicked off the service, Palo Alto said only that it had not been relying on the VirusTotal peer determinations and expected "no impact" on customers. CrowdStrike said it was negotiating with VirusTotal and had not been cut off by Saturday. "We support the mission of VirusTotal and have reached out to them to explore additional ways we can collaborate for the benefit of the entire security community," the company wrote in an emailed statement, declining to answer further questions.

'A Shortcut'

VirusTotal gets about 400,000 submissions of potentially dangerous files daily, mostly from old-guard antivirus companies like Symantec Corp, Intel Corp and Trend Micro Inc which sit on the most machines. "It was never meant to enable new companies to use it as a shortcut by silently relying on, and benefiting from, the service without a corresponding investment," said Trend Micro Chief Technology Officer Raimund Genes, one of many old-line tech executives who pushed for the shift.

Marx of AV-TEST said that some newer companies secretly relied on data supplied by older companies while marketing themselves as a cut above the older technology. "They are using traditional methods, too," he said. Some of the newer companies said they do not share their evaluations for competitive reasons. Blanket copying of virus indicators has been an historic grievance at VirusTotal, with at least one victim resorting to sabotage in retaliation, Reuters reported last year. Others say the way that they detect bad programs is too intensive to integrate with VirusTotal's current system.

"We were more than willing to work with them, but they didn't have a way for us," said Tomer Weingarten, chief executive of SentinelOne, a firm that acknowledges it was cut off from the feed against its will. "This is a step back." Weingarten said SentinelOne had added a new data feed to replace VirusTotal and predicted that VirusTotal will become less relevant as companies are excluded. Through a Google spokeswoman, VirusTotal said it was trying to act in the best interest of the security community and it hoped to help companies integrate their scanners into the VirusTotal platform. — Reuters

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Washington Watch

OUR ORIGINAL SINS

By Dr James J Zogby

In some of my writings, I have observed the way the US has, for centuries, absorbed countless waves of immigrants from many continents transforming them, in short order, into Americans - comparing this to the European situation which does not, as a rule, provide the same opportunities for advancement and inclusion. I have also noted that not only do new US citizens take on a new identity, but in the process of absorbing the many diverse groups who have come to our shores, the American identity, itself, has also changed. Again, this describes a process that is not generally applicable in Europe.

This absorptive and transformative capacity of new immigrants is one of America's defining traits. It is the process that has provided the opportunity for diverse incoming groups to beat back the hateful scorn and hurtful exclusion with which they have often been greeted and, within a generation, find their place in the economic, political, and social mainstream.

It is precisely this unique characteristic that has made the experience of Arab and Muslim immigrants to America different than that which has been encountered by their compatriots who have emi-

grated to Europe. During the last century well over one million Arabs, Christian and Muslim, and another three-quarters of a million non-Arab Muslims have settled as immigrants in the US.

Unlike their counterparts in Europe, they are not locked in ghettos, becoming an underclass. Lebanese peddlers or autoworkers, Syrian steelworkers, Yemeni farmworkers and longshoremen, Palestinian and Egyptian small merchants, and Moroccan waiters - have within a generation experienced the extraordinary social and economic upward mobility that is possible in America. They do not remain in the lower economic strata, because they find that opportunities abound in their newly adopted country.

Dark Underside

This much is true. But there is an important caveat that must also be noted - that establishes an American parallel with Europe. There is a dark underside to the American story. New immigrants do not find themselves locked into a "ghettoized underclass" precisely because one already exists in America - comprised of African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans. As a result, when new immigrants arrive they are able to jump in line ahead of these historically oppressed groups and move up the economic and

social ladder. This is not the fault of the immigrants. It is the way the table has been set for them. It is America's national shame and a reality we must not ignore.

America was born in original sin - actually three different sins: The cruel genocide and ethnic cleansing of indigenous peoples, the institution of slavery imposed on Africans, and the occupation and subjugation of Spanish-speaking lands. I have grown weary of seeing articles comparing the experiences of recent immigrant Muslims in the US with those in the UK or France. They are not the same, at all. The third generation angry, alienated, unemployed Arabs in the ghettos surrounding Paris do not find their counterparts in the Arab American communities in the US.

A closer parallel can be found in the struggling African American or Latino ghettos in many US cities. Like the North African or South Asian victims of colonial oppression who came to France or the UK seeking opportunity and became embittered as they found, instead, unemployment and systemic discrimination, African Americans who left the American South or Latinos who fled poverty in Central America, have also found their dreams denied. Like the immigrant underclass in Europe, African Americans and Latinos are over-represented among

our poor, our unemployed, and our prison populations. And they present American society with a nagging reminder of the sordid chapters of our past we prefer to ignore or forget.

Injustices

Just as the British and French have failed to recognize and atone for the consequences of their shameful behaviors in South Asia and the Arab World, Americans have never come to grips with the devastating impact and lasting trauma visited upon this country's indigenous peoples, slaves, and the victims of our imperial conquest of lands to our south.

But, in both instances, these victims of our histories live among us still waiting to be full and recognized participants in our societies. While we sometimes seek to absolve ourselves by pointing to the successes of those who made breakthroughs knocking down barriers to advancement - until we acknowledge our past injustices, include its lessons and the experiences of our victims in our self-definition, and radically transform our societies to create more fully inclusive societies, we will continue to be plagued by the consequences of our original sins.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

IS HILLARY A SURE THING FOR THE WHITE HOUSE?

By Andrew Beatty

In a US election that has ripped up, chewed through and spat out conventional wisdom, Hillary Clinton is still prohibitive favorite to beat Donald Trump in November. Few analysts or journalists predicted that Trump - a blustering mogul with less political experience than Katy Perry - would last long in a tough Republican race, much less win it. But here is why Clinton is still odds-on favorite to become the first female president, along with a few reasons why a dose of caution might be warranted.

The Numbers

At the starting gate, a CNN/ORC poll has Clinton leading Trump 54-41. For months, head-to-head surveys have found a similar result. That is a monumental lead in a country almost evenly split between Democrats and Republicans. But it is also borderline irrelevant. The Nov 8 vote is six months away, light years in US electoral politics. And US elections are won by carrying individual states, not the popular vote, as Al Gore found to his cost in 2000. Still, the polls contain harbingers of doom for Trump, particularly in a sliver of data that politicians refer to as "unfavorables".

About 65 percent of voters have a negative impression of Trump, according to an average of polls by Real Clear Politics. Given he has been in the public eye for years, he is widely known and minds could be difficult to shift. Yet "The Donald" has shown he does not play by conventional election rules. He has already branded his rival "Crooked Hillary" and is certain to stir up memories of Bill Clinton's marital infidelity.

Clinton who is herself seen negatively by 55 percent of voters - a large number, but not quite as catastrophic as Trump's -

has the upper hand, but will have to find the right tone to parry attacks. Trump's rivals learned the hard way that getting in the mud with him rarely pays off, but taking the high road might look detached or meek.

The Electorate

The long trend of America becoming less white means Trump, with his pseudo-nativist message, is also waging a campaign against demographics. In the 2012 election, 93 percent of African-Americans, 71 percent of Hispanics and 73 percent of Asians voted for Barack Obama. That was enough for the Democrat to win the election, even though he only got 39 percent of white voters, the biggest voting group. Trump - thanks to talk of building a border wall, Mexican "rapists" and deporting the country's estimated 11 million illegal immigrants - is doing even worse among Hispanic voters than the last Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney. His approval ratings among Hispanic voters currently stand at 12 percent.

That's bad news for Trump's chances in Colorado, Florida, Nevada, New Mexico and maybe even Arizona. To add to Trump's misery, his standing among women voters is derisory. Almost half of Republican women say they can't see themselves voting for him. "Trump has alienated growing demographic groups such as Hispanics, and he is at toxic levels with women and young people," said Larry Sabato, who heads the University of Virginia Center for Politics.

If he can't reach working and college educated women, then even blue collar states like Pennsylvania may remain out of reach. Trump hopes to change the calculus by getting more white voters to turn out. "He needs to excite the middle and working class white who doesn't usually vote," said Henry Olsen, a senior fellow at

the Ethics and Public Policy Center. Sabato was skeptical. "There aren't millions of blue collar whites who don't usually vote Republican just waiting to show up for Trump. Where's the evidence for this breathtaking proposition?"

The Map

The most important number in US politics is 270, the number of electoral college votes - out of a total of 538 - needed to win the presidency. Of the 51 state and regional contests, most are winner-take-all. But not all are equal. California is worth 55 votes, while Vermont is worth three. In 2008 and 2012, Obama broke 300. The last Republican president George W Bush squeaked by with 271 and 286. Trump may target states in the Rust Belt and New England, and battlegrounds like Florida and Ohio, but he faces the prospect of having to flip several states to the Republican column just to be competitive.

The Campaigns

The businessman will have to try to do all this without the unified support of the Republican party. There have been mass refusals to back the controversial candidate. Many donors and potential campaign staff promise to "sit this one out". To give one example of the impact, "Hacking the Electorate" author Eitan Hersh said Trump will find it more difficult to get targeted messages to voters.

A key arrow in the quiver of modern US electoral campaigns is microtargeting - cross-referencing voter rolls with records on everything from magazine subscriptions to eBay searches to build a profile of individual voters and deliver a specific message. Trump has instead focused on macromessaging, by dominating the TV news which also gives him free advertising. "Trump hasn't shown

much of an appetite to engage in micro-targeting. He also is not a team player," said Hersh. "Part of the Democrats' advantage is that the state parties, interest groups, labor unions and candidates up and down the ballot see themselves as largely on the same team."

The Zeitgeist

One area where Trump may have an advantage is capturing the spirit of the age. Many Americans still feel the effects of the Great Recession. Middle class incomes have been stagnant, while the rich have become significantly richer. Democrats are not oblivious to that fact, indeed Bernie Sanders has built most of his campaign around addressing income inequality. But Trump may better articulate the fear and anger of those who have faltered.

After years of modest growth, a mediocre jobs report in April was a reminder that another slowdown could come even before the impact of the last one is no longer felt. That could easily eat into Obama's solid 51 percent approval rating, a metric that currently indicates the electorate is not desperate for a changing of the guard. Along with the economy, polls show terrorism is a top concern for voters.

Here too, Trump's message of bombing the Islamic State group to oblivion is more easily digested than Clinton's more nuanced push for tackling radicalism through military, economic, diplomatic and cultural means. Where rivals see him as naive, Trump's status as a political neophyte might serve him well. It's harder for Clinton, a former first lady, US senator and secretary of state to argue that she will bring change to Washington. But her wealth of experience might also mean she knows a bit more about winning elections. — AFP

POWELL STRUGGLES TO FIND FORM IN WINNING 200M

INGSTON: Former 100 meter world record holder Asafa Powell flashed across the finish line in 20.45 seconds to win the men's 200m race at the Jamaica International Invitational on Saturday. Powell held off a strong field at Kingston's National Stadium and later described the 200m victory as a learning experience. "Honestly I don't remember how to even run the 200m event so this is a work in process," he said. The 33-year-old Powell said he felt good for the first 150m then got tired over the last 50m. "But I worked hard all week," he added. Powell finished ahead of American Bejee Lee and Jamaican Rasheed Dwyer, who both ran 20.52 seconds. World Championships medalist Shaunae Miller of the Bahamas retained her 200m title with a magnificent run, breaking away from the women's field in the last 60m to win by a massive margin in a wind-aided 22.14 seconds. Anneisha McLaughlin-Whilby was second in 22.79 seconds and Shalonda Solomon took third in 22.80 seconds. Kemar Bailey-Cole's winning time of 10.01 seconds in the men's 100m was also a highlight of the night. Bailey-Cole, who is still recovering from a hamstring injury that kept him out of the World Championships in Beijing last year, surprised himself with his fast time, the joint sixth fastest in the world so far.—AFP



UNBEATEN NYQUIST WINS 142ND KENTUCKY DERBY

WASHINGTON: Nyquist amply lived up to his favorite's billing, winning the 142nd Kentucky Derby on Saturday to become the eighth unbeaten horse to capture the first jewel of US racing's Triple Crown. Trained by Doug O'Neill and ridden by Mario Gutierrez, Nyquist went off a 2-1 favorite at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky, and posted his eighth victory in as many starts. The last undefeated Kentucky Derby winner was Seattle Slew in 1977. In a crowded field of 20, Nyquist broke well out of the 13th gate and settled in as Danzing Candy took the lead. Gun Runner moved to the front at the far turn, but Nyquist surged past as they entered the finishing straight and beat the fast-finishing Exaggerator by 1 1/4-lengths. Gun Runner was third, another 3 1/4 lengths back. "He's just such a special horse," O'Neill said of Nyquist. "You see it in his eye on a daily basis. He's just first class." Despite Nyquist's unbeaten record, which included a win in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile last year, the colt's connections heard plenty of doubters, especially those who questioned whether he'd handle the 1 1/4-mile Derby distance.—AFP

CHAMPS LEAGUE FAILURE LEAVES HANDANOVIC IN DOUBT FOR INTER

MILAN: A failed quest to secure Champions League football next season has left Inter Milan goalkeeper Samir Handanovic considering his future at the Serie A giants despite signing a new deal only months ago. A patchy 2-1 home win over a resilient Empoli on Saturday meant Roberto Mancini's men secured fourth spot in Italy's top flight with one game remaining. The Nerazzurri are guaranteed playing in next season's Europa League, but this leaves Slovenia international Handanovic waiting even longer to fulfil his dream of playing and winning Europe's premier club competition. "I have a contract, but in football you never know," Handanovic said at the San Siro. "Not participating in the Champions League is a big blow for me, as it is every year. It is, and will always be my main objective." Handanovic, who will miss next week's final league outing away to Sassuolo through suspension, signed a contract extension with Inter earlier this season that should see him remain at the club until June 2019. But a host of Europe's top clubs could now be watching the situation closely. Handanovic is one of the best shot-stoppers in Italy's notoriously difficult top flight and has conceded only 35 goals—marginally less than a goal a game—so far.—AFP



CHICAGO: Kris Bryant #17 of the Chicago Cubs watches his home run against the Washington Nationals during the fourth inning on May 7, 2016 at Wrigley Field.—AFP

CUBS BEAT NATIONALS 8-5 FOR 6TH STRAIGHT VICTORY

CHICAGO: Addison Russell hit a tiebreaking two-run double in the seventh inning to help the Chicago Cubs beat the Washington Nationals 8-5 on Saturday for their sixth straight victory. Kris Bryant homered and Ben Zobrist had an RBI for the sixth game in a row as the Cubs took the matchup of division leaders. Chicago has won 10 of 11 to improve baseball's best record to 23-6.

Russell finished with three RBIs. It was 5-all when the Cubs loaded the bases with two outs, and Russell hit a fly ball to right that landed barely fair as Bryce Harper ran toward the brick wall in pursuit. A review confirmed the ball was fair. Adam Warren (3-0) pitched a scoreless inning for the win. Hector Rondon earned his sixth save. Washington's Sammy Solis (0-1) got two outs and was charged with two runs and two hits.

YANKEES 8, RED SOX 2

Nathan Eovaldi pitched eight effective innings and Didi Gregorius hit a three-run double as the Yankees handed David Price his first loss with the Red Sox. Carlos Beltran added a two-run double for the last-place Yankees, who have won three of four following a six-game slide. Swept in three games by their longtime rivals at Fenway Park last weekend, the Yankees will try to return the favor Sunday night in the Bronx. Gregorius broke a 1-all tie in the fourth when he reached down and hooked an 0-2 pitch from Price (4-1) into the right-field corner. Eovaldi (2-2) struck out six and walked none while matching the longest start of his career.

DODGERS 6, BLUE JAYS 2

Clayton Kershaw struck out 10 while Joc Pederson and Justin Turner homered as the Dodgers stopped the Blue Jays' season-high winning streak at four. Coming off a three-hit shutout against the Padres and facing the Blue Jays for the first time, Kershaw (4-1) allowed two runs and eight hits in seven innings. The three-time NL Cy Young Award winner has fanned at least 10 in four straight outings. Pedro Baez worked the eighth and Kenley Jansen finished as the Dodgers won for the third time in 11 games. Knuckleballer RA Dickey (1-4) lost his fourth straight decision, allowing four runs and six hits in seven innings.

BREWERS 13, REDS 7

Aaron Hill hit a grand slam in Milwaukee's

seven-run 10th inning for his third homer of the game as the Brewers snapped a three-game losing streak with a win over the Reds. Hill belted a two-run shot in the sixth and a tying solo shot in the eighth, helping Milwaukee erase a 6-2 deficit. The second baseman set career highs and matched franchise records with the three homers and seven RBIs. Pinch hitter Jonathan Villar added a two-

runs as the Rangers slugged their way to this road win. Rougned Odor, Nomar Mazara and Mitch Moreland also went deep for the Rangers, who scored five runs in the sixth inning and overcame an injury-shortened start by AJ Griffin. The right-hander left in the third with stiffness in his throwing shoulder. Moreland's tiebreaking two-run shot off Kyle Ryan (0-1) made it 7-5 in the sixth.

in seven games. Brandon Crawford had two hits and drove in a run. The teams combined for 19 hits and 14 pitchers in a game that lasted 4 hours, 20 minutes. Parra, Charlie Blackmon, DJ LeMahieu and Trevor Story had two hits apiece for the Rockies, who have dropped four of six.

ROYALS 7, INDIANS 0

Ian Kennedy pitched four-hit ball for seven innings and Kendrys Morales homered and drove in four runs as the Royals stopped the Indians' four-game winning streak. Kennedy (4-2) worked out of a bases-loaded jam in the sixth and retired 14 in a row at one point. Morales hit a three-run homer in the first and an RBI single in the eighth. Kansas City's win came at an opportune time. The Royals had lost eight of 10 and announced before the game that third baseman Mike Moustakas was headed to the 15-day disabled list with a fractured left thumb. Cody Anderson (0-2), called up from the minors before the game, allowed four runs in five innings.

WHITE SOX 7, TWINS 2

Todd Frazier doubled and homered in support of Chris Sale, who survived a rocky start to become the first seven-game winner in the majors as the White Sox rallied to beat the Twins. After a two-run, 36-pitch first inning, Sale (7-0) settled down to retire 19 of the next 20 batters. In seven innings, the left-hander allowed three hits and a walk. He struck out nine, five on a called strike three. The victory was Sale's eighth in 13 decisions against the Twins. He entered the game with a career 4.15 ERA against Minnesota, the highest of any American League opponent. Matt Albers and Zach Duke mopped up, as Chicago improved to 12-1 in games started by Sale or Jose Quintana this season.

MARINERS 3, ASTROS 2

Robinson Cano homered early off Dallas Keuchel, then connected for a tiebreaking shot in the 10th inning that led the Mariners over the Astros. Cano got four hits. He leads the majors with 32 RBIs and tops the AL with 11 home runs. Cano sent a pitch by Tony Sipp (0-2) into the seats in left field with one out in the 10th to give Seattle its fifth victory in six games. Cano has been especially good against the Astros, piling up 13 hits with four homers and 16 RBIs in six games. Luis

Valbuena hit a solo homer in the bottom of the ninth off Mariners reliever Steve Cishek (2-1) to tie it at 2.

RAYS 4, ANGELS 2

Logan Forsythe hit a broken-bat two-run single with the bases loaded in the ninth inning after Steven Souza Jr hit a tying two-run homer off Jered Weaver in the sixth as the Rays beat the Angels. Souza greeted Joe Smith (0-2) with a leadoff single in the ninth, then broke for second on a pitchout with Logan Morrison up. The throw from catcher Geovany Soto was so good that Souza retreated back toward first base. But shortstop Andrelton Simmons' throw hit him in the back, allowing him to end up on second. Souza was forced at third on Desmond Jennings' bunt to first baseman C.J. Cron after a walk to Morrison, but Forsythe delivered the clutch hit on a 1-1 pitch after a walk to Curt Casali. Erasmo Ramirez (6-1) pitched two scoreless innings for the victory and Alex Colome got three outs for his eighth save in as many chances.

DIAMONDBACKS 4, BRAVES 2

Shelby Miller's return to Atlanta brought a return to his winning form as he threw six strong innings for his first victory as the Diamondbacks beat the Braves. Miller (1-3) allowed two runs on four hits and one walk. He was traded from the Braves to Arizona on Dec 8. The loss left the Atlanta 1-14 in home games. The Braves (7-22) are off to the worst start in franchise history since 1900. Jake Lamb had two doubles and drove in a run in Arizona's two-run third inning that tied the game at 2-all. Brandon Drury's run-scoring double off reliever Bud Norris in the sixth gave the Diamondbacks the lead.

PHILLIES 4, MARLINS 3

Odubel Herrera scored the go-ahead run on first baseman Chris Johnson's error in Philadelphia's three-run eighth inning, sending the Phillies to a win over the Marlins. Brett Oberholtzer (2-0) pitched a scoreless inning for the win. Jeanmar Gomez tossed a perfect ninth for his 10th save in 11 chances. Marcell Ozuna and Justin Bour homered for Miami, which had won four in a row. Marlins right-hander Tom Koehler struck out a season-high eight over seven innings and exited with a 3-1 lead. He allowed two hits and walked two.—AP

MLB Results/Standings

Oakland 8, Baltimore 4; NY Yankees 8, Boston 2; LA Dodgers 6, Toronto 2; Texas 10, Detroit 5; St. Louis 6, Pittsburgh 4; Chicago Cubs 8, Washington 5; Kansas City 7, Cleveland 0.

American League					National League				
Eastern Division					Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	17	12	.586	-	Washington	19	11	.633	-
Boston	17	13	.567	0.5	NY Mets	18	11	.621	0.5
Toronto	16	16	.500	2.5	Miami	16	13	.552	2.5
Tampa Bay	14	14	.500	2.5	Philadelphia	17	14	.548	2.5
NY Yankees	11	17	.393	5.5	Atlanta	7	22	.241	11.5
Central Division					Central Division				
Chicago White Sox	21	10	.677	-	Chicago Cubs	23	6	.793	-
Cleveland	14	13	.519	5	Pittsburgh	16	14	.533	7.5
Kansas City	15	14	.517	5	St. Louis	16	15	.516	8
Detroit	14	15	.483	6	Cincinnati	13	18	.419	11
Minnesota	8	22	.267	12.5	Milwaukee	12	18	.400	11.5
Western Division					Western Division				
Seattle	18	12	.600	-	San Francisco	17	15	.531	-
Texas	17	14	.548	1.5	LA Dodgers	15	15	.500	1
Oakland	14	17	.452	4.5	Colorado	14	16	.467	2
LA Angels	13	17	.433	5	Arizona	14	18	.438	3
Houston	11	20	.355	7.5	San Diego	13	18	.419	3.5

run double in the 10th as the Brewers snapped the Reds' three-game win streak.

CARDINALS 6, PIRATES 4

Matt Carpenter hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the ninth inning, lifting St. Louis to the victory. Aledmys Diaz sparked the winning rally with a leadoff single. After Jeremy Hazelbaker flied to deep left, Carpenter drove a 1-2 pitch from AJ Schugel (0-1) over the wall in right for his fourth homer. It was the Cardinals' first win over the Pirates in five games this season. Pittsburgh had tied the game on Starling Marte's double off Trevor Rosenthal (1-1) with two out in the top of the ninth.

RANGERS 10, TIGERS 5

Adrian Beltre hit two of Texas' five home

Anthony Ranaudo (1-0) got the win. Shawn Tolleson was credited with his 10th save in 12 chances - he came on to strike out Anthony Gose with the bases loaded for the final out. Ian Kinsler homered for Detroit, which has lost five straight.

GIANTS 2, ROCKIES 1

Matt Duffy hit a game-ending RBI double with two out in the 13th inning, sending the Giants to the win. Pinch hitter Conor Gillaspie set up the winning hit with a one-out walk against Justin Miller (1-1). After Denard Span walked and Joe Panik struck out swinging, Duffy lined a 1-0 pitch from Miller past Gerardo Parra in left for his second hit of the day. Derek Law (1-0) pitched a scoreless inning for San Francisco's fifth win

DAVIS PILES ON THE MISERY FOR SPURS



LONDON: Steven Davis added to Tottenham's misery in the aftermath of their failed Premier League title challenge as the Southampton midfielder's double sealed a 2-1 win yesterday. Mauricio Pochettino's side had gifted the crown to Leicester after squandering the lead in successive draws against West Bromwich Albion and Chelsea and their gloom deepened after another self-inflicted setback at White Hart Lane.

Having taken an early lead through South Korea midfielder Son Heung-Min, Tottenham were on course to effectively guarantee a second place finish. But a mistake from Tottenham goalkeeper Hugo Lloris allowed Davis to equalise before half-time and the Northern Ireland international struck again after the break to leave the north Londoners without a win in their last three matches.

Pochettino's men remain three points ahead of third placed Arsenal, who were due to face Manchester City later yesterday, and, with a vastly superior goal difference to the Gunners, they can still finish above their bitter rivals for the first time since 1994-95 if they win at struggling Newcastle in their final game of the season. "We needed to be more solid and show more consistency. We lacked this today. I'm disappointed but we're still fighting," Pochettino said. "It's important to finish second. There was no hangover from last week, but we still need to learn a lot of things." Sixth placed Southampton remain in the hunt for a Europa League place and will surpass their best points total in the division with a draw in their final fixture against Crystal Palace.

After the acrimonious scenes at Stamford Bridge on Monday, where Tottenham's players reacted with ugly aggression to their costly draw against Chelsea, the sight of Leicester hoisting the Premier League trophy amid champagne fuelled celebrations on Saturday rubbed

further salt into their wounds.

And Tottenham's regret at failing to win the title for the first time since 1961 was compounded by another meltdown in the north London sunshine. Christian Eriksen almost opened the scoring in the fifth minute when he met Danny Rose's cross with a poked effort on the stretch that Saints goalkeeper Fraser Forster managed to push away.

Tremendous composure

They took the lead in the 16th minute thanks to the energy and efficiency of Son. Taking possession 30 yards from goal, Son clipped a pass to Eriksen, then surged into the penalty area to take the return. Showing tremendous composure, Son jinxed around Forster, who paid the price for coming ponderously off his line, and a trio of defenders before slotting into the empty net for his eighth goal of the season.

However, Tottenham's inability to protect a lead proved their Achilles heel in the title race and so it proved again when the visitors equalized in the 31st minute. This was an especially vexing goal as Tottenham's defence went missing, allowing Dusan Tadic to control Cuco Martina's long pass and cross to Davis.

Even so, Davis's soft low shot from close-range appeared routine for Lloris, but the France international somehow allowed it to slip under his hand and into the net. Although that sucked the spark from Tottenham, they should still have been back ahead just before half-time.

Harry Kane, the league's top scorer with 25 goals, had a chance to move closer to the Golden Boot when he shrugged off Jose Fonte, only for Forster to block his strike from an acute angle. Shane Long was inches away from putting Southampton in front soon after the interval when he glanced a header wide from Tadic's cross.

Tottenham came close through a Jan Vertonghen header that was looping in until Virgil van Dijk flicked it off the line. But that escape spurred Southampton forward and, with the hosts wilting in the heat, they went ahead in the 72nd minute. After playing a one-two with Tadic, Davis nimbly moved past Eric Dier before hitting a low shot that trickled into the far corner past Lloris. — AFP



ROME: Roma's forward from Italy Francesco Totti shoots the ball during the Italian Serie A football match Roma vs Chievo at the Olympic Stadium. — AFP

FANS RALLY ROUND TOTTI AS ROMA JUMP TO SECOND

MILAN: Francesco Totti made his 600th Serie A appearance as Roma heaped the pressure on Napoli to move up to second spot with a festive 3-0 home win over Chievo yesterday. One-club man Totti has yet to settle his future despite reports in midweek claiming Roma are finally warming to his request for a 24th and final year's contract.

But with some believing this could be the 39-year-old's final season in Italy's top flight, fans, including ultras who had boycotted the Curva Sud for most of the season, flocked to the Stadio Olimpico to show their appreciation for the club legend through banners, t-shirts and flags which all paid tribute to the longevity and loyalty of 'Il Re de Roma' (King of Rome).

Some declared they had grown up on 'Bread and Totti', as opposed to bread and water, but the veteran playmaker was left on the bench as Luciano Spalletti's men went about staking their claim for the league's second automatic Champions League qualifying spot. Roma's 22nd win of the campaign moved them one point above Napoli into second place, and has heaped the pressure on Maurizio Sarri's men before a

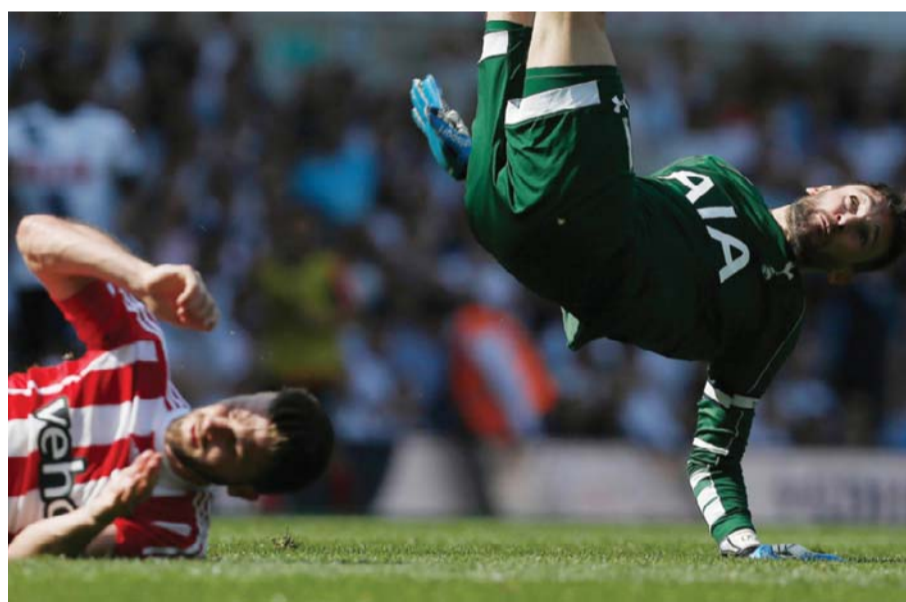
tough away fixture at Torino.

"I wouldn't say no to them (Torino) getting a result for us, but no stress, we've done what we had to do today," said Spalletti. "Today we showed how much we wanted to win and it was great to see a stadium full of fans. Their support is precious. It was a great win, everyone enjoyed themselves and that's the way it should always be." Reported Chelsea target Radja Nainggolan got the party started when he fired home from the edge of the area to beat Albano Bizzarri on 18 minutes. Germany defender Antonio Rudiger doubled Roma's lead six minutes before half-time when he headed Miralem Pjanic's curling free kick past the stranded 'keeper at the back post, although there was more than a hint of off-side. He, too, is praying Napoli drop points at Torino. "We'll be watching the game and I hope, like all Roma fans, Napoli drop some points on their trip," said Rudiger. Chievo earned more than their fair share of chances and Paul Jose M'Poku smacked the near post on the half-volley as Wojciech Szczesny came out of the Roma net to close down the angle shortly after the restart. Totti was given a standing ovation by the fans

before he even kicked a ball in anger when he replaced Egyptian winger Mohamed Salah on the hour. Only Inter Milan legend Javier Zanetti (615) and AC Milan great Paolo Maldini (647) have made more appearances in Serie A.

The club talisman's first touch left him crumpling to the ground after a challenge but hopes of earning a free kick were immediately waved away. Again, Chievo threatened, Antonio Floro Flores nodding just wide before Szczesny was forced to bat away Sergio Pellissier's effort when the towering striker got his head to M'Poku's cross on the edge of the box.

Yet Roma were a constant threat and Stephan El Shaarawy twice came close to adding to the scoreline. El Shaarawy first curled just side of Bizzarri's far top corner from outside the left side of the area and, minutes later following a nice build-up by Lucas Digne, saw another promising shot fingertipped to safety by Bizzarri. Totti has scored several goals for Roma recently after coming off the bench but this time settled for an assist, his one-touch pass allowing Pjanic to run clear and prod past Bizzarri with five minutes to play. —AFP



LONDON: Southampton's Irish striker Shane Long (L) fouls Tottenham Hotspur's French goalkeeper Hugo Lloris and received a yellow card during the English Premier League football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Southampton at White Hart Lane. — AFP

CONTROVERSIAL RB LEIPZIG WIN PROMOTION TO THE BUNDESLIGA

BERLIN: Just seven years after being founded, RB Leipzig, sponsored by energy drinks giants Red Bull, will play in the Bundesliga next season after their second division promotion was confirmed yesterday. Goals by Sweden's Emil Forsberg and Marcel Halstenberg sealed their 2-0 win at home to Karlsruhe, in front of 42,559 fans, which means they will join second division champions Freiburg in Germany's top flight next season. "Right now there is nothing better, it's unbelievable," said Leipzig's ex-Germany defender Marvin Compper. "We had to break down a lot of resistance, but at the end we deserve to go up." There are no other words for this. But RB Leipzig will not receive a warm welcome in the Bundesliga from many fans of Germany's top clubs.

Rasenballsport Leipzig were founded in 2009 when Red Bull, owned by Austrian billionaire Dietrich Mateschitz, bought the licence from lower league side SSV Markranstaedt. They changed their name, but German Football League (DFL) rules meant they were not allowed to copy the likes of Red Bull New York or Red Bull Salzburg in using the company name in the title. After a year in Germany's fifth division, the rise was constant: three years in the regional (fourth division), a year in the third tier and two in the second, before finally winning full Bundesliga status. RB Leipzig will become the 55th club to play in the Bundesliga, and next season will be the first since 2008/09 when a club from the former East Germany will feature in the top flight.

They can expect a cold reception in the Bundesliga, especially against traditional clubs like Borussia Dortmund and

Schalke. Like Bayer Leverkusen, who are sponsored by pharmaceutical company Bayer, VW-backed Wolfsburg and Hoffenheim, who are bank-rolled by software magnate Dietmar Hopp, RB Leipzig are unpopular with fans due to their backing.

Riots and boycotts

During RB's rise through the leagues, opposition fans rioted during matches, organized protests and staged boycotts, while Leipzig's players have been spat at. After a long search, Ingolstadt's Ralph Hasenhuettl was appointed as Leipzig coach for next season, while Ralf Rangnick will be director of football after coaching the side this term.

Hasenhuettl was booed by his club's own fans in his final home match against Bayern Munich on Saturday and later broke down in tears in the post-match press conference. "You'd rather be Rangnick's jester than king of the Schanze? (Ingolstadt's nickname)", questioned one banner at Ingolstadt's Audi-Sportpark stadium.

The current Leipzig squad includes Rani Khedira, brother of Germany midfielder Sami Khedira, Compper, who won his single cap for Germany in 2008, and USA international striker Terrence Boyd, but bigger names are sure to be signed before next season.

The only downside to Leipzig's promotion celebrations at their Red Bull Arena stadium yesterday was written all over Rangnick's grimacing face. The RB boss suffered a suspected torn hamstring after slipping while being chased by players who were successful in their attempts to pour beer over him. — AFP

HISTORIC BAYERN TARGET DOUBLE FOR GUARDIOLA

BERLIN: Bayern Munich plan to bid farewell to coach Pep Guardiola with the league and cup double, as they prepare to start the party next Saturday after winning a historic fourth straight Bundesliga title. Bayern became the first club to win the German league four times in a row on Saturday after their 2-1 win at Bavarian neighbours Ingolstadt, when Robert Lewandowski scored both goals.

Their hopes of winning the Champions League were ended on Tuesday in the semi-finals by Atletico Madrid, but Bayern can win the domestic double for the 11th time, having won both the league and cup eight times since 2000. They face Borussia Dortmund, who finished as the Bundesliga's runners-up, in the German Cup final on May 21 at Berlin's Olympic Stadium.

The Bayern squad partied on the way back to Munich, but the real festivities start on Saturday after Guardiola's final home game against relegated Hannover 96, before coaching Manchester City next season. Guardiola will need a spare suit at the Allianz Arena when the players receive over-sized full beer glasses after the final whistle and the coach is always the preferred candidate for the traditional 'beer shower'. Once captain Philipp Lahm has lifted the Bundesliga trophy in Munich, the focus will be beating Dortmund in Berlin.

"Next week, we'll celebrate with our fans in Munich, then it's the cup final and if we win that, then the season will have been really good," said striker Robert Lewandowski, the league's top scorer with 29 goals. Germany star Thomas Muller said winning the title did not compensate for their European heartbreak, but that a weight had been lifted. "Four titles in a row, that something which has never happened before in the history of the Bundesliga and some really great teams have played in this league," said Muller.

"It's an exceptional thing and not something we need to talk down. Now a huge weight has been lifted and there is certain satisfaction, it always looks hard to win the title back in August." Chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge was proud to see Bayern crowned champions for the 26th time. "I remember the team featuring Franz Beckenbauer, Sepp Maier, Gerd Mueller. They achieved it three times. Our team is on four now and that's something historic," said Rummenigge. "I have to pay the coach and the team a huge compliment. Unfortunately, we didn't manage it on Tuesday in the Champions League, but the title has now healed the wound a bit."

Rummenigge predicts fireworks against Dortmund in the cup final. "The game is important for us and will unquestionably be a highlight of the season which all of football in Germany can look forward to," he added. "It's a 50-50 game and we'll need to play well to reach the double. We have made history, but when you are in the final, you want to win it." — AFP



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder Roberto Firmino (R) celebrates with Liverpool's English midfielder Oluwaseyi Ojo after scoring his team's second goal during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Watford at Anfield. — AFP

ALLEN AND FIRMINO SEE LIVELY LIVERPOOL TO WATFORD WIN



LIVERPOOL: Goals from Joe Allen and Roberto Firmino helped Liverpool earn three points against Watford in an underwhelming 2-0 win at Anfield yesterday. Neither set of fans will take home warm memories of this match as it was classic end-of-season stuff between two teams with few domestic ambitions left this term.

Reds manager Jurgen Klopp clearly had Liverpool's upcoming Europa League final against Sevilla in mind with his team selection, changing eight members of his starting XI from the side that defeated Villarreal in the last four of European club football's second-tier competition on Thursday. Only Simon Mignolet, Alberto Moreno and Philippe Coutinho made the cut for this contest with the in-form Daniel Sturridge and Firmino on the bench.

Meanwhile the likes of James Milner and Adam Lallana were rested completely. Premier League glory may have to wait a while for Klopp but if he can end his first season in charge of Liverpool with significant silverware then that will do wonders

for confidence on the Kop. Watford would almost certainly have leapt at a mid-table finish if it had been offered at the start of the season, even if Quique Sanchez Flores's future as manager seems uncertain.

But a run to the semi-finals of the FA Cup, plus a comfortable season in the top-flight are not expected to be enough to ensure the Spaniard's future at Vicarage Road. Neither team could really gain an early foothold in this contest, their attacking intent producing precious little end product. Almen Abdi blasted over for Watford after nine minutes while Liverpool did not really worry Heurlho Gomes in the Watford goal until Coutinho's curling effort two minutes later.

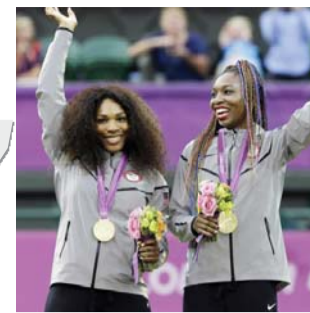
Chasing shadows

Watford seemed keen to sit back and hit Liverpool on the counter-attack, relying on Odion Ighalo's pace to outfox Lucas Leiva and Martin Skrtel in the home team's defense. But Watford spent large parts of the first half chasing shadows and the ball-even if Liverpool rarely made them suffer.

This was an opportunity for Christian Benteke to get back into Klopp's first-team thoughts after falling down the pecking order at Anfield, but the £32.5m (\$46.9 million, 41.1 million Euros) signing looked off the pace in front of goal. After half an hour, Ighalo and then Abdi caused some panic in the Liverpool penalty area but they could not twist the knife. —AFP

Sports

Williams sisters aim for another Olympic gold



Fans rally round Totti as Roma jump to second



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LILLARD'S MASSIVE NIGHT LIFTS PORTLAND OVER WARRIORS Page 16



BARCELONA: FC Barcelona's Luis Suarez (R) heads the ball to score against Espanyol's Enzo Roco, (L) and Javi Lopez during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between FC Barcelona and Espanyol at the Camp Nou stadium. — AP

BARCA TRASH ESPANYOL, ATLETICO CRASH OUT

MADRID KEEPS TITLE DREAMS ALIVE WITH CLOSE WIN

MADRID: Barcelona are one win away from retaining their La Liga title after Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar all scored as they thrashed Espanyol 5-0 in the Catalan derby yesterday. Real Madrid moved into second place, a point behind Barca with one game remaining, as they racked up an 11th straight La Liga win, 3-2 over Valencia, thanks to two goals from Cristiano Ronaldo.

However, Atletico Madrid's title hopes are over as they lost 2-1 at already relegated Levante. Barca will be champions with victory at Granada next weekend, who crucially are now mathematically safe from relegation after a 4-1 win at Sevilla. Real Madrid travel to Deportivo la Coruna on the final day of the season.

"We are going to play for a league of 38 games in one match," said Barca boss Luis Enrique. "There will be tension, Real Madrid and ourselves are in the same situation of playing away from home and having to win. The prize is there and it is attractive enough that we will all be very motivated."

Barcelona got off to a perfect start when Messi curled a delightful free-kick into the top corner after just eight minutes. However, they had to wait until seven minutes into the second half for the second as Messi teed up Suarez to fire high past Pau Lopez. Suarez maintained his four-goal lead over Ronaldo as the league's

top scorer as he powered home his 56th goal of the season from Neymar's corner. A howler from Lopez handed Rafinha an open goal to tap home his first goal since suffering a serious knee injury at the start of the season, before Neymar rounded off the scoring. Madrid shrugged off the absences of Gareth Bale and Luka Modric through injury to move above Atletico for the first time in 2016 with victory over Valencia.

Madrid holds on

"Now we are second, there is one game to go and anything can happen," said Real coach Zinedine Zidane. "In football you never know what can happen. We need to be aware of that, give our all until the end and see what happens." Ronaldo opened the scoring when he fired into the far corner for his 48th goal of the season.

Valencia felt hard done by for Madrid's second three minutes before half-time as the referee overruled his linesman, who had flagged Karim Benzema offside, before he slotted home as the ball through to the French striker deflected off Valencia defender Joao Cancelo. The visitors' bright start to the second period was rewarded when Rodrigo pounced on an error from Raphael Varane to halve the deficit.

Ronaldo quickly restored Real's two-goal advantage, but Andre Gomes ensured a nervy finish when he

smashed home from the edge of the box before Valencia were reduced to 10 men late on when Rodrigo was shown a straight red card.

Atletico paid for their exertions in setting up a second all-Madrid Champions League final against Bayern Munich in midweek, despite getting off to a brilliant start when Fernando Torres opened the scoring from Koke's pass after two minutes. Diego Simeone had left inspirational central defender Diego Godin and top scorer Antoine Griezmann on the bench and was made to pay when Victor Casadesus headed Levante level on the half hour mark. Griezmann was introduced for the second half and came closest to finding a winner for Atletico when Diego Marino turned his near post effort wide 15 minutes from time. But Giuseppe Rossi finished off a sweeping Levante counter-attack in the final minute to end Atletico's hopes of an unlikely second title in three years.

"We are ending a fantastic season and we are one game away from competing with Barcelona and Real Madrid," said Simeone. "We were a little bit short. I am hurting to fall at the penultimate hurdle, but I am delighted to have been fighting until now for the championship." At the bottom, Sporting Gijon remain out of the relegation zone thanks to their superior head-to-head record with Getafe after the two drew 1-1. Rayo Vallecano also remain in the bottom three after losing 2-1 at Real Sociedad. — AFP

Spanish League results/standings

Celta Vigo 1, Malaga 0; Eibar 1, Real Betis 1; Barcelona 5, Espanyol 0; Getafe 1, Sporting Gijon 1; Las Palmas 0, Athletic Club 0; Levante 2, Atletico Madrid 1; Real Madrid 3, Valencia 2; Real Sociedad 2, Rayo Vallecano 1; Sevilla 1, Granada CF 4; Villarreal 0, Deportivo Coruna 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	37	28	4	5	109	29	88
Real Madrid	37	27	6	4	108	34	87
Atletico Madrid	37	27	4	6	61	18	85
Villarreal	37	18	10	9	44	33	64
Celta Vigo	37	17	9	11	51	57	60
Athletic Club	37	17	8	12	55	44	59
Sevilla	37	14	10	13	50	47	52
Malaga	37	11	12	14	34	34	45
Real Sociedad	37	12	9	16	44	48	45
Las Palmas	37	12	8	17	44	49	44
Valencia	37	11	11	15	46	47	44
Eibar	37	11	10	16	47	57	43
Deportivo Coruna	37	8	18	11	45	59	42
Real Betis	37	10	12	15	32	51	42
Espanyol	37	11	7	19	36	72	40
Granada CF	37	10	9	18	46	66	39
Getafe	37	9	9	19	36	65	36
Sporting Gijon	37	9	9	19	38	62	36
Rayo Vallecano	37	8	11	18	49	72	35
Levante	37	8	8	21	36	67	32

SANCHEZ UPSTAGES PELLEGRINI



MANCHESTER: Alexis Sanchez's 68th-minute equalizer dealt a potentially fatal blow to Manchester City's Champions League qualification hopes as Arsenal claimed a 2-2 draw at the Etihad Stadium yesterday. In his final home game as City manager before handing over to Pep Guardiola, Manuel Pellegrini saw Kevin De Bruyne put the hosts in front after Sergio Aguero's early opener was cancelled out by Olivier Giroud.

But Sanchez's strike means that Pellegrini is now dependent on fifth-place Manchester United dropping points in their last two games or Arsenal losing at home to Aston Villa if his side are to finish in the top four. Having seen his team tamely concede defeat against Real Madrid in the Champions League semi-finals on Wednesday, it threatens to be a miserable end to Pellegrini's three-year tenure, which has yielded the 2013-14 Premier League title and two League Cups.

United visit West Ham United tomorrow before finishing the season at home to Bournemouth and

if they win both games, and Arsenal avoid defeat against bottom club Villa, Guardiola will begin life at City as a Europa League manager.

For Arsenal, victory over Villa in next Sunday's final game will secure a Champions League berth for the 19th season running and they could yet finish above local rivals Tottenham Hotspur, who they trail by two points. But there was a concern for Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger, and his England counterpart Roy Hodgson, in the shape of a first-half injury to Danny Welbeck.

The match program contained a message from Emirati club chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak thanking Pellegrini and hailing his "engaging approach, integrity and humility". In his own notes, Pellegrini describing managing City as a "privilege" and said that he would "take nothing but great memories" to his next job.

City failed to register a single shot on target in their meek 1-0 Champions League semi-final defeat at Real Madrid, but after a sprightly start they went ahead in the eighth minute. Jesus Navas's cross from the right was nodded back and down by Ferdinandinho and Aguero eluded Mohamed Elneny before driving a left-foot shot into Petr Cech's bottom-left corner.

Arsenal had barely set foot in City's half, but within two minutes their former player Gael Clichy offered them an attacking foothold with a misjudged back header that bobbed past a scrambling Joe Hart, hit the post and went behind for a corner. Eliaquim Mangala, deputizing for injured

skipper Vincent Kompany, misjudged Elneny's delivery and Giroud headed home his first goal in 16 league outings. Arsenal were quickly deflated again, however, as an apparent knee injury to Welbeck saw the England forward walk straight off the pitch and down the tunnel, with Jack Wilshere coming on and Alex Iwobi moving wide.

Arsenal were already missing German playmaker Mesut Ozil due to what the club said was a "slight hip injury". After warning shots from Jesus Navas and Ferdinandinho, City went ahead in the 51st minute. De Bruyne brought down a bouncing ball just inside the Arsenal half and held off Hector Bellerin before surging towards goal, cutting inside Elneny and guiding a low shot past Cech's outstretched right hand.

But the introduction of Theo Walcott for Iwobi provided an injection of dynamism to Arsenal's attack and after he had lofted a shot wide from Giroud's lay-off, the visitors equalized through Sanchez. Picking the ball up deep, the Chilean forward rolled a pass forward to Giroud, who brilliantly steered it back into his path, and Sanchez powered through a gaping hole in the City defense to clip a shot past Hart.

Pellegrini sent for the cavalry, with Raheem Sterling, Yaya Toure and Wilfried Bony all joining the fray, but the closest his side came to a winner was a deft Bony volley that crashed against the bar. Pellegrini, who bows out at Swansea City next Sunday, covered his face with his hands in anguish. — AFP



MANCHESTER: Manchester City fans hold a banner thanking Manchester City's Chilean manager Manuel Pellegrini after he managed his final home game of the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Arsenal at the Etihad Stadium. — AFP

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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US airlines enlist travelers
in bid to cut security lines

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KIB receives the 'Best Islamic
Bank in Kuwait 2016' Award

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New Mercedes-Benz GLE
450 AMG 4MATIC Coupé
arrives in Kuwait

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THE WORLD NEEDS A LOWER DOLLAR

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BEIJING: Visitors look at a BMW concept car model on display at the BMW Vision Next 100 exhibition at 798 Art District in Beijing yesterday. China's trade shrank in April in a sign government stimulus is failing to jolt the world's second-largest economy out of a prolonged slowdown. — AP (See Also Page 22)

SAUDI'S NEW ENERGY MINISTRY FACES CHALLENGES

REORGANIZATION AIMS TO CUT WASTE AND IMPROVE COORDINATION

RIYADH: Managing Saudi Arabia's new energy mega-ministry, set to oversee over half the economy and designed to cut through a tangled bureaucracy to make government more coherent and efficient, will be a formidable challenge. The new Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources Ministry, under Khalid Al-Falih, already chairman of state oil company Saudi Aramco, will handle oil and gas extraction, power generation and distribution, mining and industrial development. The changes were announced on Saturday as part of a major reshuffle by King Salman aimed at making the Vision 2030 economic reform program easier to implement by ending decades of miscommunication and turf war between government departments.

But in creating a ministry to oversee sectors that account for 53 percent of the kingdom's economic output, the vision's architect, Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, is entrusting a huge part of his sweeping reforms to Falih's hands.

How the new minister will juggle a host of responsibilities, and whether he can enact massive change across this broad swathe of the economy while integrating once rival departments, is already fodder for avid speculation in Saudi energy circles. "In order for the restructuring to succeed, accountability and responsibility has to be concentrated in the same office. This is the reason for assigning all those sectors in one ministry," said Sadad Al-Husseini, an energy consultant and former senior executive with Saudi Aramco.

"It remains to be seen what kind of specific organizational changes happen at the operational level." Previously, the oil ministry was in charge of hydrocarbons extraction and mining, the water and electricity ministry handled power generation and the commerce ministry oversaw industry. Other departments overlapped with these, covering such policy areas as nuclear and renewable energy and the running of industrial cities.

The big state-controlled companies, oil producer Aramco, petrochemicals and metals conglomerate Saudi Basic Industries Corp (Sabic), Saudi Arabian Mining Co (Maaden) and state utility Saudi Electricity Co (SEC), fit in between them. Falih is likely to now have a big say in running them all.

STREAMLINING

Saudi Arabia's creation of the new energy ministry sets it on the same path as oil-producing Gulf neighbors Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, which have done the same. "What was required before was coordination and a clear common vision, a clear strategy," said Paddy Padmanathan, president and chief executive officer of Acwa Power, the kingdom's biggest private electricity developer.

Riyadh's hopes of cutting state spending and diversifying the economy beyond oil have always rested partly on the goal of using energy resources to expand industrial output in ways that would add value, create jobs and boost non-oil exports.

However, its dominant petrochemicals industry, under the commerce ministry, and power utilities, under the water and electricity ministry, sometimes clashed over allocations of gas, which was produced by Aramco, under the oil ministry. Meanwhile, cheap energy prices encouraged power producers to employ cheaper, less efficient technology that used much larger quantities of fuel than they would have chosen were it valued at market prices, Padmanathan said.

Rampant overuse of fuel, blamed by economists on the large subsidies, has also bloated Saudi domestic energy consumption, raising fears that it would eventually cut into the amount of oil free for export. Saudi rulers have known about these problems for years, but past reform efforts appeared to be hindered by inter-departmental fighting.

The agency responsible for atomic and renewable ener-



Saudi Arabia's new Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources Minister Khalid Al-Falih.

gy, for example, proposed that a big part of Saudi power production should come from solar and nuclear plants, but its plans were quietly shelved after other parts of the bureaucracy objected.

Now Falih has been made chairman of that agency, giving him power as energy minister to see proposals through, and the government has pledged to install at least 9.5 gigawatts of solar power.

ARAMCO CHALLENGE

The one Saudi body that has traditionally crossed all these sector lines is Aramco, of which Falih was chief executive from 2009-15, and of which he remains chairman in his new role as energy minister. Beside its core oil and gas upstream business, Aramco has big downstream refining

and petrochemical factories through joint ventures with international partners, it has an in-house power unit and has carried out solar projects.

However, Aramco itself is approaching a major change as the government readies it for an initial public offering of up to 5 percent of its value on the stock market. That will require unprecedented internal adjustments including publication for the first time of sensitive reserves and balance sheet data. Overseeing that process will be an immensely challenging job not only for the company's chief executive, Amin Nasser, but for its chairman Falih as well. At the same time, he will now be in charge of expanding the mining sector to create a targeted 90,000 new jobs by 2020, ensuring power supply meets an expected tripling of consumption by 2030 and a doubling of gas output by the same date.

Falih is said to be close to Prince Mohammed, but the deputy crown prince has shown over the past year that he has no compunction about sacking favourites if they fail to meet expectations. "I expect this to be the first round of changes. Definitely there will be more rounds until you find the right mix of people for the vision 2030," said a senior banker who declined to be identified.

STABLE PRICES

Meanwhile, the energy minister said yesterday the world's largest crude exporter was committed to meeting demand for hydrocarbons from its customers and would maintain its petroleum policies.

"Saudi Arabia will maintain its stable petroleum policies. We remain committed to maintaining our role in international energy markets and strengthening our position as the world's most reliable supplier of energy," Al-Falih said in an e-mailed statement.

"We are committed to meeting existing and additional hydrocarbons demand from our expanding global customer base, backed by our current maximum sustainable capacity." Since 2014, Saudi Arabia has led OPEC through a new survival-of-the-fittest strategy aimed at defending market share rather than reducing production to support oil prices.

Falih's comments yesterday support analysts' views that no shift in Saudi oil policy is likely as a result of his appointment. Falih's appointment was part of a bigger Saudi shake-up announced on Saturday as King Salman restructured some big ministries in a major reshuffle intended to support a wide-ranging economic reform program.

As part of the restructuring, the Petroleum Ministry has been renamed the Ministry of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources. "The creation of a new Ministry in Saudi Arabia that brings together the Kingdom's abundant and unrivalled energy and mineral resources and industrial capabilities is in line with the ambitious objectives of Saudi Vision 2030," Falih said. — Reuters

GULF RISES, RESHUFFLE BUOYS SAUDI MARKET

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Most major Gulf stock markets rose yesterday in response to a modest recovery on Wall Street and in oil prices at the end of last week, while a sweeping reorganization of Saudi Arabia's economic policy-making apparatus boosted shares there. The Saudi stock index closed 0.2 percent higher after rising as much as 1.0 percent at one stage. Petrochemical blue chip Saudi Basic Industries gained 0.3 percent.

The Saudi reorganization replaced the oil minister and central bank governor and restructured some major ministries, creating a super-ministry under Khalid Al-Falih to manage the growth of industry and resource extraction.

Many fund managers still have questions about how a wide-ranging economic reform program unveiled on April 25 can be financed and whether it can be fully implemented, but local investors have been reacting bullishly. State utility Saudi Electric climbed 1.8 percent. Saturday's reshuffle moved the electricity portfolio to the new super-ministry; this could give fresh impetus to a restructuring of Saudi Electric, which has been discussed for years with little progress.

Insurers were also strong, with Saudi Arabian Cooperative Insurance jumping its 10 percent daily limit. Dubai's index gained 0.6 percent to 3,326 points, bouncing from near technical support on the late March lows of 3,248-3,253 points, though trading volume was low.

Dubai Parks & Resorts, the most heavily traded stock, rose 2.3 percent. Trading in rights to a major share issue in the company began last week and will continue through next week. Abu Dhabi's index gained 0.5 percent as Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank rebounded for a second day from a slump following its first-quarter earnings. The stock rose 1.3 percent.

Qatar edged down 0.2 percent although Dlala Brokerage added 2.7 percent in unusually heavy trade. Kuwait's Burgan Bank rose 1.5 percent after reporting an 18.5 percent fall in first-quarter net profit to 14.3 million dinars (\$47.66 million), largely because of lower foreign exchange income; HSBC had forecast the bank would make 12.68 million dinars. Kuwait's index edged down 0.1 percent.

Egypt rose 0.3 percent, buoyed by gains in a few blue chips such as Orascom Telecom Media, which was up 2.7 percent. — Reuters



New Mercedes-Benz GLE 450 AMG 4MATIC Coupe arrives in Kuwait

Fascinating driving performance and emotive appeal

KUWAIT: The wait is over for AMG enthusiasts in Kuwait, as Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Company, the authorised general distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait announced the official arrival of the all new Mercedes-Benz GLE 450 AMG 4Matic Coupe. Fascinating driving performance and the emotive appeal that is typical of the brand - the new Mercedes-Benz GLE 450 AMG Coupe displays impressive product substance. As an AMG sports model, the coupe is an attractive entry-level introduction to the world of the AMG sports car and performance brand. It brings the excitement of motorsport to day-to-day life for a wider range of customers. The GLE 450 AMG Coupe stands for maximum performance, authentic driving dynamics and the typical AMG DNA.

The compelling new AMG sports models such as the C 450 AMG and the GLE 450 AMG feature increased engine output, all-wheel drive as standard and special chassis components and braking systems from the classic AMG models, and thus honour the performance brand's promise. Thanks to the new 3.0-litre V6 biturbo engine generating 270 kW (367 hp) and maximum torque of 520 Nm, the GLE 450 AMG provides high sporty performance as shown by this dynamic acceleration value: it takes just 5.7 seconds to get from 0 to 100 km/h. The all new GLE 450 AMG Coupe marries the style and capabilities of an AMG sports car with the spaciousness of a traditional SUV to create a new pedigree in power and performance. Anticipation has been high for this model, and will be well received in our market," said Michael Ruehle, CEO, Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Company.

The new V6 biturbo engine is based on the BlueDIRECT engine family from Mercedes-Benz. Technical advances including a modified boost pressure allowed the AMG engineers to increase the engine's power output and torque.

The DYNAMIC SELECT variable dynamic control system assigns fundamentally different characteristics to the five transmission modes of INDIVIDUAL, COMFORT, SLIPPERY, SPORT



and SPORT+, which the driver is able to select using a rotary control on the centre console. DYNAMIC SELECT networks all the control systems, generating different sets of parameters for distinct driving experiences. The fifth, markedly dynamic SPORT+ transmission mode remains exclusive to AMG models. The names speak for themselves: SPORT and SPORT+ turn the GLE 450 AMG into a sporty, dynamic vehicle with pronounced longitudinal and transverse dynamics. COMFORT is at the opposite end of the spectrum. Here the emphasis is on relaxed, effortless cruising with the greatest possible energy efficiency. SLIPPERY mode optimizes the handling on surfaces with low friction coefficients such as snow or ice. In addition, INDIVIDUAL mode enables the driver to program and store personal preferences in the individual control strategies, regardless of the engine variant.

Display visualization on the COMAND screen

In the GLE 450 AMG, DYNAMIC SELECT not only modulates the "hard skills" such as the

chassis and suspension, steering or drive system. It is also possible to experience the selected mode more intensively on an emotional level because various "soft skills" such as the engine sound, instruments or dynamic control of the headlamps vary too. To this end, the nature of the various displays on the COMAND screen and in the cockpit changes according to the selected transmission mode. At the same time, the active light function of the all-LED headlamps responds more spontaneously and the engine produces the whole range of sounds from sporty and dominant to poised and reticent: if the driver selects COMFORT mode, the displays take on lesser importance and, like the engine, the dial instruments such as the rev counter show a relaxed response to the driver's commands. In combination with comfort-oriented control of the drive system and suspension, the result is an exceptionally balanced drive on a par with a saloon. The engine sound is reduced to a pleasant timbre, and the feedback from the road surface and surroundings is considerably quieter in the interior.

Things are very different when SPORT+ mode is selected. The character changes immediately, the gear changes performed by 9G-TRONIC are acoustically accentuated, especially when downshifting with the double-declutching function, and gear shifting is faster and sharper. Appropriately the cockpit instruments also respond more immediately and "sharply". The large central display visualizes the longitudinal and lateral acceleration, the vehicle level, plus the steering angle with a photo-realistic motorsport graphic. The engine sound is powerful and acoustically underscores the sports mode. In typical AMG style, every gear change is emotionally charged: partial cylinder suppression during gear changes by means of a momentary and precisely defined retardation of ignition and injection under full throttle speeds up the gear changes, and is also audible to the driver. The emotional double-declutching functions during downshifts and the "exhaust rumbling"

in overrun mode provide the fitting accompaniment. As is customary for AMG, a special sports exhaust system was designed for the GLE 450. This fact removes any doubt: the GLE 450 AMG Coupe is a lively sports model of the highest order, and treats its occupants to an engrossing world of experience.

Pronounced dynamism around the car's vertical axis

The driver will sense this through a more pronounced thirst for cornering and more. High agility and dynamism around the car's vertical axis stem from an AMG speciality: the drive from the 4MATIC permanent all-wheel drive is not split evenly, but is biased more to the rear in a ratio of 40:60. The DYNAMIC SELECT transmission modes SPORT and SPORT+ deliver superior longitudinal agility and transverse dynamics - specifically as a result of the perfect interplay between the AMG-specific driving dynamics control systems ASR, ESP(r) with Dynamic Cornering Assist, the all-wheel drive control system 4ETS and the ADAPTIVE BRAKE control system.

Extremely sporty exterior design

The standard equipment for the GLE 450 AMG is fascinating from the first look: the special AMG bodystyling includes a specific front and rear apron, a spoiler lip in the colour of the vehicle.

As standard, the vehicle comes with the AIR-MATIC package including an air suspension, infinitely variable adaptive damping system (ADS Plus) and automatic level control. In SPORT mode the body is lowered by 15 millimetres and a further 10 millimetres in SPORT+ mode. The optional ACTIVE CURVE SYSTEM boosts sportiness even further: this active roll stabilisation system reduces the roll angle when cornering dynamically so that the driver experiences increased transverse dynamics and driving enjoyment. Driving stability and safety are also increased, especially at high speeds, guaranteeing that inimitable AMG driving feel.

AMG-typical interior elements

The interior of the GLE 450 AMG is an impressive sight with sports seats and the 3-spoke black nappa leather sports steering wheel, as well as trim parts in light longitudinal-grain aluminum and brushed stainless steel sports pedals with rubber studs. Sporty round dials on the instrument cluster, including a 280 km/h speedometer scale, exude pure dynamism even while the car is at a standstill. AMG carbon-fibre and black piano lacquer trim enhance the appearance of the interior as an additional option.

The standard equipment for the GLE 450 AMG 4MATIC Coupe includes (selection):

- ADAPTIVE BRAKE
 - ATTENTION ASSIST
 - COLLISION PREVENTION ASSIST PLUS
 - EASY-PACK tailgate
 - ECO start/stop function
 - LED Intelligent Light System
 - ISOFIX child seat attachment points in the rear
 - PRE-SAFE system
 - Tyre pressure monitoring system
 - Reversing camera
 - Crosswind Assist
 - Electrically adjustable front seats
- Other optional equipment (selection):
- AMG Line Interior
 - Bang & Olufsen BeoSound AMG high-end surround sound system
 - COMAND Online
 - DISTRONIC PLUS
 - EXCLUSIVE Interior
 - Driving Assistance package Plus
 - Harman Kardon Logic 7 surround sound system
 - Night package
 - Climatized seats for driver and front passenger

The new Mercedes GLE 450 AMG 4MATIC Coupe is now available at A R Albisher & Z Alkazemi Co's Shuwaikh showroom.



BUSINESS TITANS SECRETLY FUND PHILIPPINE PRESIDENTIAL BETS

MANILA: Philippine presidential favorite Rodrigo Duterte has flippantly brushed aside campaign trail allegations of accepting million-dollar gifts, while his rivals have refused to disclose their backers, deepening concerns over business titans' shadowy grip on politics.

The Philippines has one of Asia's biggest rich-poor divides, with poverty rates remaining stuck in recent years despite strong economic growth, and analysts say one of the reasons for the disparity is the debt that politicians owe their secret backers. Under the nation's campaign financing laws, there are no caps on how much people or companies can give to candidates, nor are there limits on individual donations.

They also do not have to reveal their backers until a month after polling day. Duterte has entrenched himself as the clear frontrunner for today's elections by portraying himself as a frugal, anti-establishment politician who is tough enough to take on the elites. "When I become president, by the grace of God, I serve the people, not you," Duterte told reporters this week, referring to the elite.

But in the final stages of the campaign trail Duterte, who is meant to earn less than \$2,000 a month as the mayor of the southern city of Davao, was hit with allegations that

millions of dollars had poured into secret bank accounts. He initially denied there were any hidden accounts. After a journalist deposited money into them, he admitted they did exist and that 193.7 million pesos (\$4.2 million) were deposited into them on his birthday two years ago, nearly 10 times his declared assets.

"That only means I have many rich friends," he said, refusing to disclose who they were.

Asked at an earlier national television debate to name his campaign donors, Duterte gave a mocking answer, answering "Emilio Aguinaldo", a leader of the Philippines' 19th-century war for independence from colonial power Spain.

Buying politicians

His rivals similarly have felt no obligation to tell voters who their backers are, let alone how much they have been paid by them. Senator Grace Poe, who has been in politics for just three years and fashions herself as a lily-white poster image of change and probity, has been widely rumoured to be backed by taipans Eduardo Cojuangco and Ramon Ang. They are in charge of San Miguel Corporation, one of the nation's biggest conglomerates. — AFP

AGILITY REPORTS KD13.1M NET PROFIT FOR Q1 2016

KUWAIT: Agility yesterday announced its financial results for the first quarter of 2016, reporting a net profit of KD 13.1 million, an increase of 10.9 percent compared with the first quarter of 2015. Earnings-per-share stood at 11.4 fils, and EBITDA increased by 12.1 percent, to KD 26.2 million, compared with Q1 2015. Revenue for the first quarter stood at KD 298.8 million, 6.1 percent decrease vs. the same period last year. "Agility started the year on a good note. Net profit improved 10.9 percent, despite challenging market conditions in the Eurozone, China and the Middle East. Our efforts to define a clearer strategy and improve execution are paying off in stronger customer relationships, an expanding emerging market footprint, a sharper focus, and a more disciplined management approach," said Tarek Sultan, Agility CEO.

Agility global integrated logistics

Q1 revenue for Agility Global Integrated Logistics (GIL) stood at KD 225.8 million. Net revenue improved by 0.6 percent with margins expanding from 23.5 percent in Q1 2015 to 26.0 percent in Q1 2016. "There were two major drivers for net revenue improvement in GIL this quarter. First, continued growth in contract logistics. Agility has a strong contract logistics footprint in the Middle East, Asia Pacific that is serving growing consumer demand in these markets. Second, improved yields in the freight forwarding business," Sultan said.

Agility's Infrastructure Group

Agility's Infrastructure companies contributed KD 75.4 million to first quarter 2016 revenues, a 4.4 percent increase over Q1 2015.

The companies provide a broad spectrum of logistics-related services including: bulk fuel storage and transport, industrial real estate; airport and ground handling services; and commercial real estate and facilities management.

"Agility's Infrastructure portfolio of companies continues to be an important contributor to Agility's financial performance," said Sultan. "We continue to invest and grow these companies and are seeing these efforts pay off, particularly in the areas of Industrial real estate, ground handling and fuel logistics."

Recap of Financial Performance for Q1 2016

- Agility's net profit stood at KD 13.1 million, a 10.9 percent increase from KD 11.8 million in Q1 2015. EPS were 11.4 fils, compared with 10.3 fils a year earlier.
- EBITDA stood at KD 26.2 million, a 12.1 percent increase from the same period a year before.
- Agility's revenue for Q1 2016 was KD 298.8 million, a 6.1 percent decrease from KD 318.1 million in the same period in 2015 mainly attributable to GIL's revenue decline that is related to the slowing down of the global trade.

- Agility's net revenue increased by 8.8 percent over the same period
- Agility's GIL revenue stood at KD 225.8 million.

- Agility Infrastructure revenue was KD 75.4 million compared with KD 72.2 million in Q1 2015, a 4.4 percent increase from Q1 2015.
- Agility enjoys a healthy balance sheet, with a net cash position of KD 13.8 million. Cash generated from operations stood at KD 30.1 million a growth of 19.3 percent as compared to Q1 2015 and witnessed a strong EBITDA to operating cash conversion of 114.7 percent. Free cash flow stood at KD 9.1 million with an EBITDA to free cash flow conversion of 34.7 percent.

Summary

"Our longer-term target is to reach an EBITDA of \$ 800.0 million by 2020. We have a demanding road ahead to achieve this target, but have also defined a clear strategy and roadmap to meet this goal. We continue to improve our financial performance by focusing on growing our Infrastructure portfolio of companies and simultaneously driving transformation of our core commercial logistics (GIL) business," Sultan said. "As always, we would like to thank our employees, our customers, our partners and our shareholders for their support of our journey."

THE WORLD NEEDS A LOWER DOLLAR

NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

KUWAIT: After reaching a high of 100.17 in December, the US dollar reached a high against commodities and equities later in February of 2016.

Global central banks realized by then that a lower dollar would probably be better off to reduce global risks especially that China moved to a basket mainly dominated by the US dollar to value the yuan. So they intervened. Although not in a coordinated fashion, they were successful in inducing calm amid the explosive volatility in February. Whether by the Fed postponing its rate hike, or the ECB and the BoJ introducing negative interest rates, they were successful in removing risk aversion, lowering volatility and stabilizing markets.

Since February, markets have been trending higher and the US dollar has taken heat and lost almost 7%. Despite all the efforts, investors continue to doubt the recovery as global economic indicators haven't provided the clarity needed to jump back in the ship.

Indeed, US corporates have been facing falling profits as exports suffered on the back of a strong Dollar and faltering global demand. Growth also has been slowing as companies are struggling to expand on the back of high inventories built. So they have mostly reduced capital expenditures especially in the struggling commodity sector.

If the dollar continues to weaken, it will most likely have a positive impact on the global and the US economy as it seems to be the only remedy for the world at this moment. For the Fed, this means monetary policy will proceed very cautiously with respect to the pace of policy normalization. This is why, investors remain unconvinced that the Fed would raise rates in June or actually anytime this year as a matter of fact. Markets expectations are still for half a rate hike all the way until the beginning of 2017.

In parallel, the Euro hit a nine months high of 1.1616 and the yen 105.55 this week. Japan's and Europe's remain an export based economies. However, the latest Japanese economic figures showed Japan's 2016 GDP growth forecast is an anemic 1.2 percent, while the Eurozone's inflation rate remains in the negative at -0.2 percent.

This is why; it is definitely not the time to tighten monetary policy, and especially not the time for their currency to move higher. The biggest proof is Japan, where the situation has gotten worse. The Nikkei is almost down 10 percent since they introduced negative rates while the Yen exploded higher.

Unless the rest of the world starts to show signs of stability and we start to see growth again, investors are likely to remain in a no man's land. With Brexit on the door, political stress in Europe coming from all angles, a deflationary continuous environment, and the cherry on the icing a higher Euro and Yen, only better financial conditions in the US with a clear message from the Fed that it will refrain from hiking rates

would calm investors' concerns for now.

Currencies markets remain volatile. After visiting a low of 91.91, the dollar index closed the week almost two percent higher at 93.88.

In a short trading week, the euro gave up some of its strength after opening the week near the high of 1.1616. The currency closed for the week near the low of 1.1404.

In parallel, the sterling pound remains volatile as we get closer to the Brexit referendum. As mood continue to swing in favor or not of Britain exiting the eurozone, the pound reached a high for the week at 1.4770 to finish the week at

do expect us to be raising rates gradually over the next couple of years due to the strength of the labor market and where I see inflation going". Williams also said he doesn't agree with negative scenarios for the economy and doesn't take a "strong signal" from the 0.5 percent growth rate in the first quarter. He said GDP data were distorted by seasonal factors and growth was actually closer to 2 percent annual rate.

Despite the Fed speakers attempt to keep June's decision live, markets continue to price a lower probability of a hike at the next meeting. At the moment, the probability of a 25 basis point

the fall, April marked the second month of expansion and was also the second highest reading in the last eight month. Manufacturing has been hurt by weak export growth due to the strong a strong dollar and soft global demand.

The prices paid index on the more positive side actually rose to 59.0 in April from 51.5 in March, suggesting that pricing power is finally starting to return, which offers some consolation to the overall weak activity.

On the non-manufacturing side, activity in the US service sector grew at a faster rate in the month of April. The ISM report showed the non-manufacturing index climbing to 55.7 in April from 54.5 in March while economists had expected the index to inch up to 54.7

Europe retail sales

The final April Europe services PMI were revised down a very modest 0.1 points to 53.1, with the composite came at 53.0 effectively unchanged versus the prior two months. Across countries we saw marginal downward revisions to Germany and France while Italy was the positive surprise as its services reading printed ahead of expectations, 52.1 against expectations of 51.9.

Eurozone retail sales on the other hand dropped for the first time in five months in March. Sales volumes were 0.5 percent lower in March than in February, although they were 2.1 percent higher than in March 2015. That was a sharper month-to-month fall than the 0.1 percent decline economists had expected. The eurozone economy picked up in the first three months of the year, however the sharpest fall in retail sales since July 2014 could suggest that it may have been losing momentum. The decline in retail sales suggests that overall consumer spending may have slowed toward the end of the first quarter as energy prices steadied following sharp drops in the first two months of 2016.

The UK economy and Brexit

The UK economy continues to slowdown. Indeed, the latest UK Manufacturing PMI came weaker than expected. The overall manufacturing PMI fell below the 50.0 level for the first time since March 2013. April's 49.2 reading followed a downward revised March figure of 50.7. New export orders contracted for the fourth successive month and firms reduced their headcount at their fastest rate since February 2013.

This week's April composite PMI continues a downtrend that has been in place since the beginning of 2014. Real GDP growth also slowed from a 3 percent annualized growth rate in the second half of 2013 to 2 percent in the second half of last year. Moreover, the uncertainty created by the referendum is having an impact on confidence and hence on economic activity.

The British construction growth also eased more than expected in April to the weakest level in almost three years as spending decisions were

delayed by clients on "Brexit" fears according to the data. The construction Purchasing Managers' Index fell to 52.0 in April from 54.2 in the previous month while expectations were for the index to drop slightly to 54.0. The latest reading signaled the slowest expansion of business activity since mid-2013.

Chinese stimulus

After the official government manufacturing PMI were released showing manufacturing PMI at 50.1 in April from 50.2 in March, the Caixin China manufacturing PMI Index fell to 49.4 in April from 49.7 in March. The data suggests the Chinese economy lost momentum again in April after appearing to improve at the end of Q1. Services PMI were slightly better in April dropping to 51.8 from 52.2 in March, as new business component increased at the fastest pace since January while business expectations remained unchanged. The solid new business reading was boosted by stronger underlying client demand and new products, the survey said, while companies were also able to pass along higher input price.

The employment sub-component rose to 50.9 in April from March's 48.9, reversing the first decline in staffing since August 2013.

Abe to respond

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said this week that drastic fluctuations in the yen's exchange rate weren't desirable and Japan would react and respond to the situation as necessary. Abe noted that it was agreed at the meetings of the group of twenty that excessive volatility or disorderly moves in foreign exchange markets could have an adverse impact on stability. Abe declined to comment on the level of the yen but reiterated that currency market trends must be observed. He finally reiterated the "need to carefully watch these movements of the exchange rate and as necessary we would like to respond."

This week, the Reserve Bank of Australia slashed the official interest rate to a new historic low of 1.75 percent, a move to counter the latest emergence of disinflation in the country. Data last week showed deflation in the CPI and the weakest annual gain on record for core inflation.

In its quarterly monetary policy statement released also this week, the RBA forecasts that core inflation is unlikely to reach the bottom of its target this year. The bank predicted underlying inflation of between 1 and 2 percent in 2016, and then within 1.5 percent and 2.5 percent through June 2018 while three months ago, the forecast range for this year was 2 to 3 percent. Finally, the RBA left economic growth forecasts at 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent this year and next and said unemployment will remain around the current 5.7 percent.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30110

The USDKD opened at 0.30110 yesterday morning.



1.4427 against the dollar.

On Thursday night, Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that drastic fluctuations in the yen's exchange rate were not desirable and Japan would react and respond to the situation as necessary. Markets however did not react to the news, and the Yen continued to trade near the highest level seen lately of 105.55. The currency closed the week at 107.12

President of Atlanta Fed Dennis Lockhart said this week that the Fed is not getting behind the curve on inflation and has options on when to raise rates. According to his speech, the incoming economic data will be major aspect of his decision-making on raising rates. He also mentioned there were no risks at the moment that the economy is overheating.

San Francisco Fed President John Williams laid out an "optimistic" outlook for the US economy, with unemployment coming down, growth rebounding and inflation picking up, allowing the US central bank to raise interest rates gradually. "I

hike next month is a low as 10 percent and the lowest it has been for months. In fact pricing for one hike by December has a probability lower than 50 percent.

US Manufacturing

Nonfarm payroll came at 160,000 jobs in April, lower than economist expectations, while the unemployment rate held steady at 5 percent. Wages rose during the month, with average hourly earnings up 8 cents an hour, representing a 2.5 percent on an annual basis. The average work week rose to 34.5 hours. The concern remains that those counted as not in the labor force surged by 562,000 for the month to more than 94 million in the country

In addition, US factory activity expanded at a slower pace in April. However, a rise in export orders to a one year high and signs an inventory drag was fading offered hope for the manufacturing sector. The manufacturing ISM index also fell back in April to 50.8 from 51.8 in March. Despite



The 2016 Acadia – a powerful, capable crossover SUV inspires confidence and is packed with family-friendly features – now available across GMC Behbehani showrooms in Kuwait for just 10,950 KWD

Designed for families on-the-go, the GMC Acadia – a refined, full-size crossover known for its flexibility, accommodating space and functionality – has never been more within reach. GMC dealerships in Kuwait are currently running a special offer, one that provides buyers with a host of benefits including a starting price of just 10,950 KWD with cash back worth 1,000 KWD.

Moreover, the deal promises an extended warranty for 5 years unlimited mileage. In addition, the Acadia customers will enjoy a free 3 years/60,000 km free maintenance service. The warranty also comes with Roadside Assistance for a period of four years.

Perfectly tailored for family life, the Acadia which



comes equipped with highly-advanced safety features – provides drivers with the convenience, comfort, and style needed to navigate today's fast-paced urban lifestyle.

Acadia's 2016 lineup includes the SLE, the SLT and the Denali models, with seven- or eight-passenger configurations. All Acadia models are equipped with a 288hp 3.6L V-6 engine and a six-speed transmission powertrain, that includes performance and fuel economy optimizing technology.

The Acadia's interior functionality has become a family favorite, including the Smart Slide seating system, which allows easy access to the third row for both

seven- and eight-passenger seating configurations. Additionally, the second and third row still fold flat for class-leading maximum cargo space.

The spacious interior of the GMC Acadia is complemented with the user friendly and feature rich IntelliLink infotainment system which is available as standard on the base SLE for the 2016 model year. IntelliLink uses Bluetooth or USB to connect the driver smartphone to Acadia's high-resolution, full-color touch screen display. IntelliLink allows smartphone control via voice activation and steering wheel mounted controls, and streaming stereo audio from the phone.

Most importantly, IntelliLink enables seamless

integration of stowed portable devices with Acadia's infotainment system, allowing minimum driver distractions.

Built on the philosophy of 'Commands Respect', GMC has built pickups since 1902. With a rich heritage in the Middle East and an impressive 111 years of presence, innovation and engineering excellence is built into all GMC vehicles. The brand is evolving to offer more fuel-efficient pickups, crossovers and SUVs.

The GMC portfolio in the Middle East features Terrain and Acadia crossovers. The Sierra half-ton pickup is the most powerful light duty pickup on the market, and the first full size pickup to receive the highest possible five-star Overall Vehicle Score for safety since the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration changed its New Car Assessment Program for the 2011 model year. Every GMC model, including Yukon and Yukon XL, full-size SUVs, is available in Denali luxury trim. GMC also offers customers a high-level aftersales service experience.



LULU EXCHANGE DIRECTOR HONORED IN FORBES LIST

TOP INDIAN LEADERS IN THE ARAB WORLD FOR 2016

DUBAI: Forbes Middle East revealed the 4th Top Indian Leaders in the Arab World at a gala ceremony hosted at the



Waldorf Astoria, Dubai Palm Jumeirah on Tuesday. The defining list recognizes the most successful and groundbreaking Indian leaders in the Middle East.

T P Seetharaman, Indian Ambassador to the UAE, graced the occasion as the guest of honor and presented the awards to the winner. Achievers from various sectors like retail, industrials, healthcare, banking and finance, among others were recognized during the event in two categories - top owners and top executive management. Out of the 100 in the top owners list, 91 of them were based out of the UAE. Diversified companies dominated the awards list, followed by retail and industrials, while luminaries from 21 other sectors were also honored at the event.

In recognition of his contribution to the banking and finance sector in the GCC, Aadeb Ahamed, Director, LuLu Exchange, was honored for the second consecutive year. Under Aadeb's leadership, LuLu Exchange has grown to become one of the leading remittance

and foreign exchange companies in the region. Many other noted owners and founders were also honored during the ceremony, including, Yusuff Ali M A, Ravi Pillai, Dr Shamsheer Vayalil, Sunny Varkey and Dr Azad Moopen, among others. In addition to entrepreneurs, Forbes Middle East also honoured Indians who have leadership position in the region, including Sanjeev Chaddah, CEO of PepsiCo Asia, Middle East and Africa, Raghavan Seetharamn, Group CEO, Doha Bank and Raghu Malhotra, President - Middle East and Africa, MasterCard, among others.

"It is a great honour to be recognized as a leader in your industry. It was wonderful to celebrate the occasion with other successful business leaders and my team.

The recognition will help me reassert my commitment to set management benchmark standards in the region's financial industry," said Aadeb Ahamed of the sidelines of receiving the award. He further added, "Sharing the evening



with the stalwarts from a variety of industries was a great experience, but I don't feel as though my contributions have been any greater than those of my incredible team of associates at LuLu

Exchange, who have been crucial in the growth of this company. I would also like to thank Forbes Middle East for this recognition and dedicate it to all my associates at the organization."



KIB RECEIVES THE 'BEST ISLAMIC BANK IN KUWAIT 2016' AWARD

WORLD FINANCE RECOGNITION FOR THIRD YEAR IN A ROW

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) adds a new achievement to its track record after receiving the "Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait" for 2016 Award from World Finance for the third consecutive year. KIB was rightfully awarded by the specialized and most reputed financial magazine in the London Stock Exchange in recognition of its unique achievements and commitment to providing innovative banking services and solutions in accordance with the Islamic Sharia principles.

"We are extremely proud that World Finance, the specialized institution in the financial and banking sector that is known for its credibility and impartiality, recognizes us for our successive achievements and especially after our recent win of the "Best Sharia Compliant Bank in the Middle East" Award for 2016 from Capital Finance International", commented KIB Chairman, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

Al-Jarrah confirmed that KIB's sequential achievements, honour and awards are a solid recognition of its distinction and leadership in the Islamic banking sector, as well as an obvious proof of customers' trust, and confidence. "KIB's success, and sound reputation is based primarily on three factors; its prudent leadership, investment in technology and innovation, and its continuous strive to employ talented professionals with high calibre which have helped collectively in putting the bank at the forefront of the industry", he added.

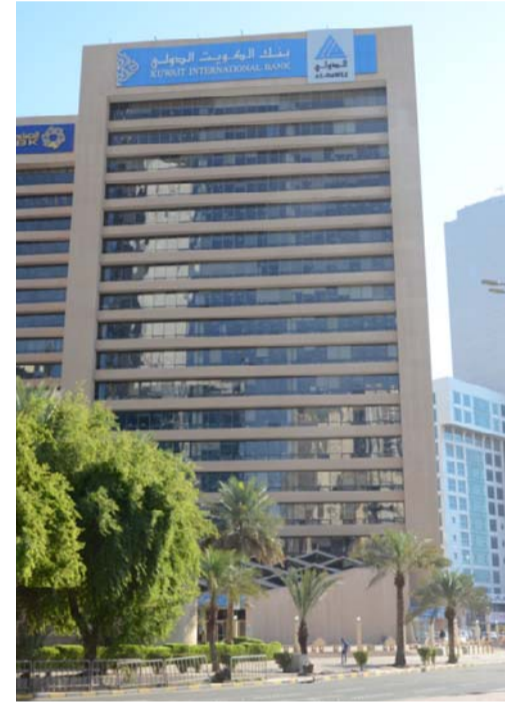
Al-Jarrah concluded by affirming the bank's determination to keep moving forward by

developing innovative Islamic banking products for its individual and corporate customers to satisfy their banking demands and needs. He asserted that the secret to maintaining the forefront position lies in continued innovation with trust and ease.

It's worth noting that Kuwait International Bank (formerly known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank) was founded in May 1973 to meet the



growing needs of customers, at that time, and provide specialized services in the real estate sector. In July 2007, the bank went through a one-of-a-kind transformation from a traditional/conventional bank into a leading comprehensive bank operating in accordance with the Islamic Sharia under a new name "Kuwait International Bank". Today, the bank stands at the forefront of the industry and offers a wide range of banking products and services like: Deposits, Investment services, finance products like Murabaha (auto, real estate, and commodi-



ties), Istisna'a, Tawarruq, Wakala, lease to own, credit cards and many others. KIB services are tailored to individuals, as well as small and medium businesses like finance projects, treasury, LC's, LG's and real estate services like property management.

JOYALUKKAS JEWELLERY INAUGURATES NEW SHOWROOM IN SHARJAH ROLLA

SHARJAH: The global giant Joyalukkas Jewellery opened new showroom at Sharjah Rolla. This is as part of their mega expansion plan for this financial year as committed rapid expansion across India, GCC and a couple of new countries. This compliments my vision to make the brand accessible and available to every jewellery lover in the world," said Joy Alukkas, Chairman & MD, Joyalukkas Group.

Joyalukkas Jewellery is currently a 120 plus showroom chain network spread across 11 countries around the world. The brand which is one of the world's largest jewellery retail chains is a part of a multi-billion dollar global conglomerate, which has varied business interests. The Joyalukkas Group's business interests include Jewellery, Money Exchange, Fashion & Silks, Luxury Air Charter, Malls and Realty. The world's largest jewellery retail chain has presence in Singapore, London, UAE, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman & India and will soon open in 2 new countries. The jewellery retailer currently has a customer base of over 10 million customers worldwide and offers over 1 million choices in all types

of jewellery at each of its showroom.

"Our plan for Joyalukkas Jewellery in this financial year includes strengthening our presence across the world, opening our showrooms in cities and towns that we feel is ready for Joyalukkas experience" said Joy Alukkas, Chairman & MD, Joyalukkas Group. The showroom features over One Million dazzling collections and exquisite designs in gold, diamond, precious stones, platinum and pearl. The collection is a mix of traditional, ethno contemporary and international designs that have won of hearts and following of customers around the world.

"Vision for our jewellery business is to 'ornament the world' and we will manage this by offering customers the best mix of Price, Choice, Convenience and Service" said John Paul Alukkas, Executive Director, Joyalukkas Group.

This international jewellery retail chain is also one of few retail chains to be recognised with many awards and accolades for its exceptional standards in jewellery retailing. Joyalukkas has also been awarded the prestigious 'Superbrand' status for six years in a row in the UAE.

ABK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF ITS FIRST 'DOUBLE YOUR SALARY' WEEKLY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its first 'Double Your Salary' weekly draw on 3 May, 2016 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, announcing the names of the winners for this week. The new promotion includes up to five monthly draws, with two winners per draw and will run from 1 May to 30 September, 2016.

The winners this week are:
1) Shaymaa Abdulaziz S Alshoumar - Jahra 1 Branch
2) Saad Ammassh Farhan Alenezi - Shuwaikh Branch

New customers who transfer their salary to ABK will receive KD 100 and automatically be entered into the weekly draws to double their salaries.

Existing customers who are already transferring their salary to ABK will be entered into a separate draw.

The Bank's next draw will be held on 10 May, 2016 where two new lucky winners will be announced subsequently. All winners will be contacted personally and a weekly announcement will be made through the media with the winners' names.

AUB ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-HASSAD SAVING PROGRAM

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank held its weekly draw of Al-Hassad Islamic Saving program on May 04. 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 Sharia 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: Mane Mohammed Abdullah.

The winners of the KD1,000 prize each: Nuruddin Arnod Wala, Hafedh A A Al Hadad , Alya Shwaish Al Azmi, Hessah Abdullah Al Sahlawi , Anwar Jassim Al-Helail , Mohammad Yousef Al-Awadhi, Farhan Saddah Al-Enezi, Mohammad Naser Al-Dahash , Latifa Waeel Al Matar, Karunanidhi Kolandaswamy , Bibi Hussain Ali, Salwa Abdulrazzaq Al Razouqi, Saeed Hamad Al Ajmi, Fahed Ahmed Ali Al Bannai, Akil Ahmedally Lookman, Talal Ali Al

Shammari , Badreyah Saoud Abdulaziz, Saif Mohammad Al-Azmi, Ahmed Qanber Abdullah, Habib Abbas Abdulla, Jalilah Sayed Habib, Nada Hasan Hussain, Ahmed Mallala Abdulla, Zuhair A. Hammad Mohd, Masooma Amin Akbar.

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.

VANILLA PRICE BUBBLE VEXES PRIME-PRODUCER MADAGASCAR

ANTANANARIVO: The sweet flavors of vanilla are taking on a bitter edge for buyers in Madagascar as prices have almost quadrupled but quality has declined, with experts blaming speculation, money laundering and a poor harvest. Madagascar, producer of 80 percent of the world's vanilla, has seen the spice's price jump from about \$60 per kilogram (2.2 pounds) in 2014 to as much as \$220 now.

In some local supermarkets, vanilla-used in everything from ice cream to cakes-has become so expensive that the pods have been removed from the spice aisle and placed close to the cash registers to deter thieves. "The 2015 harvest was not excellent, about 1,200 tons compared to 1,800 the year before," Emmanuel Nee, head of the ingredients department at French spice trading company Touton, told AFP. "But that doesn't justify the huge price jump we've seen this year," he added, instead blaming "extremely speculative" traders and an "irrational" market. Dominique Rakotoson, head of a Madagascar family-operated vanilla company and one of the few people willing to talk on the record, pointed to large operators for stockpiling and hiking up prices.

Half of Madagascar's vanilla is exported to Europe, and a third to the United States-but the island is not seeing the potential benefits of higher prices. "Some buyers abroad have now cancelled or reduced their orders," said Rakotoson, while food production companies are turning to cheaper synthetic vanilla as an alternative.



MADAGASCAR: Producer of 80 percent of the world's vanilla, has seen the spice's price jump from about \$60 per kilogram (2.2 pounds) in 2014 to as much as \$220 now. — AFP

All the while, the quality of Madagascar's crops have been slipping. Many producers are harvesting the vanilla pods before they reach maturity, hoping to cash in on the high prices and also to pre-empt the theft of their increasingly valuable crops. There has also been a spike in vacuum packing, bypassing a complex and months-long preparation

process that dries out the pod and reveals the spice's sweet aroma.

By trapping the moisture in the pod, "vacuum packing interrupts the drying process, which compromises the quality of the vanilla," explained Landry Njaka, secretary of the National Vanilla Platform, the industry's trade association. —AFP

AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-NAJMA ACCOUNT DRAW

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the Al-Najma Account daily draw on 8th May, 2016.

The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry represented by Mr. Abdulaziz Al Ashkanani.

The winners of the Al Najma daily draw are:
Farouk Khuzari — KD 7000,
Bhanu Sindhi Ved Prakash Sindhi— KD 7000,
Khalil Abl Al-Shatti — KD 7000,
Jaber Antar Ali Ahmad— KD 7000.

Al-Najma awards are now brighter and bigger than ever
With the revamped Al Najma account, all your dreams will be turned to reality. On top of offering the highest daily prize in Kuwait for KD 7,000, now our Mega prize draws got bigger to reach KD 250,000. The new prizes scheme for Al-Najma account. Daily draw to win KD 7000.

Quarterly draws to win great prizes that would start from KD 100,000 to KD 250,000.

- 1ST quarter KD 100 000
- 2ND quarter KD 150 000
- 3RD quarter KD 200 000
- 4TH quarter KD 250 000

With Al Najma you have more chances to win greater prizes

- * Each KD 25 kept in your account gives you one chance to win
- * Each KD 25 kept in your account for one week will give you a chance to enter the daily draw.
- * Each KD 25 kept in your account for 3 months will give you chance to enter the quarterly draw.
- Additional features
- * ATM card
- * Issue a credit card against your account
- * Obtain all CBK banking services
- You deserve to win! Open an account now with just KD 500 and you will enter all draws.



EMC LAUNCHES NEW WAVE OF TECH

NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES TO MODERNIZE DATA CENTERS

By Islam Al-Sharaa

LAS VEGAS: EMC Corporation has announced multiple new modern data center products and services fundamental to customers' modern data center transformation initiatives. This transformation is leading to complex data center priorities: maintaining traditional business applications as efficiently and in a low-cost manner as possible without compromising service integrity, and using those savings to support next-gen application development needs.

Each requires different investments, which largely come from the same (typically flat) IT budget. The first step toward balancing these conflicted IT priorities is to modernize the infrastructure on which IT is built. EMC introduced the new EMC Unity family of all-flash storage; Virtustream Storage Cloud platform; EMC MyService360 service-centric online dashboard, EMC Enterprise Copy Data Management (eCDM) and ViPR Controller 3.0.

"The IT industry is in a state of massive transformation, resulting in both disruption and great opportunity. Every business leader, across every industry, is facing the dilemma of how to support and grow traditional IT infrastructure while modernizing the data center in order to support the development of new applications and advance their digital agendas. Some are doing all of this simultaneously. The products and services announced today will help advance the customer's journey to build a modern data center in order to thrive as a digital business," said David Goulden, EMC Information Infrastructure CEO.

EMC Unity

EMC has declared 2016 the Year of All-Flash for primary storage, and EMC expanded its market-leading all-flash portfolio with the new EMC Unity family of storage arrays. The new all-flash array, ideal for small and medium-size IT deployments, sets the new standard for simplicity, affordability and flexibility. It is available in all-flash, hybrid, converged and software-defined configurations and is designed to help customers make an affordable and simple transition from disk to flash.

EMC Unity offers cloud-like proactive management and monitoring through a modern HTML5 task-oriented interface that leads the user through daily operations and integrates with VMware and Microsoft ecosystems for easy third-party management. It features new Proactive Assist capabilities designed to give IT control, visibility and automated management of Unity storage systems.

With 3X the performance of EMC's previous generation VNXarrays, EMC Unity can deliver up to 300K IOPS. EMC Unity is purpose-built to deliver value to customers with predictable all-flash performance and enterprise-class features. Since every business has its own unique storage challenges, Unity has been designed to offer greater flexibility and deployment options than competing data storage offerings, with the ability to scale up to 3 Petabytes (PB) and up to 300K IOPS.

Designed for all flash, Unity provides some of the best flash



Chairman, president, and CEO of EMC Corporation Joe Tucci (left), Michael Dell, founder, chairman and CEO of Dell (right), during EMC world Summit.

economics in the industry, starting under \$18,000. Additional inline data services will be added in the future to further lower effective \$/GB cost. Unity also introduces a new level of affordability for customers deploying hybrid arrays, with prices starting under \$10,000. Unity provides incredible unified storage density, with up to 80TB of all-flash storage in a dense, 2U array.

Virtustream Storage Cloud

New Virtustream Storage Cloud is a global cloud storage platform offering enterprise-levels of resiliency and performance combined with true web scale. The launch of Virtustream Storage Cloud represents the latest expansion in capabilities for Virtustream which, over the course of the last ten months as an EMC company, has continued to innovate on its core enterprise-class, mission-critical infrastructure-as-a-service platform while enhancing the portfolio with a comprehensive set of managed services capabilities for both on- and off-premises implementations.

Virtustream Storage Cloud is built for the world's largest enterprises, service providers, and public sector organizations, which need to secure, manage, and store mission-critical data in the cloud. Virtustream Storage Cloud provides a hyper-scale storage platform with enterprise-class resiliency and performance. This new platform has been extensively tested, with underlying elements running successfully in production for several years as the primary object storage platform for a select set of customers managing multiple Exabytes of data, with hundreds of billions of objects under management and an event

monitoring system that processes more than 35 billion events per day.

The new Virtustream Storage Cloud offering builds from this hardened and customer-tested base. In addition to availability as a Web-scale object storage platform, Virtustream Storage Cloud provides seamless cloud extensibility for on-premises EMC storage, providing customers with simple and efficient tiering, long-term backup retention, and cold storage in the cloud, with single-source EMC support. Virtustream Storage Cloud has been designed from the ground up to support a complete range of enterprise use cases. Additionally, organizations soon will be able to deploy Web-scale object storage for cloud-native applications, leveraging a simple, S3-compatible application programming interface.

MyService360

The new EMC MyService360 cloud-based service dashboard - available at no additional cost to customers registered with EMC Online Support - provides a visually compelling, near real-time visibility into the health and status of a customer's entire EMC data center environment. MyService360 is built using EMC's internal data lake and provides powerful analytics and visualization tools designed to improve, enhance and simplify the way customers engage with EMC products to make their jobs easier.

EMC MyService360 is a service-centric cloud-based dashboard, providing near real-time visibility into the status and health of a customer's EMC data center environment. Supporting hundreds of EMC products, MyService360 provides customers with a highly visual and personalized online capability that consolidates proactive monitoring of EMC systems deployed across a customer's global enterprise. Available at no additional cost to customers with an EMC warranty or maintenance agreement, the cloud-based service is designed to help IT teams increase risk-readiness and respond with speed and accuracy when fulfilling IT service requests or diagnosing

potential issues. Built on top of a secure, cloud-based EMC Internal Data Lake, MyService360 is designed to modernize the service and support experience for the enterprise. EMC's Internal Data Lake leverages modern infrastructure using EMC Storage and converged platforms including Isilon XtremIO and VCE VxRack System 1000 with FLEX Nodes, VMware, Greenplum, Pivotal Cloud Foundry and third-party technology to deliver powerful analytics and data-driven visualizations designed to help enable customers to make well-informed IT decisions.

Enterprise Copy Data Management

EMC Enterprise Copy Data Management (eCDM) is an expansion of EMC's Copy Data Management portfolio which helps customers tackle data sprawl and reduce the cost of storing and managing multiple copies of the same data. eCDM enables customers to modernize their storage and protection strategy with discovery, automation and optimization of copy data to reduce costs and streamline operations. eCDM provides companies with a pan-enterprise solution to monitor, manage and analyze copy data, eliminating the waste organizations will spend storing data on the wrong tier of data or when they no longer need the data all together.

ViPR Controller 3.0

ViPR Controller 3.0 is designed to help customers transition to the modern data center by bridging traditional and cloud native environments to enable business transformation. New updates announced today help customers modernize their multivendor storage environments, with support for over 50 EMC and third-party storage platforms.



Chairman, president, and CEO of EMC Corporation Joe Tucci (left), Islam Al-Sharaa Kuwait Times IT Director (center) Michael Dell, founder, chairman and CEO of Dell (right), during EMC World Summit.



Jeremy Burton President, Products and Marketing



Journalist and media analyst during the EMC Summit



Mohamed Talaat, Vice President at EMC, Saudi Arabia (Left), Habib Mahakian, Vice President for Gulf and Pakistan.

EMC UPBEAT OVER CLOUD SOLUTIONS

By Islam Al-Sharaa

LAS VEGAS: During the EMC World Summit in Las Vegas, Kuwait Times spoke to Habib Mahakian, Vice President for Gulf and Pakistan.

Kuwait Times: The drop in oil prices has affected everything in Kuwait. Has this impacted any EMC projects in Kuwait?

Habib Mahakian: Most companies' budgets are shrinking, but operational budgets are increasing, and maintenance contracts help us and our customers to renew and change solutions with good financial facilities from us. Most customers cannot purchase complete solutions and do not

have the budget for this, but they are buying cloud servers (cloud solution) and the company buys the servers they require with the budget they have. Today, all companies are heading to the cloud to cut operational costs and maintenance contracts, so cloud solutions are the best for our customers.

Kuwait Times: What will be the effect of the merger between Dell and EMC in the Kuwait market? Will it be good for EMC?

Mahakian: For sure it will be very good for us. Dell has the SMP market and EMC has the enterprise market, so the two of us will cover most of the market in the region.

SCORES HELD AS VIETNAM BREAKS UP FISH DEATHS PROTEST

HANOI: Vietnamese police detained scores of people yesterday as they broke up a protest against a Taiwanese company accused of being behind a toxic leak that has caused mass fish deaths off the central coast. The protest in Hanoi, which follows a similar demonstration last weekend, was swiftly dispersed by authorities yesterday, an AFP reporter witnessed, in a communist country where all shows of dissent are tightly controlled. Several hundred demonstrators had gathered in the heart of the capital outraged at the poisoning of waters near Ha Tinh province that has left tons of fish and clams dead and decimated the local fishing industry, accusing Taiwanese steel mill Formosa of overseeing a toxic leak.

"Never has the Vietnamese sea been this badly polluted," army veteran Nguyen Manh Trung, 68, told AFP. But "the police are now more and more professional in breaking up protests," he added of the scores of people taken away in unmarked cars.

Vietnam's prime minister has vowed to get tough on those responsible for the leak, but an official inquiry has yet to apportion blame. However state-run media has pointed the finger at a 1.5 kilometer (one mile) waste water pipeline from Formosa's multi-billion dollar steel plant into the ocean. The company has a bad record of environmental scandals spanning the globe. But it has not formally been linked to the mass fish poisoning.

As the scandal unfolded in April a Formosa communications official was sacked after he said Vietnam needs "to choose whether to catch fish and shrimp or to build a state-of-the-art steel mill". "You cannot have both," the official said. The company later apologized for the comments and has launched its own inquiry but public anger is snowballing. Vietnam's central provinces are heavily dependent on seafood, including farmed shrimp, catfish and wild-caught tuna. Last year the country earned \$6.6 billion from seafood exports. — AFP



HANOI: A local militia member stands guard at the unusual empty Opera House square where protesters initially planned an anti-Formosa rally after a heavy Hanoi municipal police force has broken it by dozens of arrests in Hanoi yesterday. — AFP



New York: Alice Singer, center, an artist who is a resident of the assisted living apartments Prospect Park Residence, is visited by her daughter Joyce Singer, left, and her next-door neighbor, Annemarie Mogil. — AP photos

5 ELDERLY HOLDOUTS FIGHTING CLOSURE OF ASSISTED-LIVING HOME

'I THINK WE HAVE THAT RIGHT TO DO WHAT WE WANT TO DO'

NEW YORK: The stately dining room at this once-bustling old-age home has been emptied, its floors ripped up. The tiny general store's shelves are barren, and the exercise room has gone silent. No one is leafing through the books of the library or digging into a treat in the ice cream parlor or painting at an easel in the art room. In the hulking assisted-living facility, all that remains are five women, ages 91 to 101, in the fight of their long lives. Two years after the owner of Prospect Park Residence announced the building in the trendy Park Slope neighborhood would be sold and converted to condos, its fate remains in limbo.

The announcement came in a meeting that elicited screams and wails from among the 125 residents. Yet nearly all of them - including Holocaust survivors, a Tuskegee airman and a floor full of people with advanced dementia - have heeded management's call to leave. In a sort of age-reversed version of a campus sit-in, however, five have refused to go, challenging the handling of the sale and sparking a web of litigation. The holdouts' fight is shedding light on the rights of the elderly and the difficulty of transition in life's twilight.

"I think we have that right to do what we want to do," said 93-year-old Annemarie Mogil, a retired social worker who has remained in her eighth-floor apartment and says she can't imagine leaving Brooklyn or imposing on a daughter who already has her hands full. "I've earned my rest. I worked hard. I deserve my peace." Down the hall, Alice Singer takes solace in the place she has come to regard as home, decorated with oil and acrylic paintings she made. She speaks of small comforts - big windows and bright light - but also of the overarching fear: She doesn't know where she'd go if she had to leave.

Health rules

A few floors below, it is the same fear that keeps 98-year-old Lillian Guide from leaving her apartment. "All of this," said Deborah Pollack, the daughter of Guide, who has Alzheimer's disease, "is an effort to protect my mother from having to go into a storage facility." Prospect Park Residence, in operation for years and anchored on a lucrative plot of Brooklyn land, was purchased in 2006 by developer Haysha Deitsch for about \$40 million. In 2013, he reached a deal to sell the property for \$76.5 million,

with millions more in potential bonuses if he could meet deadlines for emptying the building. The home's fate remained secret, following state Department of Health rules, until its closure plan was approved and then announced in March 2014. Lawyers and others allied with families of the residents see more to the story, though.

It was billed as an assisted-living facility, but unbeknownst to tenants, it was not licensed as one by the state until 10 months before it submitted its closure plan. In litigation predating the current battles, Deitsch insisted he was simply a landlord, and "not in the health care business." Those who oppose the owner believe he sought a license simply because he thought it would ease the removal of residents, avoiding potentially costly and lengthy evictions through New York City's housing court. The rules for long-term care centers only require 30 days' notice to residents before closing. Deitsch gave them 90.

"If you tried to evict 120 old people in landlord-tenant court, it would take you five years and probably \$10 million in attorney fees," said John O'Hara, an attorney who has filed seven wrongful-death suits against the facility claiming inadequate treatment or improper discharge played a role in fatalities. By getting assisted-living status, O'Hara said, "he gets a license just to kick everyone out." As Prospect Park Residence was emptying, a small band of tenants decided the home was worth putting up a fight for. Local politicians came to their defense, and The Legal Aid Society sued on their behalf. As the months ticked by, they said Deitsch purposely worsened conditions in hopes of persuading them to leave. O'Hara called it a "campaign of terror."

Ineffective and noisy

The holdout residents were being bathed less frequently and saw housekeeping scaled back and some elevators shut off, their backers say. On hot days, they said central air conditioning was cut off, leaving many parts of the building stifling, and window units were ineffective and noisy. On cold days, they said the heat was tampered with. Singer remembered her aides jury-rigging baths with microwaved water because management had shut off the hot water. Deitsch, the opponents of the sale say, orchestrated those moves all while raising fees on the hold-



New York: Annemarie Mogil sits in her bedroom holding the camera she uses to make photographs from her window at Prospect Park Residence, an assisted living apartment complex for seniors in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

outs. Then, in a countersuit against the families of the remaining residents, he called for \$50 million in damages for their interference in the sale, "slanderous" allegations and resulting "mental anguish."

"In the court of public opinion, we're never going to win. But we weren't left with a choice," Deitsch said in a brief interview. "I'm not trying to win the public. I'm trying to take care of the people and I'm trying to do what's right." In an emailed reply to additional questions from The Associated Press, Deitsch said he wishes some circumstances were different, but he always followed state law. Residents of the home always "received outstanding services and care" and he never cut back on services, he said.

Choosing to close was not an easy decision, he said, but costs became untenable at Prospect Park Residence after the expiration of temporary tax benefits. He rejects the idea that he sought licensure for the facility simply to ease evictions; had he planned to close, he said, he never would have gone through the cumbersome process at all. He portrayed the remaining residents as unable to make decisions on their own and represented by individuals with questionable motivations.

"We have not settled because the representatives of those who remain are not negotiating in good faith. They repeatedly have changed their positions and moved the goal post," Deitsch wrote. "Those representing the remaining residents are acting out of greed and malice and appear unwilling to offer any compromise or reasonable position." In legal filings, he has said the facility is running a deficit of \$100,000 a month and bankruptcy is possible.

But Deitsch finds a tiny bit of common ground with his opposition, saying residents' complaints should really be with the Legislature and state regulators. New York City Councilman Brad Lander, a vocal opponent to the handling of the sale, also sees lax state oversight, though he isn't letting Deitsch off the hook. "He is evil. He is acting in a way that I think is sociopathic. But the state health department has essentially taken the side of the sociopath instead of the side of the seniors who it's their job to protect," Lander said. — AP

NURSING HOMES TURN TO EVICTION TO DROP DIFFICULT PATIENTS

NEW YORK: Nursing homes are increasingly evicting their most challenging residents, testing protections for some of society's most vulnerable, advocates for the aged and disabled say. Those targeted for eviction are frequently poor and suffering from dementia, with families unsure of what to do, according to residents' allies. Removing them allows an often stretched-thin staff to avoid the demands of labor-intensive patients in favor of ones who are easier and more profitable. "When they get tired of caring for the resident, they kick the resident out," said Richard Mollot of the Long Term Care Community Coalition, a New York advocacy group.

Complaints and lawsuits across the US point to a spike in evictions even as observers note available records only give a glimpse of the problem. An Associated Press analysis of federal data from the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program finds complaints about discharges and evictions are up about 57 percent since 2000. It was the top-reported grievance in 2014, with 11,331 such issues logged by ombudsmen, who work to resolve problems faced by residents of nursing homes, assisted living facilities and other adult-care settings.

The American Health Care Association, which represents nursing homes, defends the discharge process as lawful and necessary to remove residents who can't be kept safe or who endanger the safety of others, and says processes are in place to ensure evictions aren't done improperly. Dr. David Gifford, a senior vice president with the group, said a national policy discussion is necessary because there are a growing number of individuals with complex, difficult-to-manage cases who outpace the current model of what a nursing home offers.

Justifications for discharge

"There are times these individuals can't be managed or they require so much staff attention to manage them that the other residents are endangered," he said. The numbers of both nursing homes and residents in the US have decreased in recent years; about 1.4 million people occupy about 15,600 homes now. The overall number of complaints across a spectrum of issues has fallen in the past decade, though complaints about evictions are down only slightly from their high-water mark in 2007, the federal figures show. Meanwhile, the share of complaints that evictions and discharges represent has steadily grown, holding the top spot since 2010.

Advocates say offending facilities routinely flout federal law, attempting to exploit and widen justifications for discharge. They say hospitalizations are a common time when facilities seek to purge residents, even though the Nursing Home Reform Act of 1987 guarantees Medicaid recipients' beds must be held in their nursing homes during hospital stays of up to a week.

"They try and take the easy way out and refuse to let the person back in," said Eric Carlson, an attorney who has contested evictions for the advocacy group Justice in Aging. Bruce Anderson, 66, suffered a brain injury more than a decade ago, and had been through several transfers before ending up at Norwood Pines Alzheimer's Care Center in Sacramento, California. His daughter, Sara Anderson,

said the facility began insisting it wasn't an appropriate setting for him, and after he was hospitalized with pneumonia, he wasn't allowed back.

She saw the action as retaliatory after repeated complaints about her father's care. She appealed the facility's action and won, but said it still refused to let him back. He remains hospitalized. "It doesn't matter if you win or lose it, there's no enforcement of these hearings. We didn't know that the hearing was pointless," she said. Norwood Pines did not return calls seeking comment.

Federal law allows unrequested transfers of residents for a handful of reasons: the facility's closure; failure to pay; risk posed to the health and safety of others; improvement in the resident's condition to the point of no longer needing the home's services; or because the facility can no longer meet the person's needs. Though that final category is often cited in evictions, advocates dispute how often it fits.

"The majority of the time, it's because the resident is considered difficult," said Tony Chicotel, an attorney for California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform. Chicotel says involuntary discharges are almost entirely focused on Medicaid beneficiaries and that economics sometimes play a role in the ousters. Rather than a long-term Medicaid patient, many facilities would prefer to fill a bed with a private-pay resident or a short-term rehabilitation patient, whose care typically brings a far higher reimbursement rate under Medicare.

Fight the eviction

Vicki Becker of Sammamish, Washington, said she began receiving pressure from administrators at her mother's assisted living facility about two years ago to have the then-94-year-old transferred elsewhere. For the first six years she had lived in the home, she had paid more than \$5,000 monthly. It was only after Becker's mother exhausted her savings and went on Medicaid that the facility initiated discharge proceedings, making her wonder if money was a factor. Becker hired a lawyer and enlisted the help of the local ombudsman to fight the eviction. Though the facility eventually dropped the discharge case, it left her feeling as if her mother's rights had been violated. "It was her home," she said. "What an awful thing to do to somebody."

Whatever facilities' reasons, the process can be harrowing. "It's not just losing their home. It's losing their whole community, it's losing their familiar caregivers, it's losing their roommate, it's losing the people they sit with and have meals with," said Alison Hirschel, an attorney who directs the Michigan Elder Justice Initiative and has fought evictions. "It's completely devastating."

Agyemang Bediako knows the feeling well. After breaking both legs in a jump from a burning building, he found himself recovering at a New York City nursing home. He said he was still undergoing rehabilitation when the facility told him it would be discharging him to a homeless shelter. "I was panicked," he said, describing his thoughts before a successful appeal of his case. "What am I going to do? I couldn't even eat. I became depressed. I wanted to kill myself." — AP



CALIFORNIA: Nurse Zachary Notario, center, and Janette Wilson, right, look after her husband, John Wilson, who suffers from Lou Gehrig's disease, at the Dignity Health St John's Pleasant Valley facility in Camarillo, California. — AP



NEW YORK: Photo shows Prospect Park Residence, an assisted living complex for seniors, near the entrance to Prospect Park in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

STARFISH BABIES RETURN IN DROVES FOLLOWING MASSIVE DIE-OFF

EUREKA, California: Doves of baby starfish are returning to Oregon and Northern California's shores after a wasting disease decimated whole populations of the creatures over the past two years along the West Coast. Data collected by Oregon State University

researchers shows an unprecedented number of baby starfish, or sea stars, survived the summer and winter of 2015, the Eureka Times Standard reported Saturday. "When we looked at the settlement of the larval sea stars on rocks in 2014 during the epidemic, it

was the same or maybe even a bit lower than previous years," Oregon State University marine biology professor Bruce Menge said in a statement. "But a few months later, the number of juveniles was off the charts - higher than we'd ever seen - as much as 300 times normal."

A similar increase was found at sites just north of Trinidad, California, near Patrick's Point State Park. A baby starfish boom also was noted in the summer of 2014 near Santa Cruz. A virus killed millions of starfish on the Pacific Coast from Southern California to Alaska by causing them to lose their limbs and eventually disintegrate into slime and piles of tiny bones. The cause of the massive outbreak remains unclear. Some have hypothesized it to be abnormally warm waters in the Pacific Ocean, which have wreaked havoc on marine ecosystems for the past two years.

Humboldt State University Marine Lab Director Brian Tissot disagrees with that hypothesis since the virus spread during colder months and didn't expand as much during the abnormally warm 2015. "There is no clear environmental cue," Tissot said, adding the deadly wasting disease has declined in intensity but remains present. Experts say that while it's encouraging to see the abundance of baby starfish, the disease, competition and environmental factors make their survival difficult. — AP



WASHINGTON: In this file photo a healthy sea star is seen under a magnifying glass during a survey to determine the health of local sea star populations at Camano Island State Park in Washington state. — AP photos



WASHINGTON: A volunteer measures a tiny baby sea star on a concrete piling on Washington's Hood Canal near Poulsbo.



WASHINGTON: In this file photo, several sea stars cling to a concrete piling on Washington's Hood Canal near Poulsbo.

LOOMING MARIJUANA RULING COULD LIMIT FEDERAL PROSECUTIONS

'STOP PROSECUTING PEOPLE WHO ARE USING MEDICAL MARIJUANA FOR THEIR NEEDS'

SAN FRANCISCO: Rolland Gregg and his family have fought federal marijuana charges for more than three years, arguing that the roughly 70 marijuana plants investigators found on their Washington property were for their own medicinal use and fully complied with state law. A federal jury last year convicted Gregg, his mother and his wife of growing 50 to 100 marijuana plants - amounts their attorney said are in compliance with state medical marijuana law. With prison sentences looming, they have now turned to a recent act of Congress that they say should have stopped the U.S. Department of Justice from prosecuting them because they were doing what their state allowed. Marijuana is illegal under federal law, and the DOJ disagrees with Gregg's understanding of the new law.

"It's been the hardest thing I've ever had to deal with in my life when you see the government coming down on you for simply trying to be healthy," Gregg said. A federal appeals court is expected to issue a ruling soon on the scope of the law that could pave the way to end or overturn at least six federal marijuana criminal prosecutions and convictions in California and Washington, including Gregg's, and limit future prosecutions of medical marijuana users and dispensaries in eight Western states that allow them.

Implementing laws

"The 9th Circuit is the biggest circuit, one that contains lots of marijuana states. If they were to say, 'The federal government is prohibited from enforcing medical marijuana law,' that would be huge," said Sam Kamin, a professor at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law who studies marijuana regulation. At issue is a Congressional amendment that said the DOJ could not use funding Congress allocated to it for 2015 and 2016 to prevent states that have legalized medical marijuana from implement-

ing laws that permit its use, distribution and possession.

The amendment's bipartisan sponsors - California Congressmen Sam Farr, D-Carmel, and Dana Rohrabacher, R-Costa Mesa, - say it prohibits the DOJ from prosecuting people who are complying with state medical marijuana laws. California and more than 20 other states have legalized marijuana for medical use. The drug, however, remains illegal under federal law. The DOJ has interpreted the law more narrowly, saying it prevents prosecutors from trying to block state medical marijuana laws or charging state officials who implement them, yet permits US attorneys to go after marijuana dispensaries and growers.

The 9th Circuit is expected to clarify the amendment in appeals by three sets of defendants who have cited it as grounds for judges to dismiss their marijuana charges. Steve McIntosh, a dispensary owner in Los Angeles, had permits from local officials that show him in compliance with state law, according to his attorney, Marc Zilversmit. Under the Congressional amendment, the most the federal government can do is refer him to state authorities for prosecution, Zilversmit said.

Prosecuting people

Another defendant, marijuana grower Samuel Doyle, met Washington's requirements for collective cannabis grows for medical marijuana patients, his attorney Douglas Hiatt said. "He was growing medical marijuana for people who needed it, whether they could afford it or not," Hiatt said. The DOJ says McIntosh's dispensary had ties to a street gang, and Doyle and his co-defendants did not meet the legal requirements for medical marijuana in Washington. Investigators found more than 550 plants growing on the Spokane property Doyle oversaw, and at least one of Doyle's co-defendants indicated the marijuana

was being sold, prosecutors said.

The DOJ did not respond to a request for further comment. Gregg's case is not among the ones the 9th Circuit is set to rule on. But he has raised the same argument as the other defendants, and the 9th Circuit has put his appeal on hold pending the outcome of the other appeals, his attorney Phil Telfeyan said. "The feds think they have the power to override voters of the State of Washington and the will of Congress," said Telfeyan, co-founder of the nonprofit civil rights group Equal Justice Under Law. "It's up to the 9th Circuit to tell them, 'Enough is enough. You can't keep prosecuting people who are using medical marijuana for their needs.'"

The DOJ cited a county investigator's testimony that he saw evidence of a for-profit marijuana growing operation on Gregg's family property. The investigator said he found records that he believed were for drug sales, a scale and packaging material in the house as well as firearms, according to court documents. Gregg, 34, who owns an alternative energy company, denied he sold marijuana, saying he used the drug to treat pain following a snowboarding accident that left him with a broken back and neck. His mother has rheumatoid arthritis and his ex-wife had an eating disorder, he said, adding that all three had medical marijuana authorizations.

But the DOJ argued in his case and Doyle and McIntosh's cases that the Rohrabacher-Farr amendment doesn't bar it from prosecuting people violating federal drug law, even if they meet state law. Alex Kreit, a marijuana law expert at Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego, said the DOJ and marijuana defendants have strong arguments for their conflicting interpretations of the amendment. "The (amendment's) language is not a model of clarity," he said. "It really is open to a number of different interpretations." — AP

NEW STUDIES AND DATA IN THE FIELD OF SENTINEL NODE BIOPSY AND CONSERVATIVE MASTECTOMY

KUWAIT: Professor Kefah Mokbel lead oncoplastic surgeon at the London Breast Institute of the Princess Grace Hospital, part of HCA Healthcare UK, has presented three studies with new data at the fifth Kuwaiti Cancer Control Centre conference. The presentations focused on his research in the field of the sentinel node biopsy and conservative mastectomy combined with immediate reconstruction for the breast cancer.

In the largest study to date (involving approximately 3400 patients) professor Mokbel concluded that it is now feasible to safely avoid radical surgery to the armpits after chemotherapy for breast cancer that had previously spread to the lymph glands in the armpit. This approach will reduce the complications of surgery and improve the patients' quality of life. His research has identified new criteria to ensure that this new approach does not compromise the cancer outcome.

In his second presentation regarding the role of sentinel node biopsy for noninvasive breast cancer known as ductal carcinoma in situ, he presented data related to approximately 10,000 patients and concluded that the sentinel node biopsy for non-invasive breast cancer should be considered in patients undergoing lumpectomy only if the tumor was high grade and larger than two centimeters.

In the third presentation he presented the findings of his study that involved approximately 13,000 patients who had conservative mastectomy combined with immediate reconstruction for breast cancer. The procedure preserves the skin envelope of the breast including the nipple areole complex. Professor Mokbel



Professor Kefah Mokbel

reported a low incidences of local recurrence which equated to 2.38% and concluded that conservative mastectomy was a safe option for appropriately selected patients who require or opt to have mastectomy as part of breast cancer treatment or prevention of the disease.

In his personal series of nipple sparing mastectomy, professor Mokbel has reported a very low incidence of surgical complications, and no cases of local recurrence. Furthermore, the patients reported a very high level of satisfaction with the outcome of the procedure and its impact on their quality of life (9/10). At the end of his presentation he made a reference to the specific issues encountered in Kuwaiti patients with breast cancer and praised the high standards of management provided by the Kuwaiti Cancer Control Centre for patients with breast cancer under the auspices of Dr Medhat Oteifa, the head of surgical oncology at the Kuwaiti Cancer Control Centre.

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LULU HYPERMARKET LAUNCHES BEST OF EGYPT 2016



Lulu Hypermarket, the leading hypermarket chain in the region, kicked off its 'Best of Egypt 2016' promotion on May 5, 2016, with Ambassador of Egypt to Kuwait Yasser Atef inaugurating the festival at the hypermarket's Al-Rai outlet. During the promotion, running from the 4th to 14th of May, the beauty of Egypt's cultural monuments is highlighted with a variety of colorful displays. Another exciting part of the festival is the cultural programs held on the 5th and 7th of May at the Hypermarket's Al-Rai outlet with the focus on Egypt's rich music and dance traditions. Shoppers are sure to be wowed by an entertaining show that includes the tanoura dance, horse dance, hobe dance, and an Arabic music band among others. Popular brands such as White Swan, California Garden and more offer consumers a variety of unique flavors at special prices. To sample the diversity of Egypt, patrons can visit any of Lulu outlets during the festival to shop for delectable vegetables and fruits, fish and meats in addition to a variety of other groceries. The 'Best of Egypt 2016' promotion is another successful venture by Lulu Hypermarket to present consumers with the best the world has to offer, at affordable prices and in an unique shopping environment. Egypt, a country linked to a rich and diverse heritage, is a tourist attraction for millennia-old monuments including the colossal Pyramids, Sphinx at Giza and the hieroglyph-lined Karnak Temple and Valley of the Kings tombs in Luxor. Egyptian cuisine is simple yet tasty and mostly relies on vegetables, herbs, lamb and chicken.



WIN UP TO 15 KILOS OF GOLD AT MALABAR GOLD AND DIAMONDS

Malabar Gold and Diamonds, the leading jewelry retailer unfurled the details of its much awaited campaign to celebrate this festive season. This campaign which is available in all Malabar Gold and Diamonds outlets in the Middle East and Far East from 27 April to 14 May will be providing customers purchasing jewelry with unprecedented opportunities to win a total of 15 kilos of gold. For every purchase of gold jewelry above KD150, the customers get a 'Scratch and Win' coupon through which they can win a guaranteed gold coin or up to 250 gold coins instantly. The customers will also get pearl jewelry on every purchase of diamond jewelry. Customers also have the option to pay 10% of the value on their desired jewelry and get gold rate protection until 14 May. They can also buy 22K 8 gm gold coins with absolutely no making charges from any of Malabar Gold and Diamonds outlets in GCC during this period.

Malabar Gold and Diamonds has also unveiled the latest collection of jewelry specially designed for the festive season in gold, diamonds and precious gems to suit the tastes of their multicultural and multinational customers. Moreover, customers can update any of their old ornaments purchased from GCC with the brand new collection of Malabar Gold and Diamonds without any loss. Any

22K old gold ornaments purchased from GCC can be exchanged with Malabar Gold and Diamonds designs by paying only making charges ensuring they don't lose any value on the rate of gold. Also added is the lifetime free repair and maintenance service that is available for all its products. All these offers will be valid at all Malabar outlets in GCC until 14 May.

The group offers one of the most admired brands in the jewelry segment that includes Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewelry, Era - Uncut Diamond Jewelry, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Divine - Indian Heritage Jewelry, Precia - Precious Gem Jewelry Solitaire One - An exclusive solitaire brand, NV - Trendy 18K Gold Jewelry, Ago Bay - Pearl Jewelry and Starlet - Kids Jewelry.

Malabar Gold and Diamonds is the flagship company of Malabar Group, a leading diversified Indian business conglomerate. Established in 1993 in Indian state of Kerala, Malabar Gold and Diamonds today has a strong retail network of 146 outlets spread across 9 countries, 10 wholesale units in addition to offices, design centers and factories spread across India, Middle East and Far East. With an annual turnover of \$4 billion, the company currently ranks among the world's top five jewelry retailers in terms of annual turnover and is the largest jewelry retailer of Indian origin.



Dileep, one of the lucky winners of 'Win up to 15 kilos of gold' campaign receives the prize '250 Gold coins' from Afsal Khan - Zonal Head in the presence of Abdul Rauf - Manager and other officials of Malabar Gold and Diamonds at Al-Rai branch.



INDIAN PROPERTY SHOW BEGINS AT CROWNE PLAZA

The much awaited IIK Indian Property Show 2016 was inaugurated on Friday, May 6, 2016 at Crowne Plaza Hotel Farwaniya. Exhibition was inaugurated at 10:00 am by Dr Sushil Kumar, Commercial Secretary, Indian Embassy in presence of prominent personalities, IIK officials, Exhibition Organizers, participants and a large crowd of eager exhibition visitors. Prominent community members Wadhawan, Asad Khan, Ashok Anugural etc were a few who attended the inauguration function.

With a tag line 'Converting your dreams into Reality', buying a home which seemed to

be a dream for NRIs in Kuwait could now become reality, thanks to the wide variety of handpicked homes from across South India.

Large number of projects from all over India from reputed builders are exhibited at Crowne Plaza. Builders from Bangalore, Kerala, Pune, Chennai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Noida, Delhi, NCR, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Udaipur, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and many other places from All Over India are exhibiting their projects with exclusive offers for the visitors.

The exhibition witnessed a huge turnout on the early morning on the first day of the

show. The two-day exhibition is open to the public from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. The exhibition will continue on Friday, 6th May and Saturday 7th May at Al-Andalus Ballroom, Crowne Plaza hotel, Farwaniya Kuwait.

Title Sponsor of the event is TATA Housing. Air India made their presence felt with two free air tickets for the lucky winners at the end of the exhibition. Tik Tok and Schneider are also sponsoring free gifts to pre-registered visitors.



Artwork by Amani Al-Thuwaini



Farah Salem Photography



JAMM Art Gallery - Dubai

SEVEN KUWAITI ARTISTS TAKE PART IN ABOLISH 153 EXPO

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

Seven Kuwaiti artists among a total of eleven have participated in an annual art exhibition, which was hosted by the Abolish 153 campaign at the JAMM Art gallery in Dubai last week. The campaign highlighted article 153 of Kuwait's penal code, demanding a harsher punishment for honor killing. The fine artists and photographers have exhibited a body of work that symbolizes their personal views about this social issue.

These artists are, Farah Salem, Maha Al-Asaker, Thuraya Lynn Al-Jasem, Zahra Al-Mahdi (also known as Zouz The Bird), Amani Althuwaini, Deena Qabazard (also known as Machina) and Tarek Sultan. Artist from outside Kuwait were from Iran, Bahrain and Iraq. Exhibition Abolish 153 brings the spotlight on this subject matter to Kuwait at FA Gallery on May 16, 2016.



Zahra Al-Mahdi Artwork



The judging Committee with Al-Sayer CSR representatives.



Kids with their paintings.

AL-SAYER GROUP ANNOUNCES SHORTLISTED ENTRIES FOR 10TH TOYOTA DREAM CAR NATIONAL CONTEST

RECOGNITION BECKONS FOR IMAGINATIVE CHILDREN

Al-Sayer Group recently organized a screening event to shortlist entries of the 10th Toyota Dream Car Art Contest. The event was attended by Engineer Nehad Haj Ali Group Manager Corporate Excellence in the presence of expert panel of external judges who chose 200 entries to compete at the national contest.

From this year's contest 2500 impressive artworks were collected from 27 Arab, Asian and International schools in Kuwait. The artworks reflecting dreams and creative ideas of imaginative children across 3 contesting age group of Under 8 years old, 8 to 11 years old, 12 to 15 years old were in the spotlight.

According to Mohammad Naser Al-Sayer, Managing Director and Chairman Al-Sayer Group CSR Committee "Toyota dream car art contest is one of the largest global art contest for children. This contest is an amazing experience for the kids

as well as for us, there is no limitation to the imagination of young minds. Mobility is no more limited to the roads! They want to drive their cars to protect nature, reduce waste, promote renewable source of energy."

Highlighting the creativity of the young artists one of the judges commented "Below 8 years category is high with imaginations. Majority of those tiny minds want a car to carry big family or friends along with them. They used vibrant colors, and drawings are very natural and detailed. It shows their minds for belonging, warm care. Attention towards nature and the colors inspiring them."

According to Nehad Mohammad AlHaj Ali, Group Manager Corporate Excellence Al-Sayer Group "Toyota Dream Car Art contest is to motivate children's to dream differently. To encourage them to look at each problem with a solution, which they did and it was a tough task for us to

NATIONAL CONTEST - JURY PROFILE

	MARGARET E GRAHAM: Master of Fine Arts from University of Oregon, who was teaching in USA and Saudi Arabia with specialization in printmaking arts. Now working in Kuwait to nourish art talents at Gulf University for science and technology.
	MARYAM HOSSEINNI: Department Chair, Associate Professor of Graphic Design in American university of Kuwait. M.F.A. from Minneapolis college of Art and Design, USA.
	WILLIAM J ANDERSEN: Assistant Professor Studio Arts & Graphic designs in American university of Kuwait. M.F.A from School of the Arts Institute of Chicago, USA.
	M V JOHN : Bachelor of Applied arts from Raja Ravi Varma College of Fine Arts. Founder and creative Director of LAZY LEO Studio, Kuwait.
	MUSTAFA CHOORAPPULAN - Graphic Designer Artist, socio-environmental activist from Kuwait.

screen best of best. For Al-Sayer Group it is always in our initiatives to promote such social and community development program to encourage our young minds to be responsive

and responsible to understand current needs and look for the future." "What if a car connects you to a place swiftly when your mind says to go! You are mobile in your immobile



Judging committee members during the scoring process for the artworks.

status. A universal peace car which protects refugees from war area, vehicle which helps people with drinking water and share basic knowledge. So the children are

updated with current affairs, and they always want to help with solutions" said one of the members from the judging committee.

JUMEIRAH MESSILAH HOTEL SUPPORTS SPECIAL NEEDS KIDS WITH OPEN DAY

Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa reinforced its ongoing support for the Kuwait Down Syndrome Association by hosting an eventful open day packed with activities for the children.

Twenty children accompanied by parents and members of the Association were invited to stay at the idyllic resort and enjoy a full day of entertainment such as swimming, painting, dancing, and arts and crafts next to the beach area.

General Manager, Hakan Petek, said: "Social responsibility is our commitment and we spare no efforts to support initiatives of this nature. We take this opportunity to convey our appreciation to The Kuwait Down Syndrome Association. The team has made an invaluable contribution to the lives of the children with special needs which has had a positive impact on society as a whole. It was a truly heart-warming experience to see the children enjoying their time in our hotel!"

Hessa Al-Baloul, Deputy Chairman of Kuwait Down Syndrome Association, said: "Our mission is to help and support children with this condition and enable them to live healthy, active and happier lives. We are happy to have collaborated with Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa and have them actively support us in our initiative. The children were filled with joy and had an incredible time as the Jumeirah team engaged and bonded with them. We would like to express our sincerest gratitude for the hotel's management and team for offering this opportunity to the children."

The Kuwait Down Syndrome Society, in association with Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa, hosts several events and workshops throughout the year dedicated to encouraging and empowering the children to develop their full potential and lead fulfilling lives.



CROSSWORD 1248

Crossword grid with numbered squares from 1 to 83.

ACROSS

- 1. A sock with a separation for the big toe.
5. Food that is discarded (as from a kitchen).
11. A milkshake made with malt powder.
15. By bad luck.
16. A republic in the Asian subcontinent in southern Asia.
17. A hazy or indistinct representation.
18. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
19. Excessively fat.
20. God of fire.
21. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
24. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
25. Form a mental image of something that is not present or that is not the case.
27. A descent down a nearly vertical surface by using a doubled rope that is coiled around the body and attached to some higher point.
29. Harassment especially of a tethered animal.
33. A state in New England.
34. Related to or concerned with alchemy.
36. A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
38. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
42. A fraudulent business scheme.
43. (informal) Of the highest quality.
44. Resembling an eel in being long and thin and sinuous.
46. A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
47. Half the width of an em.
48. Being nine more than ninety.
50. Formed or gathered into a ball.
51. A mountainous landlocked communist state in southeastern Asia.
55. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
56. Jordan's port.
59. Affected manners intended to impress others.
62. Argentinian carriama.
65. United States designer noted for an innovative series of chairs (1907-1978).
69. Capable of being isolated or disjointed.
71. Refuse to acknowledge.
72. The language of the nomadic Lapp people in northern Scandinavia and the Kola Peninsula.
73. Any of various perennial South American plants of the genus Loasa having stinging hairs and showy white or yellow or reddish-orange flowers.
76. Type genus of the Gaviidae.
77. A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
78. A genus of evergreen shrub that grows in New Zealand.
80. The administration of a strong electric current that passes through the brain to induce convulsions and coma.
81. Water chestnut whose spiny fruit has two rather than 4 prongs.
82. Establish on a new scale.
83. Any of several small ungulate mammals of Africa and Asia with rodent-like incisors and feet with hooflike toes.

DOWN

- 1. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.

- 2. A city in northwestern Syria.
3. A small cake leavened with yeast.
4. A line drawn on a map connecting points having the same numerical value of some variable.
5. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
6. Pertaining to or characteristic of a chora-gus.
7. The capital of Morocco.
8. A sharp narrow ridge found in rugged mountains.
9. Earlier than the present time.
10. An ancient upright stone slab bearing markings.
11. A master's degree in business.
12. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
13. A long piece of brightly colored cloth (cotton or silk) used as clothing (a skirt or loincloth or sash etc.) in India and Pakistan and Burma.
14. Of the nature of or undergoing an experiment.
22. Informal terms for journalists.
23. The compass point that is one point north of due east.
26. Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
28. Be going to.
30. Genus of erect herbs of the Middle East having showy flowers.
31. Small tropical American tree bearing edible plumlike fruit.
32. A chronic skin disease occurring primarily in women between the ages of 20 and 40.
35. Tropical American trees with palmately compound leaves and showy bell-shaped flowers.
37. A populous province in northeastern China.
39. A local and well-defined elevation of the land.
40. Widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions for its fragrant flowers and colorful fruits.
41. English monk and scholar (672-735).
45. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
49. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
52. Traveling by boat or ship.
53. Any of various large edible marine gastropods of the genus Haliotis having an ear-shaped shell with pearly interior.
54. An enclosed space.
57. Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.
58. Someone who walks at a leisurely pace.
60. Popular music originating in the West Indies.
61. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
63. Physicist honored for advances in solid state electronics (born in Japan in 1925).
64. Relating to or characteristic of people of Rome.
66. Emotionally moved.
67. Any plant of the genus Erica.
68. An area that includes seats for several people.
70. Informal terms for a meal.
74. (of champagne) Moderately dry.
75. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
79. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).

Yesterday's Solution

Grid for Yesterday's Solution crossword puzzle.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may find that someone close to you is supportive of your ideas and may even want to join you in one of your projects today.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are feeling particularly optimistic this Sunday. Any personal or home projects begun now will have much success.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You could find that your special gift for bringing people together, regardless of age or feelings, plays an important part in this day's activity.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your passion is high and your creative juices are flowing, ready to apply to any work you want to undertake.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You seem determined to move in one direction today. Don't push too hard-you could become difficult.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

All that hard work you have been doing lately needs to be put behind you today. In the future, take care to schedule your time as you would a budget.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You are particularly energetic today and involving yourself with some form of vigorous exercise this morning will properly channel your good thoughts.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Take advantage of these days to make extra money-it seems you are on an uphill swing financially.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Something really has your mind whirling within. You could be trying to understand a situation today in order to know the truth of a matter.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Relaxing and enjoying this day is in order. You could find yourself a bit persuasive around others but work around the house or in the yard can make you feel a great deal of satisfaction.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Obtaining and exchanging information becomes most important this day. Being more involved with neighbors keeps you in-touch and up-to-date with the important changes in the community as well as the best maintenance people.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Unsolved problems or mysteries may catch your attention. You could be the sleuth in your family and discover the truth behind a mystery that has been puzzling for some time.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Real Estate 1

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 22 letters spell a common Real Estate phrase.

Wordsearch grid with letters for Real Estate 1 puzzle.

- AGENT AMORTIZATION APPRAISAL ASSESSMENT ASSET BUILDING BUNGALOW BUYING CLOSER COLLATERAL CONDEMNED CONDO CONTRACT CREDITOR DEED DEPOSIT DEPRECIATION DUPLICATE EXTERIOR FLIPPING FOR SALE HOUSE INSPECTOR INSURANCE INTERIOR LAND LAWYER LENDER LIEN LOAN LOFT MARKET VALUE OFFER PAYMENT PLOT PROPERTY REALTOR SELL SKYSCRAPER SOLD SQUARE FOOTAGE TAXES TIMESHARE TOUR TRIPLEX VACANCY VALUATION ZONE

Yesterday's Solution

Hanukkah

Grid for Hanukkah wordsearch puzzle.

- BIMUELOS BLESSINGS CANDLES CHANUKIAH CHARITY CUSTOMS DAIRY FOODS DREIDEL EIGHT DAYS FAMILY FEAST FESTIVAL GAMES GELT GIFTS HALLEL HANEROT HALALU HEBREW HOLIDAY HOLY TEMPLE JERUSALEM KISLEV LATKE LEVIVOT LIGHTS MA'OZ TZUR MACCABEES MATSIYAHU MENORAH MIRACLE OLIVE OIL PONTSHIKES PSALMS SEVIVON SHAMASH SONGS SUFGANIYOT TALMUD TORAH TRADITION YEARLY YEHUDIT

The hidden message is: HANUKKAH IS A JEWISH HOLIDAY THAT LASTS EIGHT DAYS

Daily SuDoku

4x4 grid for Daily SuDoku puzzle.

Yesterday's Solution

4x4 grid for Yesterday's Solution SuDoku puzzle.



Color me!



The Great Wall of China



The Great Wall, one of the greatest wonders of the world, was listed as a World Heritage by UNESCO in 1987. Just like a gigantic dragon, it winds up and down across deserts, grasslands, mountains and plateaus, stretching approximately 13,170 miles (21,196 kilometers) from east to west of China. With a history of more than 2,000 years, some of the sections are now in ruins or have disappeared. However, it is still one of the most appealing attractions all around the world owing to its architectural grandeur and historical significance. The Great Wall of China is a series of fortifications made of stone, brick, tamped earth, wood, and other

materials, built along an east-to-west line across the historical northern borders of China to protect the Chinese states and empires against the raids and invasions of the various nomadic groups. Several walls were being built as early as the 7th century BCE: these, later joined together and made bigger and stronger, are now collectively referred to as the Great Wall. Especially famous is the wall built 220 — 206 BCE by Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. Little of that wall remains. Since then, the Great Wall has on and off been rebuilt, maintained, and enhanced; the majority of the existing wall is from the Ming Dynasty.

What Time is it?

Directions: Write in the digital time.



:



:



:



:



:



:



:



:



:

Word Search

Indoor Games

Find and circle all of the games that are hidden in the grid. The words may be hidden in any direction.

T H U M B W R E S T L I N G B L R
 K U H H U J J N I S P Y C Q B R S
 M H P Y S D L W O Z T R H M N N D
 A U Q I S I E F S K A Q O S O G Y
 G U S M H A F E I Z U N T I E D V
 O Z F I Q S Z O Y A O F T V L N Q
 O B C A C S E E G P G S E E D J C
 E L H H K A I L O N E M R N A Q H
 T X C C A G L L T U T I C S R C E
 W D A Y H R Y C Q T A V O K C P C
 E J S T X U A Y H T A W L F S J K
 O D S P O K T D I A B B D S T C E
 D X E A J N F L E U I S E X A G R
 T S H I E T O V D S J R R N C R S
 J E C W W S G R V E U K D S S P C Z
 L A T I X S K N I W Y L D D I T G
 D I A M D L O V T I C T A C T O E

- BATTLESHIP
- GO FISH
- OLD MAID
- CAT'S CRADLE
- HOTTER, COLDER
- SOLITAIRE
- CHARADES
- I SPY
- THUMB WRESTLING
- CHECKERS
- JACKS
- TIC, TAC, TOE
- CHESS
- MONOPOLY
- TIDDLYWINKS
- CRAZY EIGHTS
- MUSICAL CHAIRS
- TWENTY QUESTIONS

SUDOKU PUZZLES 2 PRINT

5		3	8		2	6	7
					4	8	
	9	2					5
1			7	6	8		
		4	9	1	3	2	
	3	6	2				8
2	5		1		9	4	6
	1		3				
		8			7	1	2

6	7	1	2	5	4	8	9	3
2	8	5	9	7	3	6	1	4
3	9	4	6	8	1	2	5	7
8	1	2	5	4	7	9	3	6
9	5	7	3	1	6	4	8	2
4	3	6	8	9	2	1	5	7
5	4	3	1	2	9	7	6	8
7	6	8	4	3	5	1	2	9
1	2	9	7	6	8	3	4	5

RECIPES FOR KIDS

Cheesy eggs in a hole!



Give your mother a break from kitchen duty and try and make your own breakfast for a change. With these fun and easy steps, you can make yourself a delicious meal.

- Ingredients:**
- 1 egg
 - 2 teaspoon of butter
 - 1 slice of bread
 - 1 teaspoon of cheese
 - Salt and pepper
- Serves one.

Directions:
 Take your slice of bread and grab a cup. Place the cup in the center of your slice and cut the slice. This forms a hole in the center. Smear the slice and a smaller slice of bread with butter and let it toast on your pan. Crack the egg open and let it fall into the center of the bread slice. Sprinkle some cheese, pepper and salt into the egg. Let it cook for a few minutes on low flame. Don't forget to ask your parents to help you with the gas stove.
 Once that's done, put the dish on to a plate. Use the cut out slice to dip into the yolk. Add some cut fresh fruit to make your meal healthier.
 Happy Cooking!

Circle the adjective that best describes the sentence

- 1) A (big / tasty) dog was chewing on a bone.
- 2) Peter rode to school in a (tiny / yellow) bus.
- 3) It was a very (cold / dented) day.
- 4) Ann asked a (blue / strong) man to open her bottle.
- 5) Lilly hurt her mouth on a (hot / sticky) slice of pizza.
- 6) John had to fix his (slippery / broken) glasses.
- 7) I was excited to see the (old / huge) elephant at the zoo.

Circle the odd one out!

- 1) Apple | Banana | Strawberry | Potato
- 2) Red | Blue | Shoes | Pink
- 3) March | Saturday | November | August
- 4) Cat | Chocolate | Dog | Bird
- 5) September | Thursday | Friday | Monday | September

What is the opposite for..?

- 1) Happy X _____
- 2) Up x _____
- 3) Hot x _____
- 4) Run x _____
- 5) Old x _____
- 6) Near x _____
- 7) Inside x _____



Did You Know

- Rabbits and parrots can see behind themselves without even moving their heads!
- Butterflies taste food by standing on top of it! Their taste receptors are in their feet unlike humans who have most on their tongue.
- Most of the dust in your home is actually dead skin! Yuck!
- Although the Stegosaurus dinosaur was over 9 meters long, its brain was only the size of a walnut.
- Humans get a little taller in space because there is no gravity pulling down on them.
- Because of the unusual shape of their legs, kangaroos and emus struggle to walk backwards.
- A hippopotamus may seem huge but it can still run faster than a man.

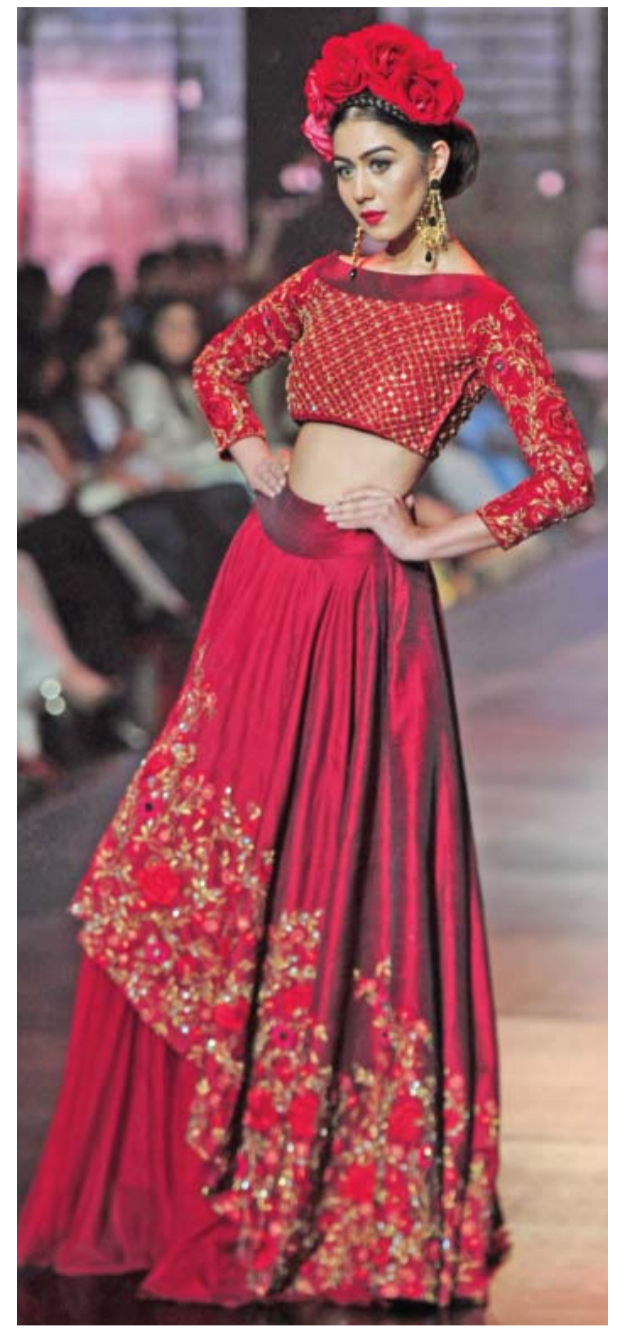
MATCH THE FOLLOWING

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

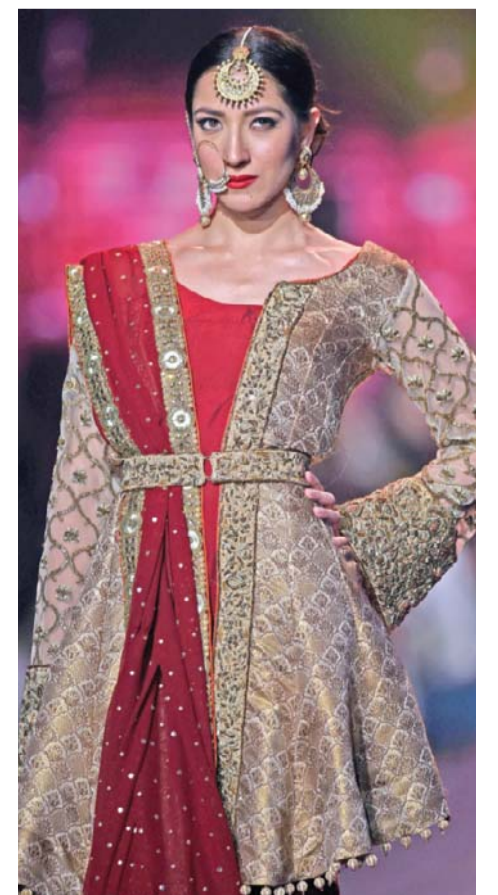
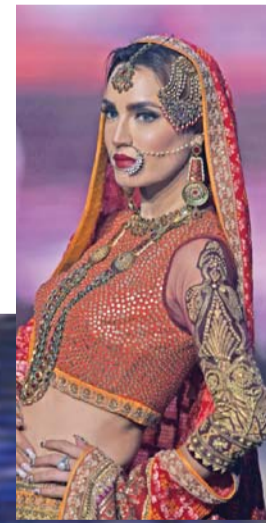
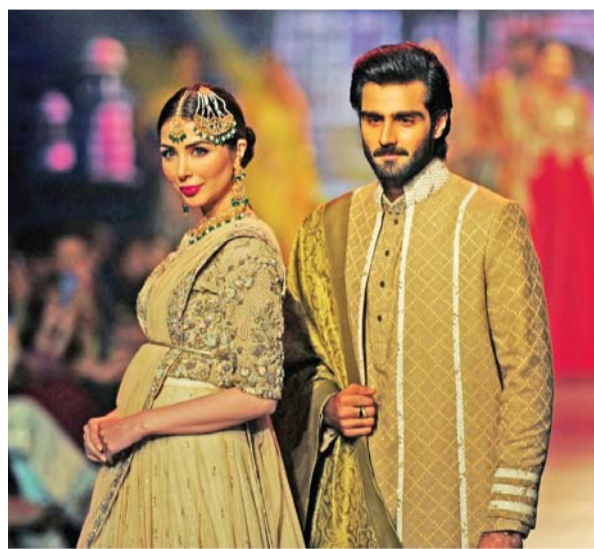
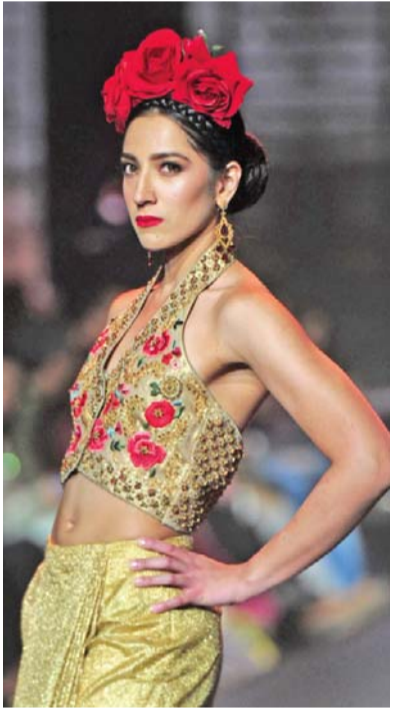




Models present creations by designer Yasmin Zaman on the first day of Bridal Couture Week-Gold Edition in Karachi. — AFP



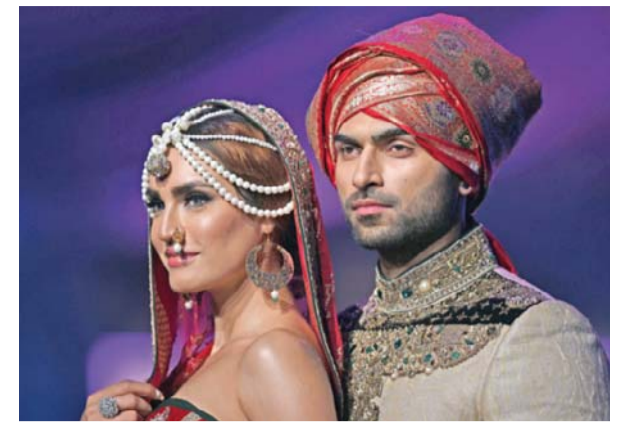
KARACHI BRIDAL COUTURE WEEK - GOLD EDITION



Models present creations by designer Deepak N Fahad.



Models present creations by designer Zahid Khan.



Rochelle Humes 'dreads' going to the gym



The 27-year-old singer-and-presenter refuses to commit to exercising more than once a week because she dislikes it so much and can't stop "moaning" when she does go to work out. She said: "I work out once a week and I can't commit to any more than that."

"I'm not one of those people who's like 'I enjoy it, I feel amazing after it' - I don't. I dread going when I'm there. "And I'm not a big moaner in life but in the gym that is where the moaning goes down..."

Rochelle - who has two-year-old daughter Alaia-Mai with husband Marvin Humes - tries to maintain her slim figure with a healthy diet, but she may be upping her work out regime soon after finally finding a form of exercise she enjoys, machine-based, core-stability class Reformer Pilates. She told Look.co.uk: "I've started doing Pilates, the reformers one. And I love it. And I've never enjoyed exercise in my life so I think, I can commit to it. "And I just try to have a balanced diet and then I'm doing that." But the Saturdays singer admits it isn't a particularly easy work-out.

She added: "The first time I did it I thought, 'Ooh this is going to do so much' but then the next day I was aching. Some of the stretches you do get that burn when your legs shake, but it's quite chilled the environment, so I really enjoy it." While she hates working out, Rochelle always admires other women who she sees clearly look after their figures with exercise. She said: "As much as I say I don't like to work out because I don't, when I see someone's body and I can tell they eat well and that they've worked hard in the gym - I love that. "I always think Jessica Alba looks like she's worked out but she looks comfortable in her body. She looks how she should look." — Bang Showbiz



Burberry said looking for Bailey support

Burberry are reportedly looking to appoint a senior manager to support Creative Director and CEO Christopher Bailey. The 44-year-old designer has led both the creative and business sides of the fashion house since the departure of former CEO Angela Ahrendts in 2013 but executives are keen to bring in some "back-up" to assist with the workings of the company. A shareholder told the Financial Times newspaper: "Bailey needs back-up." "He needs someone to help him on the marketing and retail side, who has a good understanding of the business and knows exactly where they want to take the company."

There is said to be no question over Christopher's experience and skills as creative director, but investors are keen for him to focus on his area of expertise by bringing in someone else to complement his work by taking the reins of the business side. Another shareholder said: "It worked with Christopher Bailey as head of design and Angela Ahrendts as chief executive, but there have been problems since he took up both roles after she left."

No names up for the rumored position have been disclosed as yet, while the fashion house - whose shares have fallen 21 per cent since May 2014 and are down 32 per cent over the last 12 months - haven't yet commented on the reports. Christopher joined Burberry 15 years ago as design director and was appointed Creative Director three years later, in 2004, and Chief Creative Officer in November 2009. In October 2013, it was announced he would be the next CEO of the fashion house and took up the position on May 2014 when Angela departed for Apple. — Bang Showbiz

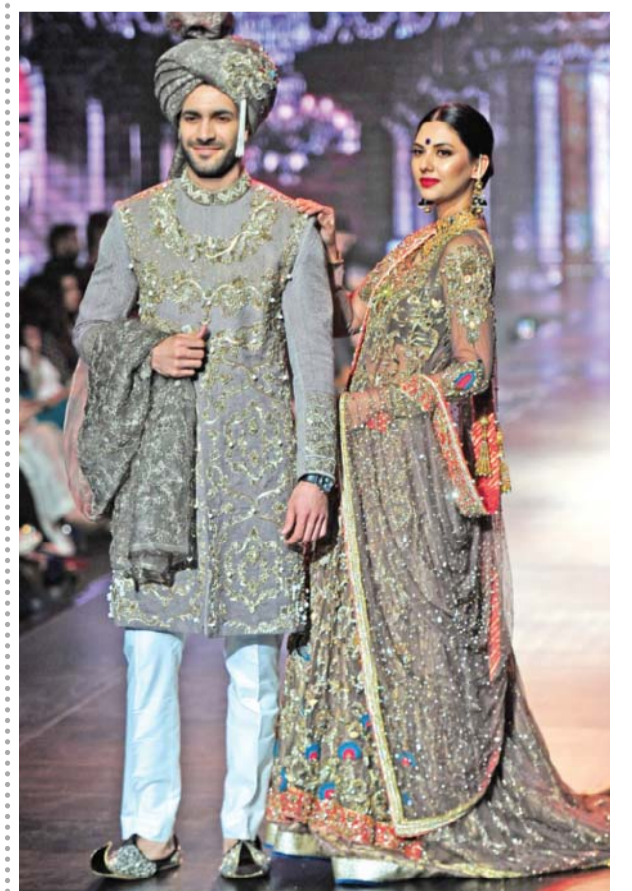


Perry is proud that some people 'hated' her Met Gala look

Katy Perry and her stylist are proud that some people "hated" her Met Gala look. The "Firework" hitmaker turned heads at the fashion extravaganza earlier this week with her charm-laden velvet Prada gown and while some watchers slammed the ensemble - which saw the 31-year-old singer bleach out her eyebrows and pile her hair high - stylist Leslie Fremar thinks it is good not everyone "understood" her outfit because it proved it was truly unique. Leslie said: "She's definitely adventurous and she knows her body, knows her fans so well which I find incredible. Her fans are super loyal to her. "I do think that at the Met Gala a lot of people are trying to be different, but Katy is different. So it felt organic to push it to the very edge."

"Some people love it and some people hate it but, but that's when you know you did a good job: When not everyone understands it," she says. "If everyone understands it, it's generic." However, Leslie admitted she had advised her famous client - who attended the event with boyfriend Orlando Bloom - not to dye her brows but the stylist respects the "visionary" singer for ignoring her suggestions and continuing with her own plan for the overall look. She told PeopleStyle: "If it were up to me would she have had eyebrows? Yes. But you know what? It wasn't up to me. "She really did just want to be bold, take risks and embrace the night. She wanted to have to have fun with it. She's freaking Katy Perry! That's what she does-she has fun! "She's such a visionary and I have a very strong vision myself, but there is a respect there."

"She is an artist in the true form. Her honesty is what makes her so cool. When I say, 'Listen, I actually think that you should have eyebrows tonight,' she says, 'Well you know what, I appreciate that but I am not going to.' But it wasn't just Katy's appearance that Leslie was worried about. She added: "I was like, 'Do you know that you're not allergic to that? Do you know that you're not going to get a rash on your face right now?' She's like, 'We'll find out!'" — Bang Showbiz



Models present creations by designer Mohsin Naveed.



This photo shows singer Tizzy, from Antigua and Barbuda, performing during the Latin American and Caribbean music festival in Beijing. — AP photos

China and Caribbean cosy up to the sound of music

Gyrating in the night, Trinidadian soca singer Lil Bitts' derriere, hugged by a pair of hot pants, is center stage in efforts to bring together China and the Caribbean as Beijing seeks a more prominent presence in Washington's back yard. "I want to teach people how to jump and wave and wind and enjoy yourself like a Caribbean person," she told AFP at Beijing's biggest Latin American and Caribbean Music Festival to date.

The four-day event, which saw bands from 15 Caribbean countries looking to twerk open pocketbooks and hearts in the world's second-largest economy, is part of the exchanges agreed when Chinese President Xi Jinping attended a 2014 summit in Brasilia. China's

Quyi, 19, said the crowd had been lively only because there were few Chinese in attendance. "The Chinese are too stiff and serious—they aren't willing to move around. They would've all been crushed." Outside the venue, Deng Yuanhe, a migrant construction worker, crept over to a metal fence to catch a glimpse of the first black people he had ever seen. He liked the music, he said, but admitted: "If they came over to talk to me or approached me in the night, I'd definitely be afraid. So black, with such big eyes."

'The next 100 years'

One of the biggest projects with Chinese involvement in the Caribbean is the ill-fated \$3.5 billion Baha Mar resort complex in the Bahamas,

ment of Pointe Nassau, building condominiums and performing arts centers in the heart of the capital, and have snatched up the historic British Colonial Hilton Hotel.

The former British colony, although just a short flight from the United States, was turning to Chinese capital as other countries had "their own situations and austerity programs", Gomez told AFP. "China is looking to expand, because it has a significant population and has always been a forward-planning type of nation—not just for the next year or the next 20, but for the next 100 years."

'Think about balance'

Other than oil and fish, the Caribbean has few of the natural resources that have driven much Chinese investment in the past, but a Beijing-based businessman said it had other attractions. Unlike in Africa, it was easy to get money out, he said, and it also offered a foothold in the Americas that could avoid tariffs in other markets on the continent, such as Brazil. "When I speak to the ambassadors, I get the sense that they especially hope within this term of office to bring in some Chinese investment, because China now has the money." But mega-projects such as Baha Mar risked being too high profile, added the businessman, who did not want to be identified because he works with governments.

"When you do something on such a large scale right on the US's doorstep, then that has an impact, it becomes an issue between countries," he said. "That's no longer business, that's politics. America has to think about balance." Another obstacle, Ferchen of Tsinghua University said, was that Beijing does not have diplomatic ties with several Caribbean countries. Instead they number among self-governing Taiwan's 22 remaining political allies—although one of them, Panama, sent a hip-hop artist to take part in the Beijing festival.

Such considerations were far from the minds of some in the audience at the event. "I didn't even know there were countries in the Caribbean," said Liu Yudi, 23, an English language masters student cowering wide-eyed against a wall as she watched a group of Bahamian fans grinding enthusiastically. "When we think of the Americas, we only think of the US and Canada. The other countries below are a bit hazier." — AFP



Chinese and foreign fans watching Daddy Chess perform during the Latin American and Caribbean music festival in Beijing.

growing economic and political interests on the US doorstep are part of its "efforts to deepen trade, investment and financial ties to developing countries and regions and at the same time to further broaden 'South-South' cooperation", said Matt Ferchen, professor of international relations at Tsinghua University. But efforts to reinforce those links at a "people-to-people" level have to contend with a clash of cultures from opposite sides of the globe—sometimes bordering on racism. Lil Bitts' Chinese translator Li

described as the biggest commercial real estate development in the western hemisphere. It has yet to be completed, while its owner has filed for bankruptcy and has sued the Chinese contractor, blaming it for multiple delays. Ratings agency Standard and Poor's has downgraded the Bahamas' credit rating in response. But Paul Gomez, the Bahamas' ambassador to Beijing, insisted that "the Chinese are not viewed negatively" as a result. Chinese companies are involved in an estimated \$250 million develop-

Rock 'n' roll architect's ashes find new home

The life and legacy of musical pioneer and promoter Alan Freed have been celebrated at an Ohio cemetery, where a monument honoring him has been unveiled. Freed's ashes have found a permanent home in Cleveland, where he organized what's considered the world's first rock 'n' roll concert more than 60 years ago.

E Street Band member Stevie Van Zandt and others spoke Saturday at Lake View Cemetery about Freed's legacy as a musical pioneer. Freed died in 1965 at age 43. An urn containing his ashes was on display for 12 years at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland until his family was asked by museum officials to take the urn back in

2014. 9:25 am. The ashes of musical pioneer and promoter Alan Freed have found a permanent home in Cleveland where he organized what is considered the world's first rock 'n' roll concert more than 60 years ago.

Freed's life and musical legacy will be celebrated Saturday at Lake View Cemetery, where a monument honoring him will be unveiled. Stevie Van Zandt of the E Street Band and others will speak about Freed's legacy as a musical pioneer. Freed died at age 43 in 1965. An urn containing his ashes was on display for 12 years at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland until his family was asked by museum officials to take the urn back in 2014. — AP



George Miller

'Mad Max' creator Miller rides into Cannes on top of the world

Australian director George Miller is at a highpoint in a masterful career. His "Mad Max: Fury Road" won a swag of awards, adding to a long list of acclaimed movies, and this week he will bask in the glory of presiding over the Cannes film festival jury. Even missing out on the best director gong at this year's Oscars, won by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu for "The Revenant", could not take the gloss off the success of the latest of his post-apocalyptic "Mad Max" action movies, released last year.

"You'd be a fool to be disappointed when we did so well," the 71-year-old director told The Sydney Morning Herald on returning to the city in March after the movie won six Academy Awards and four British Baftas. As a writer, director and producer Miller is a pioneer of Australian cinema with a career that runs from the original 1979 "Mad Max" starring a young, leather-clad Mel Gibson, to "Babe" and the feel-good animated classic "Happy Feet" in 2006.

Miller was part of a renaissance of Australian cinema in the 1980s which included Peter Weir ("Dead Poets Society", "The Truman Show"), Bruce Beresford ("Driving Miss Daisy") and Phillip Noyce ("Patriot Games", "Salt"). But his career in cinema was not always assured, with Miller at first setting out to be a doctor, and working in the medical profession for a time.

He has said that working as an emergency doctor, and seeing "the kind of carnage as a result of car accidents or bike accidents", affected him deeply and went on to influence his violent "Mad Max" movies. "It kind of disturbed me quite a bit. And I think all those things were part of the mix of the 'Mad Max' films," he told Australian Screen Online in a 2006 interview.

'A singular vision'

After the original smash hit, Miller went on to make "Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior" (1981) and "Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome" (1985), but "Fury Road" was a long time coming. In the meantime, he produced the coming-of-age film "The Year My Voice Broke" (1987) and the thriller "Dead Calm" (1989) — which launched his compatriot Nicole Kidman on the world-as well as Australian television series such as "Vietnam" and "Bodyline". He has a string of acclaimed films to his credit including the fantasy comedy "The Witches of Eastwick" (1986) and the heart-tugging drama "Lorenzo's Oil" (1992), as well as winning an Oscar for the animated feature "Happy Feet".

Close on 40 years after he launched the "Mad Max" series, Miller is enjoying the lasting appeal of the frantic action films which have been praised for reconciling mass audience expectations with the highest artistic standards. David White, who won an Oscar for sound editing on the movie, has praised Miller's ability to bring his vision to the screen, despite the difficult logistics of producing frenetic action.

The film also faced other setbacks, including Mel Gibson dropping out, making way for the younger Tom Hardy, and shifting the filming from the Australian desert to Namibia. "There's probably less than a handful of people in the world like George," White told the Herald earlier this year, adding that he was "the smartest person I've ever met". "This guy has had a singular vision to do this film." Miller has two children with wife and film editor Margaret Sixel and an older daughter from a previous relationship. The Cannes film festival starts on Wednesday and runs until May 22. — AFP

Levine leads last opera as Met music director after 40 years



Conductor James Levine gives his final bow after the matinee of Mozart's "Die Entfuehrung aus dem Serail (The Abduction from the Seraglio)" Saturday The Metropolitan Opera in New York. — AP

The cast walked off the stage and left conductor James Levine to watch and listen Saturday as the orchestra cheered and the Metropolitan Opera House audience broke into rhythmic applause. He had just led his 2,557th performance with the company, where he debuted in 1971, his final staged opera during a 40-year run as music or artistic director. With the 72-year-old Levine slowed by poor health for more than a decade and Parkinson's disease increasingly hampering his baton technique, the Met announced April 14 he will retire as music director at the end of this season.

The matinee of Mozart's "Die Entfuehrung aus dem Serail (The Abduction from the Seraglio)" was the end of an era. While Levine is scheduled to lead the Met Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in concerts on May 19 and 26, and he plans to conduct three revivals in the house next season as music director emeritus, this was an opportunity for the company to show its appreciation for his decades of devotion that lifted the Met's music making to among the most acclaimed in the world. Concertmaster David

Chan handed a bouquet of red roses to Levine, who has conducted from a motorized wheelchair since his return in 2013 after a two-year layoff caused by a fall that led to spinal surgery. Levine tapped his heart repeatedly and blew kisses to the audience. The aisles near the pit were filled with spectators who wanted to get closer to take photos with their mobile phones, and even some of the orchestra members were snapping moments.

"Thank you, Maestro, for your years of inspiration, artistry, and dedication to The Metropolitan Opera," the orchestra said in a statement posted on Instagram. His reign is pretty much unparalleled for an opera music director, and he spanned several generations of singers. His first performance, Puccini's "Tosca" on June 5, 1971, starred Grace Bumbry, Franco Corelli and Peter Glosop; his first as music director, Puccini's "Il Trittico" on Oct. 15, 1976, featured the Met debuts of Hildegard Behrens and Neil Shicoff. The top ticket price has escalated from \$25 when Levine started as music director to \$480 this season. — AP

Five things you need to know about Cannes

The Cannes Film Festival opens this week in the French Riviera resort. Here are five essential—and often surprising—facts about the glitzy Mediterranean town.

Bad timing

Timing is everything in cinema, they say, but as Cannes was to prove that's not always the case. France's great reforming education minister Jean Zay first came up with the idea of a global international film festival in 1939 as a rival to the Venice festival, which was then the plaything of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and his film-loving German friend Adolf Hitler. Biarritz on France's Atlantic coast was first chosen as the host city but when it couldn't raise the money, Cannes nipped in. However, war soon broke out and Mussolini's troops marched into the town.

It wasn't till after the war in 1946 that the festival finally got going, quickly becoming the most important in the world. Unfortunately by then Zay was dead, murdered because he was a Jew by France's collaborationist government. His ashes were moved to the Pantheon in Paris last year as one of the leading heroes of the French Resistance.

Lap of luxury

The myth of the French Riviera was created at the end of the 19th century by the crowned heads of Europe who wintered there. Their legacy—and often their palatial villas — has nowadays been taken up by Russian oligarchs and wealthy Gulf potentates. To serve their every whim, Cannes has more luxury good shops than anywhere else in France outside Paris. Chanel, Chopard, Rolex, Prada, Louis Vuitton, Dior... no less than 70 top name brands have shops squeezed into the 800 meters of its seafront Croisette.

Cat burglars

Like bears to honey, where there is great wealth, there are always criminals eager to redistribute a little of it their way. The Croisette has witnessed some of the biggest and most daring jewelry heists in history. A solitary robber, thought to be one of the infamous Pink Panthers, took gems worth 103 million euros (\$130 million) from the Carlton hotel in 2013 where they were being displayed at an "Extraordinary Diamonds" exhibition. The surprisingly simple raid still holds the world record as the biggest heist of all time.

That same year at the film festival a 1.6-million

euro necklace was stolen and gems worth only slightly less also went missing. Having vowed that such crimes should never be allowed to happen again, the authorities were found wanting again last year when only a few days before the festival began 17.5 million euros of jewelry was taken from the Cartier shop on the Croisette. If that all seems like something from the movies it's because it is. That connoisseur of crime films Alfred Hitchcock set part of his 1955 classic "To Catch a Thief" about a Riviera cat burglar in the Carlton hotel. It was during the film shoot that Hollywood star Grace Kelly met Prince Rainier, the ruler of nearby Monaco. Their fairytale marriage later sealed Tinseltown's links with the coast.

It's British actually

Cannes is a French town, but it was actually the British who made it what it is today. A Scottish aristocrat and lawyer, Henry Brougham, 1st Baron Brougham, is the man who turned the sleepy fishing village into a fashionable resort. An anti-slavery campaigner, he became Lord Chancellor, the head of the judiciary, and encouraged hundreds of wealthy British aristos and industrialists to come and build their winter homes nearby. Brougham was the inventor of a stately four-wheeled carriage which still bears his name. He also holds the record for speaking non-stop for six hours in the House of Commons.

'French Hollywood'

From the dawn of cinema, when the Lumiere brothers shot their first short reels by its glittering shore, the Cote d'Azur has always attracted filmmakers. After the Lumieres' stay in 1897, some of the greatest directors of the silent era descended on the coast to shoot exterior scenes, a trend that was to continue with the advent of the "talkies". The Victorine Studios at nearby Nice were once called "French Hollywood", with Marcel Carné shooting part of "Les Enfants du Paradis"—often regarded as the greatest French film of all time—there in 1944.

Nowadays, however, Cannes has morphed into one of Europe's conference capitals, hosting the MIPTV and MIPDoc, the world's biggest television and documentary markets, as well as the film festival every year. — AFP

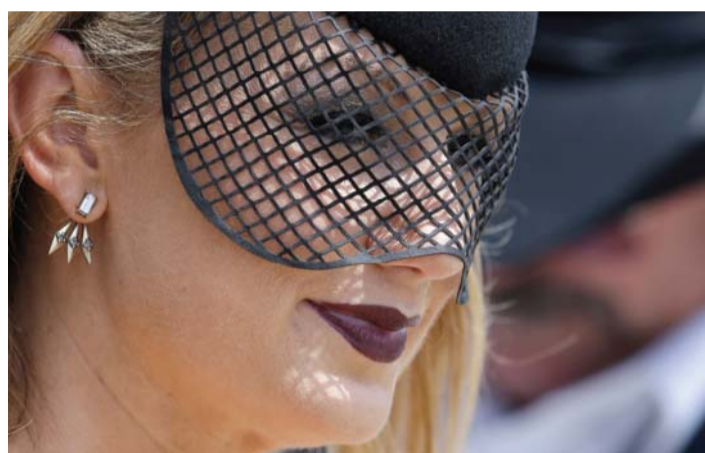


This file photo taken on May 15, 2015 shows guests arriving for the screening of the film "Fia" (Son of Saul) at the 68th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southeastern France. — AFP

Hats off to Kentucky Derby fashion



Fans wear hats before the 142nd running of the Kentucky Derby horse race. —AP photos



If it's Derby day, it's dress day. The Kentucky Derby is more than just the greatest two minutes in sports. It's also a 12-hour fashion show, featuring every type of hat imaginable - and some that aren't. Here's a look at the head gear some folks adorned for Saturday's Run for the Roses. —AP





A Flamingo rests in the sun in their enclosure at the zoo in Cologne, western Germany. — AFP

Chinese billionaire treats 3,000 workers to paella in Spain



Chinese conglomerate Tiens Group employees unfurl a giant banner during a celebration.

The billionaire founder of Chinese conglomerate Tiens Group treated 3,000 of his top salespeople Friday to a traditional Spanish paella dinner during a free Madrid trip that also included a bullfight and a tour of King Felipe VI's Royal Palace. The smiling crowds washed down heaping plates of paella with sangria at a massive spread of picnic tables in a river-

side park during the event footed by Li Jinyuan and organized by China's U Tour travel company.

Spain was selected for this year's bonus trip for the workers because they "are fond of Spanish history and culture, and its delicious cuisine and its soccer," said Li Zhongmin, the company founder's son. U Tour deputy manager Zhang Xilai said the tour for

the group of mostly health care products salespeople cost 7 million euros (\$8 million). The trip came a year after Li took 6,400 employees to France. Zhang says fewer salespeople went this year because of higher sales targets and stiffer competition in China.

The employees saw a bullfight in a town near Madrid complete with Spanish horse riders and flamenco



Chinese conglomerate Tiens Group employers take photos while waiting to be served Paella.



Chinese conglomerate Tiens Group employees dance while waiting to eat Paella in Madrid.

Cedar Point debuts newest record-breaking roller coaster

The roller coaster capital of the world is showing off its newest addition this weekend. Cedar Point, in Sandusky, Ohio, is home to the new roller coaster that's opening to the public on Saturday, the same day the park opens for the season. Valravn (VAL-ray-vuhn) gives riders a sweeping view of Lake Erie before dropping them over 200 feet on a 90-degree free fall that hits a top speed of 75 mph. It also turns riders upside down three times.

The roller coaster has already broken records. It's now recognized as the world's tallest, fastest and longest dive coaster. Valravn is Cedar Point's 18th roller coaster. Only Six Flags Magic Mountain, in Santa Clarita, California, has more roller coasters with 19. — AP

This photo provided by Cedar Point Amusement Park shows the Valravn, the new roller coaster that's opening to the public on Saturday at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio. — AP photos

