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## ASSEMBLY GIVES FINAL NOD TO NATURALIZE 4,000 IN 2016

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### IRAN DELEGATION IN SAUDI FOR HAJJ TALKS

**TEHRAN:** An Iranian delegation was travelling to Saudi Arabia yesterday for talks on the annual hajj pilgrimage despite a diplomatic crisis between the Gulf rivals, the official IRNA news agency reported. "A delegation of six people will leave this afternoon for Saudi Arabia at the invitation of the Saudi Minister of Hajj for negotiations," it quoted Said Ohadi, head of Iran's Hajj Organization, as saying. "The talks will be held on Wednesday in Jeddah."

On May 12, Culture Minister Ali Jannati, who oversees the Hajj Organization, said "arrangements have not been put together" for Iranians to make this year's pilgrimage to Makkah at the end of the summer. He accused Riyadh of "sabotage", but Saudi Arabia has denied blocking Iranian pilgrims. The two countries held an unsuccessful first round of talks last month in Saudi Arabia on organizing this year's pilgrimage for Iranians.

It was the first dialogue between the

region's powers since diplomatic relations were severed in January. Riyadh cut ties with Tehran after demonstrators burned its embassy and a consulate there following the Saudi execution of a prominent cleric. Tehran says Riyadh insists that visas for Iranians be issued in a third country and does not allow pilgrims to be flown in aboard Iranian aircraft, which Iran has rejected.

Iran and Saudi Arabia are at odds over a raft of regional issues, notably the conflicts in Syria and Yemen in which they support opposing sides. Another contentious issue has been security, after a stampede at last year's hajj killed about 2,300 foreign pilgrims including 464 Iranians. On Friday, a senior Saudi religious leader warned against those who would "wreak havoc" under the guise of pilgrimage, an apparent swipe at the Islamic republic. The annual hajj and the lesser pilgrimage known as umrah draw millions of faithful to Saudi Arabia from around the world each year. — AFP



**KUWAIT:** HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah greets Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem as he attends the opening ceremony of the new Sabah Al-Ahmad building at the National Assembly yesterday, along with HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The National Assembly yesterday overwhelmingly passed a law in the second and final reading to allow the government to naturalize up to 4,000 foreigners in 2016. Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah said the government accepts the law and vowed to try to implement it in the remaining seven months of the year. The Assembly has been passing this law for over a decade, but the government did not implement it in the past few years.

Originally, the law was introduced to help resolve the decades-old problem of over 100,000 stateless people or bedoons by naturalizing whom the government believes deserve to be granted citizenship. But the government and many MPs refused this time to restrict naturalization to bedoons and left it open for all foreigners. Forty-four MPs including government ministers voted in favor of the law, while six lawmakers voted against it.

Before the vote, the Assembly rejected a proposal by MP Saleh Ashour to restrict the 4,000 to bedoons. MP Saadoun Hammad said bedoons who have corrected their status should be considered among the 4,000 hopefuls for nationality. Ashour said that the government admits that 32,000 bedoons qualify for consideration for citizenship, so many of the 4,000 hopefuls should be from them. Bedoons claim the right to Kuwaiti citizenship, while the government says a majority of them are citizens of other countries and they or their forefathers destroyed their identification documents to get Kuwaiti nationality.

Continued on Page 13

### RUSSIAN BASE IN SYRIA DAMAGED IN IS ATTACK

**LONDON:** Satellite imagery appears to show extensive damage to an air base in Syria used by Russian forces following an attack by fighters from the Islamic State group. US intelligence company Stratfor said yesterday. The claim was immediately denied by Russia's defense ministry, which said that the damage had been there for months and was due to fighting between Syrian government forces and "militants from terror groups". Stratfor released satellite images dated from May 14 and May 17, implying that the damage to the

T-4 base, also known as Tiyas, was caused in that time.

The images suggest four helicopters and 20 lorries were destroyed by fire inside the base, which is strategically located in central Syria between war-ravaged Palmyra and Homs. "The T4 air base was severely damaged by an Islamic State artillery attack. In particular, four Russian Mi-24 attack helicopters appear to have been destroyed," Stratfor said on their website.

The cause of the apparent damage could not be determined from the images obtained by Stratfor. But the

BBC quoted Stratfor analyst Sim Tack as saying that "this was not an accidental explosion". It "would really be a marginal, almost non-existent chance for this to be accidental," he added. Tack said there was evidence of "several different sources of explosions across the airport, and it shows that the Russians took a quite a bad hit". The Stratfor report said that "ordnance impact points are visible" in the images and that a Syrian MiG-25 fighter jet also appeared to have been damaged.

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### BEDOON POETRY THRIVES IN GULF



**ABU DHABI:** Kuwait's Rajih Al-Hamidani celebrates after winning the final of the televised program Million's Poet on May 17, 2016 at Al-Raha Theatre. Apart from the glory, the Kuwaiti student took home five million dirhams (\$1.36 million), the top prize in a television show followed by millions of poetry lovers across the region. — AFP (See Page 40)

### SAUDIS ADAPT MESSAGE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AGE

**DUBAI/RIYADH:** The participation of tens of thousands of young Saudis in a social media debate over plans to reform the kingdom's oil-reliant economy last month marked a shift in Riyadh's interaction with people. Saudi leaders have historically courted public opinion only via informal councils with tribal, religious and business leaders or citizens seeking to petition them.

But in one of the most active countries on social media in the Arab world, leaders have started trying to shape the online debate with carefully managed media campaigns and senior officials have been sacked after

social media criticism. "It's a new focus for the government as it reaches out to a young Saudi population that is more likely to use social media," Saudi analyst and commentator Mohammed Alyahya said. "That's the most effective way to capture their attention."

One recent showcase for this was the launch of 31-year-old Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's Vision 2030 reform plans, which used Twitter alongside traditional media to build anticipation and introduce hashtags - key discussion phrases.

Continued on Page 13

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**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, members of the Cabinet and National Assembly are pictured in a group photo at the new parliament building which was inaugurated yesterday. —Amiri Diwan photos

# AMIR INAUGURATES NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah patronized and attended the opening ceremony of the new Sabah Al-Ahmad building at the National Assembly yesterday. His Highness the Amir was received upon arrival by National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and members of Parliament Office where he unveiled the memorial of the building.

The ceremony was also attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, senior sheikhs, His

Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, President of the Constitutional Court and Head of the Cassation Court Justice Yousef Jassem Al-Mutawa'a, and senior state officials. The cere-

mony started with the national anthem, followed by the recitation of Holy Quran verses, and a documentary on the new Sabah Al-Ahmad building was aired.

In his speech, Ghanem expressed his gratitude to His Highness the Amir for sponsoring and attending the inauguration ceremony of the building, which includes offices for MPs and vital facilities to help National Assembly carry out its duties and messages.

"The building has been named after Your Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-

Jaber Al-Sabah, just to tell next generations that Sabah Al-Ahmad was one of the founding fathers who, along with some men, drew up the country's constitution," Ghanem said.

"The building has been named after Your Highness to tell them, generations, that it was Sabah Al-Ahmad who established the principles of consultation and democracy, and of respecting constitutional institutions at a time when some nations of our region were suffering from difficult conditions, terrorism and conflicts," he added. Your Highness has been

keen on supporting the rights of citizens, and making a consensus when legislative and executive authorities get engaged in differences," he noted. At the end of his speech, Ghanem wished Kuwait further progress, prosperity and stability, and His Highness the Amir good health. Furthermore, a documentary on His Highness the Amir was shown. His Highness the Amir honored those who produced the documentary. Finally, memorial souvenirs were presented to His Highness the Amir and to His Highness the Crown Prince. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem takes His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in a tour around the building.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah tours the new National Assembly building.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen during the tour.



(From left) Cabinet Affairs Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah, Public Works Minister Dr Ali Al-Omar, Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud, Amiri Diwan's Deputy Minister Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah, and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah take a picture with children during the ceremony.



(From left) Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem attend the ceremony.

# KUWAITI FM HOPES SUMMIT'S RESULTS BOON FOR HUMANITY

**ISTANBUL:** Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah hoped yesterday that the results of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul find their way to alleviate the burdens of the destitute, impoverished, and indigent people in the world. The participation of Kuwait's Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in the Summit was warranted due to his stature as a World Humanitarian Leader, the foreign minister said

in a statement to the press. The minister further said that the speech delivered by His Highness the Amir in front of the Summit embodied the principles defined by United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, which are incumbent on the international community and civil society to implement in order to assuage the onuses and hardships on the world's indigent and deprived. These principles pivot on the responsibility of political leaderships to prevent conflicts and wars, to try to eradicate poverty and

deprivation, to invest in human resources, and to apply humanitarian criteria in dealing with the populace, said the foreign minister.

He added that Kuwait took part in a round table seminar, held on the sideline of the Summit, on means of investing in the human potential for survival and success and the role financing and funding play in helping to achieve that survival and success.

The outcomes of the seminar feed into forming concepts by the international community and civil society in dealing with humanitarian crises, conflicts, and wars, he said. He thanked Turkey for hosting the World Humanitarian Summit and the UN for assisting to organize it.

Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Consul General in Istanbul Mohammad Al-Mohammad, Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations' Affairs Nasser Al-Hain, and a number of senior officials at the ministry.

appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality His Highness was received with while attending the World Humanitarian Summit, which concluded yesterday in Istanbul. His Highness also praised the well organization of the summit, as well as recommendations and efforts to meet basic needs for the needy and ensure a decent life for them. He also wished the Turkish President good health and happiness and all progress and prosperity to Turkey and its friendly people. — KUNA

### Amir thanks Erdogan

In other news, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday, in which he expressed deep



**ISTANBUL:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Secretary General of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Iyad Ameen Madani. —KUNA

### Exhibition

The foreign minister visited an exhibition, set up on the sideline of the Summit, where the Kuwaiti section in it displayed the charitable work and achievements of major Kuwaiti charities, among them Kuwait Red Crescent Society, Al-Rahma International Charity, an affiliate of Kuwait's Al-Islah Society (Society for Social Reform), Islamic Revival Society, Kuwait Humanitarian Center, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nouri Charitable Society, and Kuwait Fund For Arab Economic Development. Earlier yesterday, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met with Secretary General of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Iyad Ameen Madani. The meeting included Kuwait's Ambassador to Turkey Abdullah Al-Thuwaiikh, Assistant Foreign Minister at the Foreign Minister's office Ambassador Sheikh Dr



First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah visits Kuwait Red Crescent Society's pavilion.



# SHELTER A 'HOME' FOR MIGRANT LABORERS

## HUMAN RIGHTS SOCIETY, INT'L GROUPS VISIT SHELTER

**KUWAIT:** "In Kuwait, there is a particular interest in the rights of migrant workers which reflects the general trend to preserve human dignity, without exception, and to respect all the international conventions and agreements signed by Kuwait. The most prominent of these concerns is the Shelter Center for Migrant Labor of the Ministry of Social Affairs," said lawyer Mohammed Thaar Al-Otaibi, Director of Training and Development Center of the Kuwait Society for Human Rights (KSHR).

While praising what the center does in supporting the rights of workers, Otaibi said, "It is more than just a center. Its capacity is of 500 female inmates. It was built according to international standards to care for female workers who suffer from problems with their employers, to become one of the most important centers in the region." In the middle of the month, Kuwait Society for Human Rights conducted a workshop entitled 'the crime of human trafficking and its impact on societal security,' during which several recommendations were raised, including a visit to the Shelter Center for Migrant Labor. As a result, the KSHR organized a joint visit to the center in collaboration with the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW), National Movement for Domestic Labor - India, National Fund for workers' welfare - India, the Arabic network for immigrant rights (ANMR) and Solidarity Center.

### Receiving the delegation

Falah Mazid Al-Mutairi, Chairman of the Shelter Center for Migrant Labor, greeted the visiting delegation which Otaibi, lawyer Athra'a Al-Rifai, Head of the Complaints Committee in the Society, Sahl Al Gunaid, The projects and programs manager in the Society, Dr Zainab Al-Maraj, Chairperson of the family committee at the National Association of Domestic Security 'Rawasy', Abdul Rahman Noman Al-Turki, Coordinator of labor solidarity Center in Kuwait, Amy Testa, Programs officer of access to justice in the Global Alliance against trafficking in Women, as well as



Mutairi spoke with full transparency about the center and how it is trying to protect human rights according to the statement of Otaibi. Some female workers are exposed to actions that violate their rights as workers and as a human being. It was necessary for the State of Kuwait to take positions against violators through the Shelter Center and provided female workers with a shelter until their problems are resolved.

### The shelter

Administratively, the Shelter follows the Public Authority for Manpower of the Ministry of Social Affairs. It contains offices of the concerned government agencies such as ministries of interior, foreign affairs, and justice, in addition to a clinic for the Ministry of Health that works around the clock. One might wonder how inmates are received in the Shelter Center. The way is not complicated. The female inmate just advances personally with a shelter request or she is forwarded by her embassy or one of the organizations or the Ministry of Interior. She should be over 20 years old, and then she has medical, security and

ficking for investigation and then is referred to the prosecution, as happened in similar cases.

What does happen to the inmate inside the Center? She gets permanent supervision and follow-up by qualified specialists. There are a social supervisor, a psychological supervisor and a legal scholar doing the permanent follow-up since the entry of inmate of the shelter until she leaves.

What do the inmates get? According to Rifai, the inmates have access to full comfort and comprehensive services: air Conditioned and clean rooms, good food, tea break, a large resting room contains a TV, adequate lighting, a theater to implement events; especially in the national holidays and celebrations in collaboration with the communities, personal and health requirements, and in pathological cases, surgeries are carried out, besides psychological and social rehabilitation.

And there is even more. According to Rifai, there is a special center to train the female workers on handicrafts where raw materials are available. At the center, the inmates have the right go in and out at any time and in order to prevent any unexpected problems, the center corridors are equipped with cameras for the inmates' safety. What if the female worker has children? Quoting remarks Rifai, who was one of the members of the visiting delegation that there is no worries about that. Even with lack of private nurseries for women who have children, the center's administration has made separate rooms for them.

There were other important remarks that caught the attention of the visiting delegation. For example, the inmates are not forced to wear hijab and they practice their religious rituals freely. There is a section allocated for prayers and another section in the center for other groups to practice their religious rituals, according to Rifai. In addition to all of the above, the center checks if the domestic worker was exposed to physical abuse. In the case of confirmation, the case is referred to the human trafficking department in the Ministry of Interior. There is also a general direction to have Human Rights Office in the center, according to Rifai's press statement, "I observed also a list of instructions of the inmates' rights in Arabic and English and the Society in collaboration with the center will translate it into several languages fit different nationalities of the inmates."

According to Rifai, the center has six private cars with a large bus for mass transit. In addition, there are communities representatives on a voluntary basis as a contribution in providing translation services.

And she stresses, "during our visit, the number of inmates was up to 355 but the staff treatment with them at the center was "high refinement."

### Sense of responsibility

Turki meanwhile praised what the center does to support the rights of workers, touch their pain and advance their cases, which proves the existence of a sense of responsibility among those in charge of the center. He praised the role of the Center, the welfare and different services offered for the inmates. And that makes it one of the important centers that provides better humanitarian standards since it includes all residency requirements and that assures the inmate till the amendment of her situation without insulting her and without costs.

On the other hand, Testa said that the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women - which is an Alliance includes more than 100 non-governmental organizations from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean and North America working on the subject of human trafficking, migration and Women's rights -

rights of all the migrant workers in Kuwait and protect them. We hope to see a greater cooperation between the various ministries involved in the operation and support of the Shelter, as well as with civil society organizations, including the countries of origin."

### Final observations

The visiting delegation found it necessary to strengthen cooperation and coordination in a direction that contributes to the upgrading of workers' rights in Kuwait. It was necessary for them to submit suggestions for the center to assure mutual cooperation. And since there is no cultural library and a website for the center, the Kuwait Society for Human Rights will work in collaboration with other associations to provide the library and the website and other things that will contribute to the upgrading of this noble humanitarian work. The delegation found that the number of the Centre's staff is 17 male and female employees. The Center needs more employees, and the delegation wishes that the Ministry of Social Affairs will provide a greater number of employees and specially



**KUWAIT:** Falah Mazid Al-Mutairi, Chairman of the Shelter Center for Migrant Labor, tours the visiting delegation around the center.

representatives from the National Movement for Domestic Labor and the National Fund for workers' welfare.

Together with the work team of the Centre, Mutairi provided a detailed explanation for the delegation. He told them about the center's sections and gave them the opportunity to hold collective and individual meetings with the inmates, in addition to informing them about the Center's professional work and its role in protecting workers' rights.

legal examinations.

That is the only step she needs to make. If she is not suffering from any infectious disease or a criminal problem, she becomes an inmate. Then her employer is called, and if he is holding her passport, the administration intervenes to deliver the passport. If the inmate asked to travel, he is compelled to bring her a ticket. And in the case of suspected human trafficking, the case is referred to the management of public decency protection and human traf-



encourages the efforts of the Kuwait government in the provision of a shelter and social assistance to migrant workers who have been abused.

She added, "We are aware of the difficulties and challenges faced by affected migrants workers and the importance of recognizing the different needs of the victims, including access to various services. We are grateful for giving us the opportunity to interact with the Shelter management and staff to learn more about migrant workers' experiences. And it is a reminder of the important role that the government plays in the recognition of the

female researchers, calling on to open the door for anyone who wants to volunteer to help. At the end of the visit, Kuwait Society for Human Rights offered a sincere appreciation for the center which cares about human rights. It is considered one of the most prominent centers that cares about the rights of workers exposed to violation. KSHR praised the staff working at the center, headed by Mutairi, who runs the team with the spirit of a leader who possess humanity first and cooperation second in terms of the opportunity for the delegation to visit and see the Center and its various services and departments.



In Brief

NAVY CONDUCTS LIVE AMMUNITION DRILL

**KUWAIT:** Navy Forces will conduct a live ammunition drill in the next couple of days, the Ministry of Defense announced yesterday. The drill will take place 6 nautical miles out of east Ras-Al-Julaiah to east of Ras Al-Zour today and tomorrow from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, the Ministry's Public Relations said in a press statement. The statement cautioned the public to keep out of the drill location for their own safety. — KUNA



MINISTER LAUDS WOMEN JOURNALISTS

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah lauded the role played by Arab women journalists union in highlighting women's issues in the Arab World. He made this remark during his meeting with the union's President - Kuwait branch - Raba'a Hussein Muki Juma'a, the Ministry of Information said in a statement yesterday. Sheikh Salman stressed his support to Kuwaiti women in all fields of media by providing proper training and vocational rehabilitation. — KUNA



JERUSALEM ARAB MEDIA CAPITAL

**CAIRO:** Members of the Executive Office of the Arab Information Ministers agreed Monday to name the Palestinian city of Jerusalem, as the Arab Media Capital for 2016. Safaa Hejazi, chairperson of the office, said in a statement the members approved the naming of Jerusalem to further highlight its status. Hejazi meanwhile said terrorism has been threatening development plans in the Arab countries. "The level of awareness among Arab citizens should be promoted to address poisonous way of thinking which threatens the youth," she said. — KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: Jet skiers battle it out at Kuwait's grand championship. — KUNA photo



KUWAIT: Meshari Al-Thufairi, General Manager of Ooredoo's Al-Jahra drive-through branch is pictured with staff.

OOREDOO'S AL-JAHRA DRIVE-THROUGH BRANCH MAJOR SUCCESS WITH CUSTOMERS



**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of international Ooredoo Group, has hailed the great success achieved by its unique Al-Jahra drive-through branch and the excellent feedback received from customers, since it was officially opened earlier this year.

Ooredoo's Al-Jahra drive-through branch offers customers a unique service, allowing them to complete any payments and purchases while remaining in their cars, providing them with high level of service at their convenience.

Commenting on the branches success Mijbil Alayoub, Director of Corporate Communications, at

Ooredoo Kuwait said: "Ooredoo is very proud to be the first telecom company in Kuwait to introduce the concept of a drive-through branch. We have received impressive feedback from customers and I am very pleased that the idea has achieved such a great success. We will continue to provide our customers with the highest levels of service along with the most innovative and recent products in the world of telecoms."

Senior executives from Ooredoo Kuwait recently visited the company's branches and strategic partners in the Al-Jahra Governorate, which has more than 150 point of sales, to connect

with customers' and dealers.

The latest branch in Jahra boasts a unique location with ample parking space, in addition to a designated section for business owners and entrepreneur services. The new branch also has an on-site repair shop, and self-service kiosks for customers to use services without the need to queue for a representative to help them.

The management's visit to the branches and strategic partners aimed to identify methods to strengthen the company's relationship with customers in order to continue to provide superior products and services.

ZANZIBAR SENIOR OFFICIAL LAUDS KUWAIT'S AID TO FIGHT CHOLERA

NEW KUWAITI-FUNDED SCHOOL OPENS IN EAST SUDAN

**ZANZIBAR/KASSALA:** Zanzibar Deputy Minister of Health Harusi Said Suleiman on Monday commended Kuwait's aid to fight cholera in the aftermath of recent outbreak of the disease. The Kuwaiti aid has played the major role in the decline of cholera patients, as the disease has recently spread in the state, Suleiman told a graduation ceremony at Al-Ihsan School, run by the Kuwaiti-based Direct Aid Society in Zanzibar, according to a statement by Kuwait's embassy in Tanzania.

MP Panya Ali Abdalla expressed pleasure for the rise in female graduates of the school this year, lauding their high level that paves the way for them to carry on with their education in the Tanzanian universities.

The Kuwaiti charity societies have responded to appeals by the Zanzibar government for assistance to combat cholera, the statement quoted Kuwait's Ambassador to Tanzania Jassem Al-Najem as saying. He added that the first part of the aid was delivered earlier in May during a visit Najem had with Zanzibar Health Minister Mahmoud Thabit Kombo to a camp of cholera patients.

Kuwait's Society of the Revival of Islamic Heritage (RIHS) also provided more aid last week. Meanwhile, the ambassador attended the opening of a training course to promote efficiency of the teaching staff, organized in cooperation with the office of the Africa Muslims Committee in Zanzibar, an affiliate of the Direct Aid Society, the embassy said.



KASSALA: Sumaya Al-Maimani, founder of an initiative by Kuwait University's female students to build a school in the Sudanese state of Kassala, attends the school's opening ceremony.

New school

In other news, a new Kuwaiti-funded high-school for girls was inaugurated in Kassala State, eastern Sudan, on Monday. The new school, named Al-Darin and financed through an initiative by Kuwait University's female students, is part of Kuwait's continued support of development and service projects in Sudan, particularly Kassala State, Deputy-Governor of Kassala Majthoub Abu-Musa said in a statement. This great educational monument, built through an unprecedented benevolent initiative by Kuwaiti female students, is a source of pride for all Kassala residents, Abu-Mousa said, adding that Kuwaiti people's philanthropic actions have expanded throughout the world, including

eastern Sudan recently. Eastern Sudanese residents are so grateful to Kuwait, he said, pointing out the Donors Conference for East Sudan, which Kuwait hosted in 2010 to reconstruct eastern Sudanese regions.

Meanwhile, Sumaya Al-Maimani, founder of the Kuwaiti initiative, expressed her joy toward opening the school, adding that the school's cornerstone was placed about two years ago, and now it is fully active. She also expressed her group's hope that the new school contributes in educating Kassala's girls and build their minds and thoughts positively, stressing the importance of educated women in making fine generations and leaders, and in leading the community toward a better life. — KUNA



ZANZIBAR: Kuwait's Ambassador to Tanzania Jassem Al-Najem is pictured with graduate students at Al-Ihsan School, run by the Kuwaiti-based Direct Aid Society in Zanzibar. — KUNA photos



**KUWAIT:** A handout photo provided by the Interior Ministry shows a mark found on a jacket recovered at the suspect's room, which matches the one worn by the suspect and shown in CCTV footage during one of his robberies.

## POLICE CATCH THIEF RESPONSIBLE FOR 27 ROBBERIES IN HAWALLY, FARWANIYA



**A metal piece and sneakers found in the suspect's room, which he wore during one of his robberies.**

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** The Relations and Security Information Department at the Interior Ministry said the crime scene monitoring team discovered 27 thefts that were committed with the same method in Hawally and Farwaniya governorates and registered against 'unidentified persons.' The department said that inspecting three



**A man arrested for collecting cash illegally from donors.**

images and camera recordings, it was noticed that the same person committed these crimes. After following the tracks of the suspect following the latest theft he committed, the team identified him as Abdullah Mubarak Al-Hareeqi, a Gulf

national residing in a Hawally hotel. Criminal detectives raided his room and arrested him. They found several stolen items that were identified by their owners, along with tools and clothes he wore during his thefts. He was sent to concerned authorities.

### 'Charity' collector arrested

Criminal detectives arrested a Jordanian man who was collecting donations and keeping them for himself. Detectives learned about the man's activities - collecting charity from citizens and expats without a license in Salimiya. The suspect confessed to collecting KD 50,000, adding that he spent some of it for his pleasure.

### Traffic crackdowns

The traffic department carried out several surprise campaigns in the six governorates between May 15 and 21 that resulted in issuing 45,965 traffic citations and impounding 1,796 vehicles and 11 motorcycles, while 69 persons were detained and eight deported for driving without a license.

### Cleaning campaigns

Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations Department said the cleaning department carried out cleaning campaigns on the islands of Um Al-Maradem, Miskan, Kubbar, Failaka, Qaruh and Uha. Director of the Capital governorate's Municipality branch Ammar Fahd Al-Ammar said 945 bags of waste were removed during the campaigns.

## KISR, JAPAN'S JCCP SIGN ACCORD TO IMPROVE KUWAITI HEAVY CRUDE

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the Japan Cooperation Center, Petroleum (JCCP) on Monday signed an agreement to conduct joint research on improving the Kuwaiti heavy crude oil, at a total cost of KD 611,000.

During the signing ceremony, KISR's Director General Dr Sameera Ahmad Al-Sayyed Omar said that the Japanese side would contribute KD 358,000 of the research budget, and KISR will provide the other KD 253,000. The project will help the Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) and the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) to make the right decisions for investment in this technology going forward, and to obtain light industrial oils and high-value products, she said.

Omar pointed to the close cooperation between KISR and the JCCP in oil research and refining, dating back to 1993. The outcome has been 16 research projects. In addition, they have held up to 24 joint conferences, seminars and workshops, besides training 30,000 researchers and engineers.

Meanwhile, Special Advisor at JCCP Eiji Hiroka said that the JCCP, founded in November 1981, is a non-profit institution, supported by the Japanese government. It works on promoting friendly relations between oil-producing countries and Japan and contribute to securing a stable supply of oil to Japan through technical cooperation and personnel exchanges in the downstream sectors of the oil industry, he added. — KUNA

## VACANCIES

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# MINISTER CONFIRMS 7.5% RAISE TO OIL WORKERS

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister, Finance Minister and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh yesterday addressed all oil sector employees, congratulating them on the occasion of the upcoming holy month of Ramadan. He also announced that following its recent meeting with union leaders, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has decided to pay the usual 7.5 percent annual raise. Saleh added that it was also agreed to give retirees the option to select between receiving medical care at the KOC Hospital or health insurance at private sector hospitals.

### Floor removed

In an unprecedented incident in Kuwait, a citizen yesterday complied with Kuwait Municipality instructions to demolish the fourth floor of his house in Raqqa because it had been built in violation of private residence construction regulations. Notably, the municipality has detected various violations at citizens' houses, who mainly built extra floors with having proper licenses. They were all warned and told to remove the violations.

### Scrap tour

Escorted by a team from the Environment Public Authority (EPA), Municipal Council members toured Naayem scrap market to examine law enforcement and abundance of environmental rules. During the tour, they noted that the area lacks basic infrastructure needed and that many lives had been lost on the highway leading to it. Member Hassan Kamal stressed that the area lacks many basic services and that most streets are unpaved. EPA representative Mahdi Fairouz said that the tour resulted in detecting various environmental violations. Workers in the area made many demands, mainly of electricity, security and a clinic or medical point providing first aid services.

In other news, the Jahra committee at the Municipal Council yesterday organized a workshop to discuss the accumulation of waste in the Jahra stables area. Chairman of Jahra technical committee Meshari Al-Motoutah said that the committee discussed the waste issue, blaming the Public Authority of Sport (PAS) for its accumulation that may cause the spread of diseases and epidemics. He also demanded that the area be included in future contracts signed with cleaning companies.

### Wi-Fi at Mubarakiya Market

Capital Governor Lt Gen (Rtd) Thabet Al-Muhanna announced that an agreement was made with a specialized company to provide free Internet access in Mubarakiya Market and

## PAS DOUBLES ATHLETES' STIPENDS

**KUWAIT:** Public Authority for Sports (PAS) announced doubling up athletes' stipends, as an initiative to support sports movement in the country. This increase was discussed and approved by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and head of PAS' executive body Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour Al-Sabah, in a meeting that focused on 'foreign participation', PAS said in a press statement yesterday.

This financial support, which was blessed by the Kuwaiti leadership, will meet athletes' aspirations and ambitions by eliminating any obstacles that would face their sporting careers. In order to resuscitate the sports movement, athletes should participate in foreign camps and sporting events, the statement added. The last increase of payments for athletes was recorded in 1998. — KUNA

## COMMERCE MINISTER ORDERS OVERSEAS PROPERTY SALE PANEL

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Commerce and Industry Yousef Al-Ali has issued a ministerial decree authorizing a new committee regulating the sale of properties at real estate exhibitions outside Kuwait. The committee will look into procedures pertinent to the sale of foreign properties at real estate exhibitions, a control mechanism, necessary documents and sale regulations, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a press release yesterday. It also considers legal problems triggered off by the sale of foreign properties and ways of tackling them in light of the Kuwaiti law, and follow up imbalance in the existing system, it added. It is also up to the committee to use the help of experts in order to do its jobs properly and effectively, but they should be denied the right of vote, it noted. — KUNA



**Minister Anas Al-Saleh**

the parks close to it. Muhanna added that the free Internet services would also be available at Sabah and Amiri hospitals. He also noted that free iftar meals would be provided at Mubarakiya Market and Nayef Palace during Ramadan.

### Educational challenges

Minister of Education Badr Al-Essa stressed

that education is facing political, economic, technological, social and cultural challenges in Kuwait. He also noted that people mistakenly believe that educational development is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MoE) alone, while the process is a joint 'venture' between MoE, schools, parents and the entire society. Speaking at a seminar organized by the Constitutional Unity Bloc (CUB) with the attendance of Minister of Justice and Awqaf Yaaqoub Al-Sane, Essa stressed that it was the responsibility of decision makers to face such challenges by passing the needed legislations.

He also noted that some curriculums promote sectarianism, tribalism and violence, and MoE officials did their best to expunge such material as much as possible. Essa also stressed that MoE is currently developing e-education and that the majority of teachers have received special training courses to use tablets in classes. He also noted that Kuwait University's capacity was very limited compared to the number of undergraduates, and this is why new universities are being built and a new bill for them was passed.

## MINISTRY PREPARED FOR ENERGY CONSUMPTION HIKE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Maximum electricity consumption during the upcoming holy month of Ramadan is expected to be 13,800 megawatts, Ministry of Electricity and Water's Undersecretary Mohammed Boshehri said, adding that the ministry is ready with a total power production of 15,000 megawatts. However, Boshehri urged all consumers to rationalize electricity usage. He also assured consumers that the maximum water consumption would be 450-460 million imperial gallons, while the ministry is capable of producing 530 million imperial gallons.

### Elections

Participants at a seminar organized by Hmak e-paper strongly criticized political blocs that recently declared their intention to take part in the upcoming parliamentary elections after they had boycotted previous elections in protest of the one-vote electoral system. Participants urged them to officially apologize to those who took part in the elections by voting and running for the elections, whom they had described as 'traitors'. Participants also urged these political blocs to justify changing their minds now after 27 former MPs of the so-called 'majority bloc'

had declared a boycott. Headed by its editor-in-chief, lawyer Mubarak Al-Mutawwa, Hmak held its monthly seminar under the title 'Kuwait Democracy between Participation and Boycotting'. Speakers at the seminar included journalist Mohammed Abdul Aziz, former minister Ahmed Baqer and former MPs Osama Al-Tahous and Duaij Al-Shemmari.

### Sport activities

The Public Authority of Sports filed cases against the squash, taekwondo, fencing and judo federations demanding KD 5,001 in compensation, accusing these federations of supporting the international suspension of Kuwaiti sport activities.

### ATM destroyed

A mentally disturbed person was arrested for destroying a local bank's ATM in Ali Sabah Al-Salem. Security sources said policemen were dispatched to the scene after a report about someone destroying the ATM. The man turned out to be mentally disturbed.

### Wages' link

The Civil Services Commission (CSC) denied social media reports about an online CSC link for wages and leaves.

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Crime

Report

Student commits suicide after failing his tests

**KUWAIT:** A Syrian boy hanged himself to death inside his family's Nagra home after failing his finals exams. His body was recovered by the coroner. Family members were shocked to find the 14-year-old hanging dead, so they called the police, who went along with criminal evidence officers to the scene. The family members said their son was going through tough times after failing his exams and kept to himself.

Doctor jailed for drug use

Ahmadi detectives arrested a Bulgarian anesthetist who works for a private hospital in Ahmadi governorate for being wanted to serve two-year jail sentence for drug use. Security source found it strange how officials of the hospital allowed him to work although he was convicted of such charges. The doctor was arrested at work and sent to the sentences implementation department. The source added that 'wasta' (connections) failed to release the doctor and he is on his way to the central prison.

Families fight

A brawl between children in Saad Al-Abdullah turned into a fierce fight between their families, and prompted a citizen to shoot at his Norwegian and Kuwaiti neighbors, injuring them both. A security source said Interior Ministry operators received a call about shots and injuries in Saad Al-Abdullah. Jahra police rushed to the area accompanied by paramedics, who took the victims to Jahra Hospital. The hospital investigator noticed crowds around the hospital, so backup patrols were sent to prevent matters from escalating and only patients were allowed in. Detectives are investigating the shooter's possession of the firearm and the shooting.

'Competitor' beaten

One of two women who were vying for the same man sought the help of her friend and beat her 'competitor' in a Salmiya cafe, until police brought the three under control. The woman had discovered the man's relationship with the other woman and decided to beat her. Hawally police responded and took the women to Salmiya police station.

Driver harassed

A lawyer was harassed by two men driving a car with temporary license plates after she ignored them. They insulted her with indecent words, then forced her to crash into the pavement, which damaged her car. The lawyer said she left Ahmadi court and went to another place, where two men talked to her about committing indecent acts. When she admonished one of them, he insulted her, so she drove off, so the two chased her and made her hit the pavement several times. The lawyer went to Fintas police station and lodged a complaint against them.

AK-47 found

Weapons detectives went to a charity society in Riqqa to seize an AK-47 that was found between clothes given by donors. State security were informed the incident.

Brothel raided

Farwaniya police raided a brothel run by a Bangladeshi woman and frequented by a large number of men. A security source said information was received about the brothel and an expat woman who was popular among customers, and nicknamed 'scorpion'. Three women and an Asian man were arrested. Separately, an illegal call center run by an Ethiopian woman was raided. Expats using the center were also arrested and the equipment was confiscated.

Police offended

A newly-released prison inmate resisted arrest in Bayan while under the influence of the drugs, and refused to hand police his ID. He also insulted them with foul words, adding: "We are used to prison... what more?" Policemen decided to stop him as he was driving erratically. — Al-Rai

News

in brief

Alternative export route feasible: KPC

**KUWAIT:** Preliminary studies have shown that a project to build pipelines that enable Kuwait to export oil from Oman via the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is feasible, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) CEO Nezar Al-Adasani said. The project would see cooperation between KPC, Oman Oil Company and UAE's International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC) to export Kuwaiti crude through Oman's Ras Al-Markaz via pipelines that pass through Abu Dhabi. It provides an alternative route than the Strait of Hormuz, which currently serves as the only path for Kuwaiti oil exports to international markets. — Al-Rai

Staff let go

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Education plans to terminate 512 employees on September 17, 2016, said Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative Affairs Yousuf Al-Najjar. He added that a list containing 85 others whose services were no longer needed was delivered to the Civil Services Commission (CSC). — Al-Rai

False report

**KUWAIT:** A Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry official denied reports published by Gambian media which stated that 320 'highly trained Kuwaiti body guards' will join Gambian President Yahya Jammeh's personal security team. "These reports are false," said Deputy Foreign Minister for Africa's Affairs Hamad Al-Mesh'aa, adding that no discussions on that regard were made during Gambian Foreign Minister's visit to Kuwait last April. — Al-Rai



KUWAIT AIRWAYS SUPPORTS RELIEF CAMPAIGN FOR SYRIANS IN JORDAN

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Airways announced that it supports the continued provision of relief to Syrians in Jordan in cooperation with the International Islamic Charity Organization as part of the airline's commitment to humanitarian assistance and in line with its social responsibility. This is the third occasion on which Kuwait Airways offered the services of its aircraft to provide targeted relief as and where it is required. Shipments included over twenty tons of food supplies, clothes and blankets to help Syrian refugees in Jordan. This special flight was operated by an Airbus A340 aircraft and departed yesterday. Philip Saunders, Chief Commercial Officer at Kuwait Airways, stated: "Kuwait Airways is particularly proud of our close partnership with the International Islamic Charity Organization. Our operational staff and all employees are committed to support the IICO's mission in providing direct assistance for Syrian refugees in Jordan wherever we can."



KEY AMENDMENTS APPROVED TO KAC PRIVATIZATION

**KUWAIT:** The Cabinet has asked Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh to prepare a proposal to amend a previous decision related to the rules of implementing law 6 of 2008 on privatizing Kuwait Airways (KAC) to agree with the legislative amendments that were made to it. Saleh was asked about decision 444 issued in 2011 which spoke about the transfer of ownership of all the company's assets to the company that will replace KAC, while it keeps the rights and advantages given to KAC, besides customs exemptions, transfer of Kuwaiti employees and other items.

High-ranking financial sources said ticket prices before Jan 1, 2016 were calculated based on a fixed price for a certain period with the knowledge of IATA. They added that airfares will be calculated after that date according to an agreement to be reached between the finance ministry and KAC. The Cabinet said it is necessary for government officials to fly on KAC aircraft, and decided to reject a request by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation to exempt it from this decision. It also rejected a proposal from the finance ministry to allow purchasing tickets from other airlines if there are no direct flights on KAC. — Al-Anbaa

MANPOWER AUTHORITY READY TO IMPLEMENT FEES INCREASE

**KUWAIT:** Only a few days are left before Social Affairs and Labor Minister and State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih is expected to make decisions to increase the fees of some procedures for bringing in and employing expatriate labor forces. The decision is expected to become effective June 1, and includes increasing fees for the issuance, transfer and renewal of work permits.

Sources at the Manpower Public Authority (MPA) said despite the passing of the fee increase, it remains the lowest compared to other GCC countries. It said that MPA plans vital projects that will enhance services, such as expanding its online portal and increasing the procedures processed through it, which will save time and effort spent by completing the process electronically without the need to go to labor departments.

Sources said the fee increase is part of the recommendations of a committee assembled to study the demographic structure. The economic reform document also recommended the increase of revenues and raising prices of services, as the Cabinet issued a decision to increase the fees for 20 categories, including farms, chalets and cooperatives.

About the transactions that are being done electronically, and others to be added soon, the sources said based on instructions of Minister Subaih, the MPA presented a group of services for the state's online portal in order to simplify procedures and help patrons process them quickly. These transactions are: Work permits for government contracts (first time permits) and permit renewal and cancellation outside the country, in addition to inquiring about files of businessmen, labor estimation and other services. — Al-Jarida

Al-Anbaa

COMPULSORY TEST

By Nermin Al-Houti

**W**e are going through a period that is not the product of an instant - rather it is the accumulation over many years until its lines became intertwined and became difficult to untangle to reach correct solutions. The drugs scourge is an issue that did not take place today, and did not happen yesterday - rather it is an expanded illness that hit the society and regrettably did not get treatment from the concerned authorities and did not get attention from some families. Today, we are demanding compulsory tests.

For years we have been suffering from the problem of drug use. It was until recently that the percentage of our society members who were on drugs was very small, but today the problem has become a tragedy and the percentage is on the rise. We are now seeing and reading about many youths who are under the curse of drugs, and their problems are not limited to use only. This has become a tool of killing, fighting and rape, and other events that did not take place in our society in the past. Today, why don't we get astonished when we read in the paper that a son killed his father, or a group of youth had a fight and the result was killing and injuring most of them? Where is the guarding eye of our children's future?!

Our words today are not blaming the interior ministry - rather we laud the role of policemen and their fight of this disease in many ways. Our words will not blame a particular place or element, but our lines are a proposal to fight this epidemic through imposing a compulsory test on all aged 16 to 35 of both genders, done monthly through special clinics in schools, universities and government departments.

Please, I do not want anyone to cry personal freedom, because drug use does not only harm one person, but also those around him. As an example to all those who say this is not right - pilots and crewmembers undergo periodic exams because they are responsible for lives onboard planes and safeguarding passenger safety. All airlines carry out such tests. Here we are talking about a society and entire families, so why not make it compulsory?!

— Translated by Kuwait Times

KUWAITIS SPENT KD 3.7 BILLION ABROAD

**KUWAIT:** Official statistics show that Kuwaitis' spending on travel and tourism in 2015 reached nearly KD 3.7 billion, and includes items such as spending on university scholarships and treatment abroad (18 percent of the total). Informed sources said this is a record amount by all standards (nearly \$12.2 billion), especially since it is repeated every year and has repercussions on the balance of payments in general. This spending has not regressed so far, despite the drop in oil prices since the second half of 2014.

Concerned sources said there is general squandering, especially on treatment abroad, apart from tourism spending, as average travel by a Kuwaiti is three to four times a year for various purposes. This "escape" is due to lack of entertainment venues domestically, while expenses on treatment abroad can build the most advanced hospitals in a few years. About study scholarships abroad, the sources said it is on the increase because of capacity challenges of educational institutes in Kuwait, bearing in mind that there is no comprehensive strategy that accurately decides the need of the marketplace for graduates. Payments to scholarship students are generous compared to other GCC countries, reaching \$900 million last year (KD 240 million). — Al-Qabas

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As the treatments carried out at London Bridge Hospital become increasingly complex, the hospital has needed to grow. Currently part way through a major £15 million developmental project, the hospital has already gained a new dialysis unit as well as two state-of-the-art operating theatre suites equipped with the latest equipment and clinical software, enabling our consultants to perform more complex procedures. The project will see the hospital's bed count rise to over 130, with the Level 2/3 Critical Care Unit increasing to 15 beds. These advanced facilities allow us to extend our surgical and treatment services for patients with acute clinical needs.

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## IRAQI FORCES CLOSE IN ON FALLUJAH

UN CONCERN MOUNTS FOR CIVILIANS AMID SHELLING

**NEAR FALLUJAH:** Iraqi forces cleared areas around Fallujah yesterday after launching an assault to retake the city, tightening their siege on Islamic State group fighters but also raising fears for civilians trapped inside. With the jihadists surrounded and outnumbered, the recapture of their iconic bastion looked ultimately inevitable, especially after IS suffered a string of losses in recent months. But illustrating that even a diminished IS is still dangerous, the group has struck back with a wave of bomb attacks, including a series of blasts that left more than 160 dead in Syrian regime coastal strongholds on Monday.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi declared the start of the operation to retake Fallujah on Monday and less than a day into the battle, Iraqi forces had secured the nearby town of Garma. That cut off IS fighters in Fallujah from one of their last support areas and paved the way for more advances towards the city, which lies only 50 km west of Baghdad. "Federal forces advanced towards the east of Fallujah early today from three directions," police Lieutenant General Raed Shakir Jawdat told AFP.

The Hashed Al-Shaabi umbrella paramilitary organization, dominated by Tehran-backed Shiite militias that are heavily involved in the operation, said ground was also gained south of Fallujah. With forces converging on the city, concerns mounted that the tens of thousands of civilians believed to still be inside had nowhere to go.

## 50,000 Civilians Trapped

The Norwegian Refugee Council estimated the number at 50,000 and urged efforts to get them out. "Families who have been suffering food and medical shortages over the last



Members of Iraqi pro-government forces drive their vehicles near the city of Fallujah yesterday as part of a major assault to retake the city from Islamic State (IS) group. — AFP

months now risk being caught in the crossfire and it is absolutely vital that they are granted safe routes out of there so that we can assist them," NRC country director Nasr Muflahi said in a statement. He told AFP that only 80 families appeared to have been able to flee the city in the hours before the fighting began, and none since. "We were expecting more to come

out overnight, this hasn't happened," Muflahi said, adding that plans by local authorities to open humanitarian corridors had not yet materialised.

Officials from Anbar, the vast western province in which Fallujah is located, reported that small numbers of civilians had managed to sneak out. A Fallujah resident reached by

telephone told AFP there was heavy shelling on the northern edge of the city yesterday. "Daesh (IS) is still imposing a curfew, preventing people from coming out on the street. Some of them are allowed to stand at their gates," said the man, who gave his name as Abu Mohammed al-Dulaimi.

"The number of Daesh members is decreasing and we have started seeing them walk in the street in groups of two or three. We don't know where the others are," he said. It was unclear what kind of defence IS was prepared to put up in Fallujah, a city that looms large in modern jihadist mythology since 2004 battles that saw US forces suffer some of their worst losses since the Vietnam War.

## 'Extensive Air Power'

As the assault began on one of the only two major Iraqi cities IS still holds - the other being Mosul - the jihadist group claimed an unprecedented string of bombings in coastal Syrian towns home to President Bashar Al-Assad's Alawite minority. The wave of bombings in Jableh and Tartus on Monday left at least 161 people dead, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group. Iraqi and US-led coalition aircraft have been pounding Fallujah and its surroundings in recent days to support the operation.

The coalition of Western and Arab nations launched air strikes against IS in Syria and Iraq in mid-2014, after the group seized control of large parts of both countries and declared an Islamic "caliphate". "This operation will again be led by the Iraqi counter-terrorism service (CTS), which made extensive use of air power in the battle of Ramadi, and levelled a great deal of the city," said David Witty, a retired US army special forces colonel.

Ramadi, the capital of Anbar, was lost to IS a year ago and brought back under government control earlier this year. "This model should not be used in upcoming battles - they don't want to say they had to destroy the city to save it, or made a wasteland and called it peace," said Witty, a former adviser to the CTS. — AFP

## NEW TURKISH GOVT REFLECTS ERDOGAN'S GROWING POWER

**ANKARA:** Turkey's new prime minister vowed yesterday to work immediately on forging the stronger presidency wanted by the incumbent, Tayyip Erdogan, and announced a cabinet that signalled policy continuity but left little doubt as to who was in charge. Top members of the economic management team including Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek, favored by foreign investors as a reformer, kept their posts in the new government; but around half of the names were reshuffled as Erdogan consolidated his 14-year hold on power.

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim told parliament he would seize a "historic opportunity" to change a constitution born of a 1980 army coup. The new basic law would reflect the fact that the president had for the first time been popularly elected, rather than chosen by parliament. Erdogan won Turkey's first presidential election in 2014 having stepped down from the prime minister's post with the intention of imbuing a largely ceremonial presidency with strong powers akin to those of the US and French heads of state.

Opponents fear creeping authoritarianism on the part of Erdogan, a polarizing figure who commands fervent support from roughly half the country, helped by a weak and divided opposition that lacks strong leadership. The nationalist MHP opposition, whose support Erdogan may need to press through changes, said a presidential system would inevitably lead to despotism.

Yildirim told a parliamentary meeting of the ruling AK Party that change was needed as Turkey aims to become a top-10 global economy within seven years. "Turkey cannot reach its 2023 targets with its current constitution. This suit is too tight for this body now," he said. "We are going to start working immediately on a new constitution that includes a presidential system ... It's the AK Party's most important duty."

Yildirim rejected suggestions that the president, who will chair the new cabinet's first meet-



ANKARA: Turkey's incoming Prime Minister Binali Yildirim (right) meets Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Presidential Palace to submit his new cabinet lineup yesterday. — AFP

ing, was meddling in government affairs in violation of the current constitution. His words reflected the confused nature of a system that, while parliamentary in name, is dominated by Erdogan, by far Turkey's most popular politician but loathed by opponents suspicious of his Islamist ideals and intolerance of dissent. The lira currency firmed to 2.98 against the dollar after Yildirim announced the cabinet, from below 3.00 beforehand, reflecting investors' relief that Simsek and Finance Minister Naci Agbal had retained their positions. The Istanbul stock market rose 3.4 percent, with banks leading the way.

The two advocate structural reforms to boost labor productivity and household savings, which economists say are long overdue. "Logic prevails - why would Erdogan not keep Simsek, so as to keep markets and investors on the side for the time-being?" said Nomura strategist Timothy Ash in an e-mailed note, but added: "This is not to say that Simsek will have that much leverage to deliver on

his structural reform plan. The power is moving to Erdogan and his less orthodox policy advisers."

Erdogan favors consumption-led growth and has said high interest rates cause inflation, a stance at odds with orthodox economics. Investors have been unnerved by pressure on the central bank, which cut the top end of its rate corridor for a third month on Tuesday, to push rates down.

Yildirim said he would prioritize growth by boosting production, encourage investment and job creation, and maintain fiscal discipline, in a sign of continuity with policies that fuelled Turkey's growth during the AKP's first decade in power. Nihat Zeybekci, a close Erdogan ally, returned as economy minister, a post he had held until last November. Erdogan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak kept his position as energy minister. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu also remained in his job, but former AK Party spokesman Omer Celik became the new EU minister at a critical time in Turkey's relations with Europe. — Reuters

## INVESTIGATORS PLAY DOWN BLAST IN EGYPT AIR CRASH

**CAIRO:** The head of Egypt's forensics authority dismissed a suggestion yesterday that the small size of the body parts retrieved since an EgyptAir plane crashed last week indicated there was an explosion on board. Investigators struggling to work out why the Airbus 320 jet vanished from radar screens last Thursday, with 66 passengers and crew on board, are looking for clues in the human remains and debris recovered from the Mediterranean Sea so far.

The plane and its black box recorders, which could explain what brought down the Paris-Cairo flight as it entered Egyptian airspace, have not been located. An Egyptian forensic official said 23 bags of body parts have been collected since Sunday, the largest of them no bigger than the palm of a hand. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said their size suggested there had been an explosion although no trace of explosives had been detected.

But Hisham Abdelhamid, head of Egypt's forensics authority, said that assessment was "mere assumptions" and that it was too early to draw conclusions. At least two other sources with direct knowledge of the investigation also said it would be premature to say what caused EgyptAir flight 804 to plunge into the sea. French investigators say the plane sent a series of warnings indicating that smoke had been detected on board as well as other possible computer faults shortly before it disappeared.

The signals did not indicate what may have caused the smoke, and aviation experts have said that neither deliberate sabotage nor a technical fault could be ruled out. Investigators rely on debris, bags and clothes as well as chemical analysis to detect the imprints of an explosion, according to people involved in two previous probes where deliberate blasts were involved. An Egyptian team formed by the Civil Aviation Ministry is conducting the technical investigation and three officials from France's BEA air accident investigation agency have also

been in Cairo since Friday, with an expert from Airbus, to assist. Egypt has deployed a robot submarine and France has sent a search ship to help hunt for the black boxes, but it is not clear whether either of them could detect signals emitted by the flight recorders, lying in waters possibly 3,000 m deep. The signal emitters have a battery life of just 30 days.

## Last Moments

Five days after the plane vanished off radar screens, Egyptian and Greek officials - who monitored the flight before it crossed into Egypt's airspace - have given differing accounts of its last moments. Greek Defence Minister Panos Kammenos said on Thursday that Greek radar had picked up sharp swings in the jet's trajectory, 90 degrees left, then 360 degrees right as it plunged from a cruising altitude to 15,000 feet before vanishing from radar.

But Ehab Mohieldin Azmi, head of Egypt's air navigation services, said Egyptian officials saw no sign of the plane swerving, and it had been visible at 37,000 feet until it disappeared. "Of course, we tried to call it more than once and it did not respond," he told Reuters. "We asked the planes that were nearby to give it a relay and we could not reach it. That's it." Egypt's public prosecutor has asked Greece to hand over transcripts of calls between the pilot and Greek air traffic control, and for the officials to be questioned over whether the pilot sent a distress signal.

He also asked France for documents, audio and visual records on the plane during its stopover at Charles de Gaulle airport and until it left French airspace. At a hotel near Cairo airport where relatives of the victims were giving DNA samples to help identify the body parts recovered so far, grief mixed with frustration. Amjad Haqi, an Iraqi man whose mother Najla was flying back from medical treatment in France, said the families were being kept in the dark and had not even been formally told that any body parts had been recovered. — Reuters





## COLLEGES OFFER SYRIAN REFUGEES A ROUTE TO US

**BOSTON:** Colleges in the US are opening their doors - and their financial aid - to Syrian refugees. Over the past year, at least a dozen schools have promised to cover full or partial tuition for Syrian refugees who are accepted for enrollment. They join a coalition of more than 60 colleges that have started providing scholarships to Syrian students since the country's civil war began in 2011. So far, colleges have awarded scholarships to more than 150 Syrian students. It's an effort organized by the Institute of International Education, a nonprofit group that offers financial help to students who are displaced by violence and natural disasters.

Among more than 11 million Syrians who have fled their homes, the institute estimates that at least 100,000 are qualified to attend college but have few options to do so. "We've never really had those numbers before," said Allan Goodman, president of the institute. "The Syrian civil war is more complicated and at a much larger scale than any other crisis." To help refugees resume their studies, an initial wave of schools volunteered to offer financial aid soon after war broke out. Since then, many have followed amid pressure from their students.

The University of Southern California is offering to pay full tuition for as many as six refugees starting next year. Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania pledged to cover \$25,000 a year for five more. Graduate students at USC had pushed the university to offer scholarships for several months before the administration agreed. Tufts University near Boston joined the coalition in late 2013 after a student government called for it.

At Davidson College in North Carolina, officials said they learned about the effort only after students brought it to their attention. The private school pledged financial aid to Syrian students last month. "This is largely driven by our students," said Kaye-Lani Laughna, the international admission officer at Davidson. "I'm hopeful that we'll be able to welcome a Syrian student in the next year."

The coalition includes colleges in some states whose governors tried to block Syrian refugees last year, including in North Carolina, New Jersey and Ohio. Experts said they hadn't heard of any universities taking a similar stand against refugees. Mohamad Bassel Khair, 28, fled Damascus after explosions and firefights became routine. After going to Egypt, where he and his wife couldn't legally work, Khair heard about scholarships at New Jersey's Montclair State University and decided to apply. "They gave

me a full scholarship, including rooming," Khair said. "They were so helpful for me."

He is graduating with a master's in nutrition and food science and is now seeking asylum in the US for his family, including a 2-year-old son. At least one college, though, questions whether it's legal to earmark financial aid for Syrian students. The University of Colorado Boulder rejected a petition asking to create scholarships for Syrian students, saying it would violate a federal law banning discrimination based on national origin. The school says it already offers other financial aid to help international students, including Syrians.

Officials at the Institute of International Education countered that other schools have offered scholarships for Syrian students without facing legal action, and they expect others to follow. Daniel Obst, a deputy vice president at the institute, said that more than 230 colleges recently agreed to waive tuition for at least one Syrian student if the institute can find other sources of money for airfare and lodging.

### Admissions

The number of Syrians studying at US colleges has risen steadily in recent years but is still relatively low compared with other countries in the region. There were 800 Syrians enrolled in 2015, compared with 9,000 from Kuwait. Demand from Syrians has been low, experts say, in part because they had a strong education system of their own before war broke out. Now, many Syrian schools have closed or been destroyed.

Along with offering financial aid, some US colleges are also loosening their admission requirements to help bring refugees. Instead of measuring students' English language skills through standardized tests that carry fees, some schools are offering online interviews instead. Some are accepting scanned copies of academic transcripts if the original has been lost. And some schools are also making room for refugees at their overseas branches. In March, Bard College announced three full scholarships for Syrian students at its Berlin campus. Meanwhile, the European Union recently announced 400 new scholarships for Syrian students, and colleges in Europe have also started offering financial aid to refugees. But the demand still far exceeds what schools can offer. Thousands of Syrians typically apply for each new batch of scholarships, said Goodman, the institute's president. "We have to try," he said. "The price to the world of having a lost generation is just incalculable, and it's all bad." — AP



**CLIFTON, New Jersey:** Mohamad Bassel Khair holds his son, Sami, 2, as his wife Lama Alassil takes a photo of them to post on Snapchat at his home on May 21, 2016. — AP

# VENEZUELA CRISIS DRAWS TIMID GLOBAL RESPONSE

LITTLE INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE ON MADURO

**CARACAS:** Venezuela is sinking deeper into political and economic chaos, but the international response has been timid so far - and is unlikely to put much pressure on an unbending President Nicolas Maduro, analysts say. So far, the international community's main plan of action for Venezuela has been to call for a "great national dialogue", in the words of the former presidents of Spain, Panama and the Dominican Republic, one high-profile group trying to mediate the crisis.

But with the once-booming oil giant sliding ever deeper into recession and hyperinflation, the leftist president and his center-right opponents are so far apart that "dialogue" seems impossible. The opposition, which won control of the legislature in December, refuses to hold talks unless the authorities agree to allow a referendum on removing Maduro from office this year. Maduro's camp says that isn't happening. As if to hammer home the point, the president has declared a state of emergency giving himself sweeping new powers.

The country faces a "long and difficult" road, acknowledged the trio of foreign mediators - Spain's Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, Leonel Fernandez of the Dominican Republic and Martin Torrijos of Panama. They have been working in Venezuela since Thursday, sent by the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), a 12-member regional bloc, to hold talks with both sides on a crisis that is increasingly worrying the region.

"There's growing action by part of the international community on Venezuela," said Felix Arellano, an international relations specialist at Central University of Venezuela. But "the reactions have been timid," he told AFP. The UNASUR mission drew words of encouragement from the United States, which Maduro accuses of plotting his ouster. US officials have been reluctant to go much further than that for fear of playing into the fiery Socialist's allegations of a coup plot orchestrated in Washington at the behest of the "fascist Venezuelan right."

Trying to strike a less confrontational tone, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay have proposed set-



**PORT OF SPAIN:** Venezuelans living in Trinidad and Tobago demonstrate against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro as he arrives with a delegation of Venezuelan ministers on Monday. — AFP

ting up a "group of friends" to get both sides to the negotiating table. But that isn't likely to work either, said Milagros Betancourt, a professor of international law at Andres Bello Catholic University. "I'm a little skeptical because I don't know what they can actually negotiate," she said. "The country is very polarized and the government won't budge an inch."

### War of Words

Meanwhile, the opposition has called new protests this week, seeking to wield the power of the street where its political maneuvers have failed. Polls show nearly seven in 10 Venezuelans want to get rid of Maduro, who is blamed for increasingly

desperate shortages of food and medicine, daily power cuts, government paralysis, violent crime and looting. Wading into these toxic waters, the secretary general of the Organization of American States, Luis Almagro, has proposed sending a delegation to seek a solution to the crisis.

His comments sparked a war of words with Maduro, who, like his mentor Hugo Chavez, has long railed against the Washington-based OAS as a tool of American imperialism. Almagro, a Uruguayan national, warned Maduro he would be a "petty dictator" if he continued to reject a recall referendum. Maduro told Almagro he was "garbage" and a "traitor." — AFP

## CONVENTION COULD BE 'MESSY': SANDERS

**LOS ANGELES:** Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders says the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia and his push to make the party more inclusive could get "messy" but asserts in an interview with AP: "Democracy is not always nice and quiet and gentle." The Vermont senator, campaigning Monday ahead of California's primary against Hillary Clinton, said his supporters hope the party will adopt a platform at the summer convention that reflects the needs of working families, the poor and young people, not Wall Street and corporate America.

Sanders said he will "condemn any and all forms of violence" but his campaign was welcoming political newcomers and first-time attendees of party conventions. He said the Democratic Party faces a choice of becoming more inclusive or maintaining the status quo. "I think if they make the right choice and open the doors to working-class people and young people and create the kind of dynamism that the Democratic Party needs, it's going to be messy," Sanders said. "Democracy is not always nice and quiet and gentle but that is where the Democratic Party should go."

Asked if the convention could be problematical, Sanders said: "So what? Democracy is messy. Everyday my life is messy. But if you want everything to be quiet and orderly and allow, you know,

just things to proceed without vigorous debate, that is not what democracy is about." Sanders is vying for support ahead of California's June 7 primary, a day that also includes contests in Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota and South Dakota. Clinton has 271 more pledged delegates than Sanders and is just 90 delegates shy of clinching the nomination when the total includes superdelegates, the party officials and elected leaders who can support the candidate of their choice.

Some Democrats have grown weary about the length of the primaries, worried that it could give Republican businessman Donald Trump a head start on the general election and make it more difficult for Democrats to unite behind a nominee. The issue gained attention when a recent Nevada Democratic convention turned raucous. Sanders said he was "bothered" by the portrayal of the Las Vegas convention, saying it did not turn violent as some media reports indicated. "There was rowdiness. There was booing. I think inappropriately by the way," he said.

The senator spoke after the Democratic National Committee announced a 15-member platform drafting committee, which will write the first draft of the party platform. The panel includes allies of both candidates. Sanders said the platform process would be an "excellent time to educate the

American people," saying it would allow the party to have a vigorous debate over ways to address wealth inequality, the role of Wall Street in the economy, climate change and universal healthcare. "A serious debate about serious issues is good for democracy, is good for the Democratic Party. It will increase voter turnout and that always works in our effort to defeat Republicans," he said.

### Running Mate

He declined to entertain the possibility of being considered as Clinton's running mate, saying he was focused on winning the nomination. "If I don't, we will see what happens later on." But he reiterated that he would do "everything that I can" to ensure that Trump is not elected president. Sanders said he had a "shot" at winning the California primary against Clinton and said, given his delegate deficit, it was "imperative" that he perform well. He estimated his rallies around the state would allow him to speak directly to 200,000 voters before the primary.

"What happens if I win a major victory in California? Will people say, 'Oh, we're really enthusiastic about Hillary Clinton despite the fact that Bernie Sanders has now won whatever it may be, 25 states, half the states?'" he said. If that happens, he added, superdelegates "may rethink that. That is why you want the process to play out." — AP

## BALTIMORE OFFICER CLEARED OVER GRAY CUSTODY DEATH

**BALTIMORE:** A Baltimore police officer involved in the arrest of Freddie Gray, an African American man who later died in custody, was acquitted of assault and other charges Monday, raising questions about whether anyone will be held accountable for his death. The verdict by a Baltimore judge found Officer Edward Nero not guilty of four misdemeanors: Second-degree assault, reckless endangerment and two counts of misconduct in office.

The 25-year-old Gray was arrested April 12, 2015 after fleeing police, and suffered a broken spine while being transported in the back of a Baltimore police van, unsecured and with his hands and feet bound. He died a week later. Gray's treatment and death triggered violent riots in Maryland's largest city and fueled a national debate about police brutality.

The six police officers being tried over his death - three white, including Nero, and three African Americans, including a woman - claim it was an accident. The first case ended with a hung jury in December. Nero, whose case is the second to come to court, chose to be tried by a judge rather than a jury. Baltimore Circuit Judge Barry Williams said that after he had carefully weighed all the evidence, "the verdict for each count is not guilty."

Nero, 30, appeared to wipe his eyes and hugged his attorneys after the verdicts were announced. One of his lawyers said Nero and his family were "elated that this nightmare is finally over." The state's attorney for Baltimore city rushed to charge him, as well as the other five officers, completely disregarding the facts of the case and the applicable law, the attorney, Marc Zayon, said in a statement, according to the Baltimore Sun newspaper. Williams should now reconsider the remaining cases "and dismiss their charges," he said. "Like Officer Nero, these officers have done nothing wrong." Williams is black, as are two-thirds of the people of Baltimore, including its Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. — AFP



**BALTIMORE:** Officer Edward Nero (center) one of six Baltimore city police officers charged in connection to the death of Freddie Gray, leaves a courthouse after being acquitted of all charges in his trial on Monday. — AP

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## DROP IN DEATHS IN MEDITERRANEAN IS HOPEFUL SIGN

### DEATH TOLL AT SEA DOWN 25 PERCENT SO FAR THIS YEAR, IOM SAYS



**AT SEA:** Migrants and refugees are rescued during an operation at sea with the Aquarius, a former North Atlantic fisheries protection ship now used by humanitarians SOS Mediterranee and Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders) yesterday in the Mediterranean sea in front of the Libyan coast. — AFP

**GENEVA:** Fewer migrants are dying as they try to cross the Mediterranean to Europe, which may reflect better management of refugee flows and swifter rescue operations, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said yesterday. So far this year 1,370 migrants and refugees have perished at sea, nearly 25 percent fewer than in the same period last year, IOM spokesman Joel Millman said. An estimated 191,134 people have arrived by boat so far this year in Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Spain.

The death toll included 13 in May, none of them on the eastern Mediterranean route between Turkey and Greece, where arrivals have slowed to a trickle since the European Union struck an agreement with Turkey to get it to curb the flow. This compared with 95 deaths in May a year ago and 330 in May 2014. More than 3,770 people are estimated to have died in the whole of 2015, most of them by drowning after their flimsy, overloaded boats capsized.

"Obviously now that the Turkey-Greece route appears suspended for the time being, we hope that this is the beginning of a sound management policy of refugees and migrants who wish to make the crossing and don't take these enormous risks," Millman told a news briefing. Some 2,725 migrants were rescued attempting to reach Europe from Libya over the past 24 hours by various vessels, he said. IOM also had reports that Libya's coastguard had turned back 850 migrants.

IOM has had greater access to Libya since a UN-backed national unity government was formed last month. The agency is helping to organize charter flights to repatriate sub-Saharan migrants who agree to take a package or receive a re-integration grant. "Those are also key developments that indicate that it's possible, and I want to stress that it's possible, that the period of stark lethality that has been going on since 2013 may have run its course by now," Millman said. "Maybe we'll see a safer summer than we had anticipated a few weeks ago." — Reuters

## PROSECUTORS SUSPECT MAFIA OF RIGGING EXAM FOR PRISON JOBS

### ROME COURT INVESTIGATES HIGHLY ORGANIZED SCAM

**ROME:** For nearly 8,000 young Italians hungry for work, the state exam last month for just 400 jobs as prison guards was a fiasco. For the mafia, it may have been a great opportunity, prosecutors in Rome say. They are now investigating widespread and organized cheating, with 88 people caught wearing bracelets or mobile phone covers carrying the answers to the test, or with radio transmitters and earpieces thought to have been used to pipe in the answers.

The Camorra mafia north of Naples, based where a company printed the exams, may have got hold of the answers and tried to get its own people inside a prison system that is holding 7,000 gang members, including some 700 bosses, prosecutors say. The mafia clan is also thought to have sold the answers to other applicants for as much as 25,000 euros

(\$28,000), according to posts on social media. The Rome court would not give details of the investigation but the Justice Ministry wants to nullify the exam results. "It's shameful," Donato Capece, general secretary of Italy's biggest union for penitentiary workers, Sappe, said of the possible rigging of the exam. "We were the first ones to ask the ministry for clarity" after cheating was discovered, he said.

In Italy, where youth unemployment has been about 40 percent for three years and full-time staff jobs are nearly impossible to find, the exam sheds light on some of woes that have long afflicted the economy: widespread corruption, pervasive mafia influence, a lack of meritocracy and a rigid labor market. "Unfortunately, those who deserve jobs often are not the ones who get them," said 29-year-old Mina, one of the 1,400 women to take the

prison guard exam. "We don't get to have dreams for the future."

Cheating in exams for public jobs is not uncommon in Italy, and there have been several criminal investigations in recent years, including into tests for a university professorship and to be a traffic policeman. In a square near the Justice Ministry in Rome yesterday, dozens of people in their 20s who took the test in April, as well as Sappe members, blew whistles, waved flags and sang the national anthem, demanding that the government immediately hire 1,000 new guards. "I would be proud to wear a uniform for the state," Mario, 25, said. "But it's also a question of finding a job because it's very difficult in Italy to find employment and have a future." Protesting alongside him, Maurizio, 24, said: "We're sick of Italy's indifference and code of silence." — Reuters



**VIENNA:** Former right-wing Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) presidential candidate Norbert Hofer (left) and party leader Heinz Christian Strache shake hands as they leave a news conference in Vienna, Austria yesterday. — AFP

## EUROPEAN 'FAR-RIGHT' CHEERS AUSTRIA VOTE

### DEFEAT HIGHLIGHTS LIMITS

**PARIS:** While far-right parties across Europe hailed the near-election of one of their own as Austrian president as a boost for their future prospects, his defeat shows that mainstream forces are still capable of rallying to keep extremists out of power. Norbert Hofer from Austria's anti-immigrant Freedom Party (FPÖ), failed by a whisker in Sunday's election to become the European Union's first far-right head of state, with only 31,000 votes between him and power.

As European mainstream leaders breathed a huge sigh of relief, far-right politicians from around the EU also cheered the result, seeing it as a sign of things to come in the debt-ravaged continent struggling with its worst migrant crisis since World War II. France's National Front (FN), one of Europe's most successful far-right movements, said the "historic performance" was a "precursor of future success for all patriotic movements, both in Austria and around the world."

Dutch firebrand Geert Wilders also tweeted his congratulations, while Matteo Salvini, head of Italy's populist Northern League which is allied with the FPÖ and FN in the European Parliament, said the "air of freedom" was blowing through Europe. What particularly heartened the far-right was the dismal performance of the two mainstream centre-right and centre-left Austrian parties, which have dominated politics there for decades and which form the current governing coalition.

They were forced to watch the presidential runoff from the sidelines after being knocked out in the first round. Andrew Wishart from Capital Economics said much of their loss in support they are trailing the FPÖs in opinion polls is due to a "muddled immigration policy". The FN hopes this could be a harbinger for the 2017 presidential election in France, where it hopes to capitalize on the deep unpopularity of Francois Hollande's Socialists and the centre-right opposition.

#### 'Only victory counts'

However, many believe that the Austrian result shows that while the far-right is knocking on the doors of power, there is a long way to go before smashing them down. Rather than point to the 2017 French election, some analysts look to 2002, where Socialist voters reluctantly threw their support behind the centre-right candidate Jacques Chirac to

ensure he defeated then FN leader Jean-Marie Le Pen in the runoff. A similar pattern occurred in December's regional elections in France, where the far-right tasted success in the first round but were badly beaten in the second, decisive, round of voting.

"In politics, only the victory counts. A defeat is a defeat," stressed historian and far-right expert Nicolas Lebourg. In Austria, Hofer was a full 14 points ahead of ecologist rival Alexander Van der Bellen after the first round of voting but still came up short in the decisive battle. Nevertheless, Lebourg said the far-right's success had the effect of dragging mainstream parties to the right in a bid to compete. "During the campaign, Austrian politicians ran after the refugee question" and other far-right issues. "In recent European history... this comes back to bite you every time. Electoral history shows that by trying to attract their voters, you actually give them a helping hand," the historian said.

#### 'Firebrand or flip-flopper?'

Heather Grabbe, an expert in populist parties at the European University Institute in Florence, agreed, saying that the rise of populism had prompted many governments in Europe—the Netherlands and Sweden, and also Austria—to change tack. But, she said, this can be a high-risk strategy, as Werner Faymann, who quit as Austria's chancellor on May 9, found out. "They can never go far enough to fend off the populists," Grabbe said. "Voters prefer a firebrand to a flip-flopper." And while far-right parties appear to be facing a form of glass ceiling when it comes to seizing power, they are still in power-sharing administrations in several countries with a tradition of coalition government.

The FPÖs have been part of coalitions in Austria's Burgenland state, which borders Hungary, and for several years in the early 2000s were part of the government in Vienna, a "black-blue" coalition with the centre-right ÖVP. In Norway, Denmark, and Finland, populist parties have all entered coalitions, and in Italy, the Northern League was long part of former leader Silvio Berlusconi's ruling coalition. And Hungary's Fidesz party and conservative Prime Minister Viktor Orban has run the country with a junior coalition partner, the Christian Democrats, since late 2015. — AFP

## DUTCH F-35 JETS TOUCH DOWN FOR EUROPE AIR SHOW DEBUT

**LEEWARDEN:** Two US-assembled F-35A fighter jets destined for the Dutch air force have landed for the first time in northern Europe, ahead of the stealth plane's continental air show debut over the summer. The Lockheed Martin-built Lightning II jets, which will form the mainstay of the Dutch fighter fleet for the next five decades, landed at Leeuwarden Air Force Base in the northern Netherlands late on Monday, AFP reporters saw.

Also known as Joint Strike Fighters (JSF), the sleek planes were escorted by a business jet with Dutch Defence Minister Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert on board after an eight-hour flight from the eastern United States which included multiple in-flight refueling. Designated "AN-1" and "AN-2", the planes will undergo tests before returning to Edwards Air Force Base in California. "This is the first time an F-35A touched down in northern Europe," Lockheed Martin spokesman Michael Rein said. "It's a historic day for Dutch aviation," he said. The jets will carry out at least eight flights to test the effects of engine sound on the environment as well as their adaptability to hangars at Dutch air bases, Dutch Air Force spokesman Frank den Edel said.

#### Stealth technology

The planes have two major distinguishing features, said Rein. First is the stealth technology that makes it "virtually invisible from radar," he said. It also features what the manufacturers call "fusion" which is a "sensor built into the airplane, all the way around, so that when a pilot views out, he can get a 360-degree view of the world." "This is a first for the Netherlands," Hennis-Plasschaert said after greeting the pilots on the tarmac. "It's an amazing opportunity for us to have them here," she added.

The planes will go on display to the public for the first time ever in Europe at an air show at Leeuwarden next month, ahead of the world-renowned Farnborough International Air Show in July. They are not, however, the first of their kind to fly in Europe as a whole, with an Italian-assembled F-35 making a test flight in September last year and crossing over to the United States in



**LEEWARDEN, Netherlands:** The first two American F-35C Lightning II fighter jets prepare to land in Leeuwarden, The Netherlands. — AFP

February. The Netherlands is one of nine partner countries helping to pay for the development of the futuristic F-35A. The Netherlands has ordered 37 planes to replace its aging fleet of F16 fighters and the F35s are scheduled for delivery in 2019, reportedly at a total cost of around 4.5 billion euros (\$5.0 billion).

#### Controversy

But the F-35 project is not without controversy. The program is expected to cost a whopping \$1.5 trillion according to IHS Jane's aviation desk editor Gareth Jennings. And in the Netherlands, parliament has been split for years over the rising cost, with only senior ruling Dutch coalition partner,

Prime Minister Mark Rutte's Liberal VVD, remaining a staunch supporter. The US government has projected the cost of each plane bought in 2018 as \$85 million, according to Lockheed Martin. A Pentagon report said in February that the F-35A remains dogged by problems sure to further complicate what is already the most expensive weapons project in history. Engineers have recently uncovered a series of flaws adding to a litany of issues including software bugs, technical glitches and cost overruns. Jennings however said the arrival of the Dutch F-35's "marked an increased confidence in the platform." "It demonstrates that things are now moving along on a more even keel than ever before," he said. — AFP

## DISMISSING CRITICISM, ERITREA HAILS 25 YEARS OF 'FREEDOM'

**NAIROBI:** Eritrea celebrated 25 years of independence yesterday with street parties, giant fireworks displays and music, shrugging off international criticism that the government has stifled basic freedoms. In the run up to the celebrations, an "independence torch" was carried across the country, with the party kicking off over the weekend with camel races, military parades, cultural events and artistic displays, the state-run Eritv broadcaster showed.

Reports in the local media said the celebrations offered "vivid demonstrations of the prevailing peace and stability" in a country which ranks below North Korea as worst in the world for press freedom, according to Reporters Without Borders. But on the eve of independence celebrations, the UN's Special Rapporteur on human rights in Eritrea, Sheila Keetharuth, said the country had been in a "constitutional vacuum" since 1997, and called on Eritrea to "fully embrace democracy and the rule of law to achieve the vision established" at independence.

The hardline regime is accused of jailing thousands of political prisoners while refugees from

the repressive Red Sea state have in recent years made up one of the largest contingents of people risking the dangerous journey to seek a new life in Europe. "National independence should match with individual independence and freedoms: freedom of conscience, thought, mind and expression; freedom to engage in employment and education of one's own choice," Keetharuth said.

#### 'Resilience and development'

Eritrea split from Ethiopia in 1991 after a three-decade independence war, which saw Eritrean rebels battling far better-equipped Ethiopian troops which were backed first by Washington and then by the Soviet Union. Victory in May 1991 was followed by a referendum two years later. But independence for Eritrea meant Ethiopia lost direct access to the Red Sea, fuelling resentment from Addis Ababa.

A subsequent 1998-2000 border conflict between the two countries still rankles, with analysts saying Asmara uses as an excuse for its continued iron-fisted rule. President Isaias Afwerki,

70, who led the rebel army to victory and has remained in power without an election ever since, is expected to address the nation at a military rally later. Tales of war sacrifices are used to boost patriotism and flagging morale under persistent economic and social hardships which are blamed on the long-running "no-war no-peace" border stalemate with Ethiopia. A "quarter century of resilience and development" read a headline in the Eritrea Profile newspaper this week.

#### A mixed report card

"I call on the government to do more to respect, protect and fulfill human rights and to establish the rule of law," Keetharuth said in a statement released in Geneva. "I salute the heroism and courage of all those women and men who struggled for their freedom and fought for their country's independence. I also acknowledge the determination of those who are still engaged in preserving such hard-won freedom." Troops still eyeball each other along the frontier, with Ethiopian soldiers defying an international ruling that they should leave Eritrean land. — AFP



**ASMARA, Eritrea:** File photo shows Eritrean soldiers parading during the young country's Independence day celebrations in Asmara. Eritrea celebrated 25 years of independence yesterday with street parties, giant fireworks displays and music, shrugging off international criticism that the government has stifled basic freedoms. — AFP

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Britain's Queen Elizabeth II is pictured through a gap in a floral exhibit by the New Covent Garden Flower Market, which features an image of the Queen, during a visit to the 2016 Chelsea Flower Show in central London on Monday. Britain has a lost generation with no gardening skills, the Royal Horticultural Society warned as the sprawling Chelsea Flower Show got underway. — AFP

SAUDIS ADAPT MESSAGE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AGE

Continued from Page 1

"A strong and determined country with a connection between the government and the citizen," one of the slogans read. Some 190,000 Twitter users in Saudi Arabia actively took part in the ensuing debate over Vision 2030, generating more than 860,000 messages according to France-based social media monitor SemioCast. This meant the discussion reached 46 percent of the 7.4 million active Twitter users in the kingdom, SemioCast said, describing this level of outreach in a state-sponsored debate as exceptional.

There is good reason for the sensitivity: Since 2012 social media storms in Saudi Arabia over government policies or the actions of senior officials have culminated in the sacking of senior people on at least five occasions. The level of participation means even ministers without social media accounts invest time and money monitoring what people say about them online, said Diya Murra, a Riyadh-based account director for social media agency The Online Project. "People are holding them accountable for things that are being done or not," he said.

Social media use among the 21 million Saudis and roughly 10 million foreign residents of the kingdom cuts across political and religious lines: Keenly followed social media users include both strict Muslim clerics and self-described liberals. Social media has also allowed many young Saudis to interact in ways that were impossible before. Twitter is most popular among 18 to 24-year-olds in Saudi Arabia, followed closely by users in their late 20s to early 40s and its usage is split roughly between men and women, according to iMENA Digital, which serves clients in Saudi Arabia. It said photo-sharing site Instagram has become the leading channel among young Saudis, around three-quarters of them women.

Speaking at a packed discussion about Twitter in an expensive Riyadh hotel last month, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir said the platform was not always an accurate barometer of public opinion, but that it could help track trends. "It is

direct. There are no barriers," he told the largely young audience, who were segregated by gender. However, he and other Gulf Arab politicians speaking at the forum also said they were in favor of controls to prevent anonymous posting and of punishing users who broke taboos by criticizing religion or calling to end monarchical rule.

When asked about jailed Saudi blogger Raif Badawi, Jubeir told a news conference the case was complicated and involved civil lawsuits that did not involve the government. Diplomats in Riyadh say while the judiciary has given harsh sentences to online dissenters who drew the anger of hardliners, the police routinely ignore on social media far more severe criticism of senior people than was ever allowed before.

The growing influence of social media became apparent in 2012 when the late King Abdullah sacked the religious police chief and replaced him with a relative progressive after a viral video showed members of the body harassing a family in a mall. In April 2014, as a deadly outbreak of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) swept Jeddah, anger over a perceived cover-up surged on social media and King Abdullah sacked the health minister.

Since King Salman came to power in Jan 2015, such sensitivity seems to have only amplified. Another health minister, Ahmed Al-Khateeb, was dismissed after footage of him shouting at a Saudi citizen during a heated argument was captured on a smartphone. Weeks later, King Salman replaced his own head of royal protocol after he was caught on camera slapping a news cameraman covering the arrival of the Moroccan king in Riyadh.

It is a far cry from the days before widespread Internet use in Saudi Arabia, when discussion was limited to informal meetings or to newspapers and television channels that rarely held officials to account or criticized government policies. Still, a culture of public expressions of respect for government endures. More than a third of reactions to Vision 2030 on Twitter were positive, SemioCast said, adding the debate generated "patriotic pride" and expectations of progress. — Reuters

ASSEMBLY GIVES FINAL NOD TO NATURALIZE 4,000...

Continued from Page 1

In the session shortened because HH the Amir opened a new building for the offices of MPs, the Assembly voted to strip controversial MP Abdulhameed Dashti of his parliamentary immunity for the public prosecution to interrogate him on a new state security offence. The Assembly has already lifted Dashti's immunity several times to make him face trial on state security cases, mainly for attacking Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Dashti has been living outside Kuwait for the past sev-

eral months under the pretext of receiving medical treatment, which the Assembly has accepted and refrained from taking action against him, including revoking his membership. Dashti has been writing strong and controversial comments on his Twitter account, but Ashour said that he has informed the prosecution that his account has been hacked. The public prosecution has already issued a number of arrest warrants against Dashti and he will most likely be arrested whenever he returns to the country. The Assembly is scheduled to debate today the key public tenders law, which has been extensively amended.

RUSSIAN BASE IN SYRIA DAMAGED IN IS ATTACK

Continued from Page 1

But Russian defense ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said: "The burnt air and auto equipment along with many craters from shell detonations have been there for several months. This is a result of heavy combat for this aerodrome between Syrian government forces and militants of terrorist groups."

Russian news agency RIA Novosti quoted an unnamed Syrian source confirming a "fire" at the base, though he did not specify when it had occurred. "The reasons of the fire are unknown. It started near the space where four helicopters were located. Fire engines could not access the fire due to shelling by terrorists. The fire spread to the helicopters," the source said, adding that there were no casualties or injuries sustained in the shelling.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights had reported shelling of the T-4 base on May 11 after IS

jihadists briefly took control of part of a route between Palmyra and Homs. "Though the Islamic State failed to cut off the road for any extended amount of time, it did move artillery within range of the base, which it subsequently shelled," Stratfor said in its analysis.

The British-based Observatory also said two days later that continued shelling had caused an explosion at a fuel depot and a fire that destroyed three helicopters. On May 15, the IS-affiliated Amaq news agency said that four Russian combat helicopters and 20 trucks carrying rockets had been destroyed at the T-4 base by a fire but did not provide further details.

IS seized control of large parts of Syria and Iraq in mid-2014, and the group has claimed deadly attacks in the West and throughout the Middle East. Russia's intervention has significantly strengthened the Syrian government in a five-year civil war that has killed more than 270,000 people and driven millions from their homes. — AFP

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## Washington Watch

WHO DO YOU THINK  
YOU ARE KIDDING,  
MR JOHNSON?

By Paul Taylor

As a former journalist who made his name by bashing Brussels but was sometimes accused of twisting the facts, Boris Johnson knows there's no easier way to hook readers than to lead with Hitler. Yet his attempt to blacken the European Union by associating its limited, negotiated supranational powers with attempts by the Nazi German leader or the French Emperor Napoleon to impose their rule on the continent by force was politically perilous.

For one thing, it disregarded the strategic vision of two of his own Conservative heroes, Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher, both of whom saw a more united Europe as the answer to Hitlerism, and a way to ensure peace and stability after centuries of bloodshed. The former mayor of London is not just distorting history - the EU's 28 democracies freely assented to pooling some of their sovereignty, even creating a voluntary exit clause which Johnson is now urging Britons to use. His Hitler jibe may backfire on the "Leave" campaign in Britain's June 23 referendum on EU membership and derail his ambitions to replace David Cameron as prime minister. Even Britons who distrust the EU and feel, like many Europeans, that its actions are not sufficiently subject to democratic control are unlikely to equate it with jackbooting dictators or the Holocaust by other means.

Latest opinion polls suggest wavering Conservative supporters are shifting towards voting to remain in the EU when the island nation faces its geopolitical choice next month. In an interview with the Sunday Telegraph, Johnson said the EU was doomed to fail like all attempts to create a "golden age of peace and prosperity" since the Roman Empire 2,000 years ago. "Napoleon, Hitler, various people tried this out, and it ends tragically," he said.

## 'Democratic Void'

"The EU is an attempt to do this by different methods. But fundamentally what is lacking is the eternal problem, which is that there is no underlying loyalty to the idea of Europe. There is no single authority that anybody respects or understands. That is causing this massive democratic void." Johnson also blames Brussels, rather than President Vladimir Putin, for Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and the success of armed Russian-speaking separatists in eastern Ukraine. "If you want an example of EU foreign policy-making on the hoof, and of the EU's pretensions to running a defense policy that have caused real trouble, then look at what has happened in Ukraine," he told a news conference on May 9.

As the author of a biography of Churchill, as well as a book on the Roman Empire, Johnson must know that his favorite statesman passionately advocated a united Europe after World War Two to prevent any return to nationalism and warmongering. In his celebrated 1946 Zurich speech, Churchill said the remedy was "to recreate the European family, or as much of it as we can, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom. We must build a kind of United States of Europe."

Although he did not envisage Britain joining such a body due to its empire, Churchill was a founding father of the Council of Europe, which established the European Convention on Human Rights and the multinational court that upholds it. Yet many of today's Conservatives want to withdraw from that convention - ratified by all European nations except Belarus, and including Russia - which they see as an unacceptable intrusion into the sovereignty of the British courts.

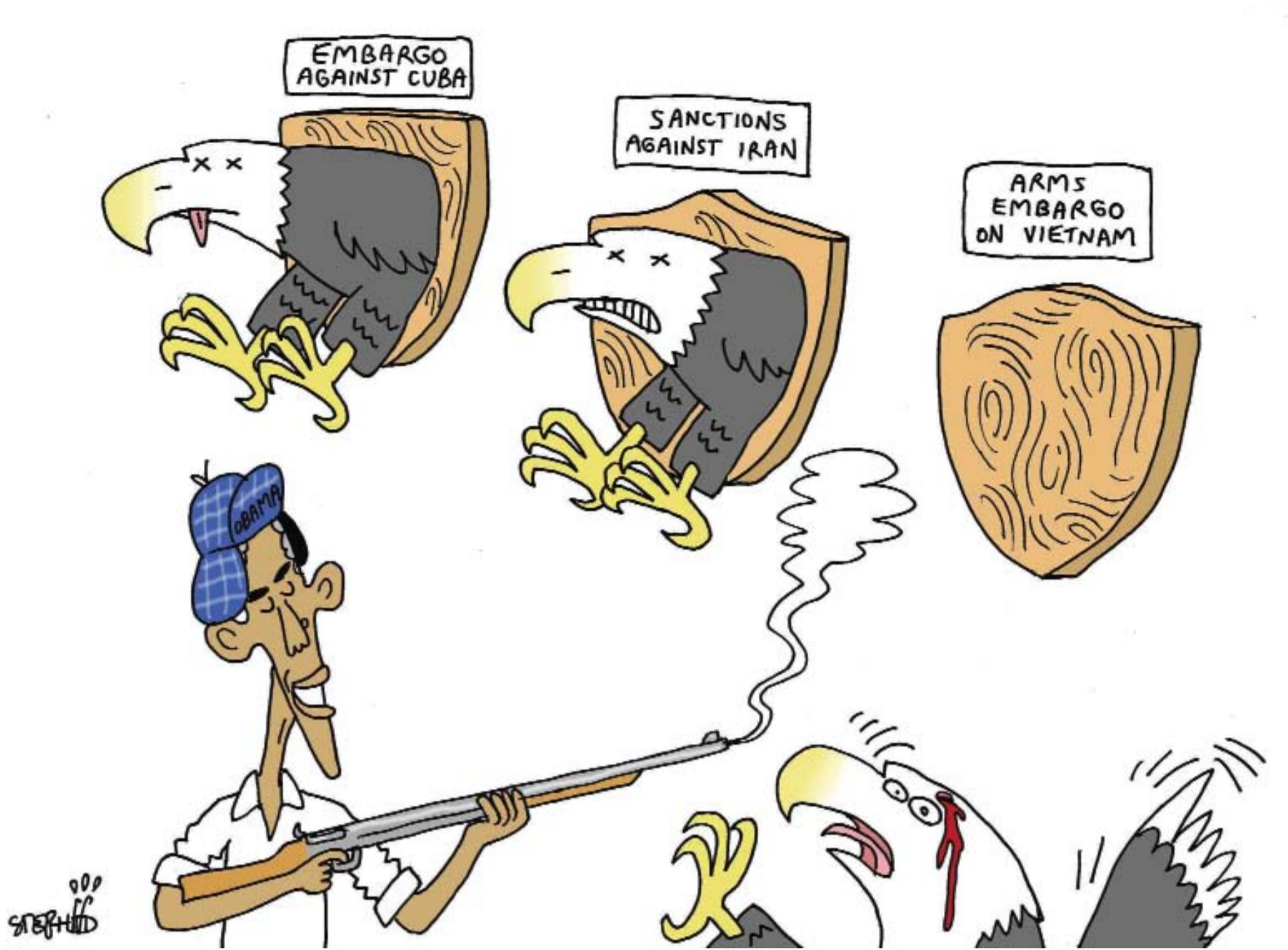
## 'Peace and Security'

Even more striking is the contrast between Johnson's view of the lessons of European history and Thatcher's. In a speech launching the Conservative "Yes" campaign in Britain's 1975 referendum on whether to stay in the European Economic Community - the forerunner of the EU - she drew a direct link between European integration and peace. Thatcher expressed gratitude that her children had not been embroiled in a European conflict as were the children of the previous two generations. "The Community gives us peace and security in a free society, a peace and security denied to the past two generations," she said.

For pragmatic post-war Conservatives, it was clear that the policy Britain had pursued since the 16th century - of trying to maintain a balance of power on the continent - had failed to avert two world wars, with disastrous consequences. The strategic lesson drawn by Churchill and his successors was that Britain must be actively engaged in building not only the NATO military alliance but also a united Europe, and not be tempted by isolationism or appeasing expansionary powers.

Johnson's view of Britain's place in Europe seems closer to the long-running BBC comedy series "Dad's Army", which mocked a Home Guard of elderly part-time soldiers preparing valiantly to defend the island against a Nazi invasion that never came. The sitcom's theme tune began: "Who do you think you are kidding, Mr Hitler, if you think we're on the run?" That question might well be addressed to Boris Johnson. — Reuters

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## IS MAY BE DOWN, BUT IT'S FAR FROM OUT

By Colin P Clarke and Chad C Serena

Many experts are now speculating that Islamic State is experiencing its death knell. It is losing territory, its finances are being drained and the number of foreign fighters recruited has reportedly dropped to a trickle, dropped by as much as 90 percent from a high of 2,000 a month in the past year. Each week, the U.S.-led coalition's campaign to eliminate high-value targets seems to be achieving more of its objectives. In addition, substantial numbers of its fighters are defecting, especially from Syria.

Yet the recent reversals might only force Islamic State to adapt its campaign of irregular warfare as other militant groups, including Al-Qaeda, have done. With foreign fighters unable to reach the battlefield, for example, Islamic State leaders could instruct would-be jihadists to remain home and launch attacks there. This would not bode well for predictions of the group's demise. Research shows that the median length of an insurgency is 10 years - and the greater the number of foreign nations involved, the more likely the insurgency will continue. The fight against Islamic State, according to historic trends, is only in its infancy.

On paper, Islamic State's loss of territory, money and recruits would seem to demonstrate significant progress by the US-led coalition. But wars aren't fought on paper. If there is one accepted truism in the battle against Islamic State, it is that the group's leaders intend to fight to the death to establish an Islamic caliphate.

This is not the first time the core of this group has adapted to changing circumstances. Islamic State is the progeny of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, perhaps the most ambitious of the Al-Qaeda offshoots and one that owes its violent legacy to the group's founder, the Jordanian Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. Some iteration of the group has existed for more than a decade, despite significant losses to US-led coalitions following the war in Iraq and the current campaign against the group.

So it is far too early to celebrate. The conflict in Syria, of which Islamic State is just one

of several violent non-state actors - along with Hezbollah, Al-Nusra and others - is only a few years old. It involves a significant intervention by forces from the United States, Russia, Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, as well as varying degrees of meddling by other Gulf countries including Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

Yet it is reasonable to expect that Islamic State will continue as a coherent organization as it adapts to the ebb and flow of conflict. Its recent losses should be viewed in the context of a longer struggle. Coalition wins are ephemeral, according to Islamic State leaders, and viewed as prologue to future fighting. Whether this fighting is conventional, sporadic attacks or low-intensity insurgency remains to be seen. But how this conflict unfolds largely depends on how Islamic State responds to changes in its operational environment.

Islamic State leaders could decide, for example, to instruct foreign recruits to remain in their native lands and conduct attacks there. There would be no need to dispatch fighters from Iraq and Syria to Europe - as the group did with the Paris attacks in November and the Brussels bombings in March. In addition, it would allow aspiring jihadists to potentially link up with fighters Islamic State claims have already been sent as sleeper cells to several European countries, including Germany, Italy and Britain. (Just this weekend, a message purporting to come from an Islamic State spokesman called on followers to attack the United States and Europe during the coming holy month of Ramadan.)

Conducting a spectacular attack on European or US soil could serve to rally Islamic States recruits, improve morale and score a major propaganda victory for the caliphate. It would also fit the pattern the group has laid out - responding to territorial and personnel losses with aggression, both within and outside of its immediate region. In any case, requiring eager recruits to travel to Syria before returning to stage terror attacks in their homelands comes with trade-offs. Key figures in the Paris and Brussels attacks traveled back and forth between Europe and Syria. But when operatives return from known

battlefields, they increase the risks of being detected by Western intelligence and law enforcement authorities.

Islamic State would clearly prefer that members have training and combat experience - in particular, instructions from its logisticians and bomb-makers. Technical expertise can be difficult to transfer in writing and is usually acquired through extended apprenticeships. This means highly skilled mentors work with new recruits to transfer

specialized knowledge. As Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev demonstrated with the Boston Marathon bombings, young militants can successfully build lethal explosives by following instructions available on the internet. Still, Islamic State is trying to have its recruits get hands-on experience to mitigate the chances of failure.

NOTE: Colin P Clarke is an associate political scientist and Chad C Serena is a political scientist at the nonprofit, nonpartisan RAND Corporation.

COULD UAE SOLAR PUSH  
LEAD TREND FOR GULF?

By Saket S

As the Gulf states take steps to expand their use of clean energy, a bold plan by the United Arab Emirates to boost its use of renewable electricity from less than 1 percent to 24 percent in the next five years could be a game-changer for the region, experts say. Much of the world is moving away from oil for its electricity generation, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), which says that globally the fossil fuel has dropped from a 25 percent share to 3.6 percent over the last four decades.

Countries in the Middle East, however, have been bucking the trend. The IEA predicts that by 2019, the region - which holds one-third of the world's proven crude oil reserves - will still be generating nearly one-third of its electricity from oil, with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia leading the way.

But dropping oil prices and growing concerns about climate change have exposed the downsides of relying on oil. As the Gulf's demand for power continues to rise, the UAE is leading the way in shifting to greener energy resources. "The implications of unmitigated climate change for the UAE make its cities unbearably hot, water even more scarce and the region more unstable," Rachel

Kyte, the CEO of the United Nations' Sustainable Energy for All initiative, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Action alone and collectively to live in balance with the planet is fundamental for UAE's future prosperity," she said.

## Solar Giant?

At the Middle East and North Africa Renewable Energy Conference in Kuwait last month, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE - pledged to mobilise \$100 billion into renewable energy projects over the next 20 years. One of the projects in the UAE's renewables push is the \$13.6 billion Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park in Dubai, which aims to become the biggest solar power plant in the Middle East. It is expected to generate 5 gigawatts of electricity - enough to power 1.5 million homes - by 2030.

Dubai also plans to install around 100 electric car charging stations as part of its Green Charger Initiative. By 2050, Dubai wants to reduce its carbon emissions by 6.5 million tons every year, with the aim of becoming the city with the world's lowest carbon footprint, according to the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority. — Reuters

## CAN TRUMP BUZZ HIS WAY TO WHITE HOUSE?

By Lynn Stuart Parramore

Creating buzz - that curious mixture of baloney and authenticity that generates excitement - is not exactly new as a campaign strategy. But Donald Trump is taking it to new heights. By the new Trump metric, the more the public knows about your crackpot ideas and your sex life, the better for buzz that translates into big rallies and action in the voter booth.

Trump has already out-buzzed his defeated GOP rivals, who could not keep up with the added attention he received, such as more talking time during debates and even extra airtime afterward. Nor could they compete with the real-estate magnate's domination in Google searches and social media mentions. Combine the presumptive GOP nominee's instinct for generating talk and attention with a volatile, angry electorate, and you are in the realm of possibility that Trump might just buzz himself into the White House. The predictable, the orderly and the consistent do not create the best buzz. Buzz is born of a disturbance in the universe. At a time when establishment politics seems to be offering so little to so many, the American people understandably have their receptors tuned to something - anything-coming over the transom that does not sound like the warmed-over results of focus groups. People want to be part of something, and the buzz surrounding Trump

allows them to be part of the rejection of a failed status quo. That feels good. Intoxicating. Yes, it gives people a buzz.

Candidate Barack Obama got a good share of buzz during his 2008 presidential campaign, surprising the pundits with his ascendancy over rivals. Long before him, John F. Kennedy proved to be a master of it during the 1960 campaign season, as Kathryn Cramer Brownell and Bruce J. Schulman have pointed out in a Reuters Commentary piece. Kennedy so successfully used the star-making strategies of Hollywood, where his family had strong ties, that Senate Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson, an established insider, grouched that his rival for the Democratic presidential nomination "never did a thing. But somehow... he managed to create the image of himself as... a youthful leader who would change the face of the country."

Trump, for his part, has proven that no matter how unsavory the content, regardless of pricks of conscience, buzz takes on a life of its own. Whether he is alluding to the size of his penis, or proposing an \$8-billion wall on the border that Mexico would pay for, or insulting a female newscaster with menstrual references, his words and whims will be endlessly discussed.

On television, on Twitter, at backyard barbecues, Trump is the inexorable topic. From the ridiculous to the outrageous to the occasionally spot-on - like his suggestion that hedge-fund

managers "get away with murder" paying low taxes - his take on just about everything reverberates throughout the vast hive mind of popular and political culture. "There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about," Oscar Wilde once said, "and that is not being talked about." Trump intuitively grasps the concept. He added his own noxious flavor in a comment to "Esquire" in 1991: "You know, it doesn't really matter what [the media] write as long as you've got a young and beautiful piece of a\*\*."

## Exposure

Buzz means being talked about. But it's more than that. It's making your name a subject of inquiry and speculation - and, above all, exerting a gravitational pull toward yourself. At the end of March, Google trend data revealed that Trump was already the most-searched presidential candidate of all time, beating out Obama's Google popularity in 2008. On May 18, the day Trump released names of his likely nominees for the US Supreme Court, the top trending search on Google was "Donald Trump, Supreme Court of the United States." Exposure is key. Trump learned this early pursuing periodicals like "Gentleman's Quarterly," deploying over-the-top comments to garner press coverage during his ownership of the United States Football League and eventually affixing his name to anything, from hotel towers to wine to Serta Trump Home Collection, a line of mattresses.

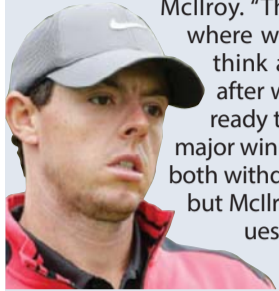
This gift for exposure was extended and perfected during Trump's 14 seasons on The Apprentice, when Americans were treated to his outsized personality bursting from their TV sets every week. His instantly recognizable face has grinned and glowered from magazine covers ranging from "Time" to "The Economist" to "Playboy," and those issues tend to be top sellers - a phenomenon known in the trade as the "Trump bump".

As of March, a "New York Times" analysis found that Trump had been given nearly \$2 billion worth of coverage by broadcast, online and print outlets - essentially advertising for which he paid not a penny. Trump, with more than eight million Twitter followers and a knack for the medium, can often bypass the traditional media. He even makes news when he tweets nothing at all. To achieve maximum buzz, you don't wait for other people to talk about you. You talk constantly about yourself. Need an endorsement? Fake one, as Trump was accused of doing in claiming support from baseball legend Pete Rose. In marketing classes, this is called "establishing your brand." Buzz begets brand, and brand begets buzz.

NOTE: Lynn Stuart Parramore is a contributing editor at AlterNet, co-founder of Recessionwire and founding editor of New Deal 2.0 and IgoUgo.com. She is the author of "Reading the Sphinx: Ancient Egypt in Nineteenth-Century Literary Culture."

MCILROY 'MAY SKIP' RIO GAMES OVER ZIKA FEARS

LONDON: Rory McIlroy took a long time to decide he would represent Ireland at the 2016 Rio Olympics but the 27-year-old world number three could now miss golf's return to the Games after a 112-year absence because of concerns over the Zika virus. The Northern Irishman had threatened to skip the Olympics as he agonized over representing Great Britain or Ireland in Brazil but after opting for the latter in 2014, the mosquito-borne disease may lead the four-times major winner to avoid the Games. First detected in Brazil last year, Zika has been linked in that country to more than 1,300 cases of microcephaly, a rare birth defect defined by unusually small heads and something that is clearly a major concern for McIlroy. "There's going to be a point in the next couple of years where we (McIlroy and fiancée Erica Stoll) are going to have to think about starting a family," McIlroy told the British media after winning the Irish Open over the weekend. "Right now I'm ready to go but I don't want anything to affect that." Three-time major winner Vijay Singh and Australian golfer Marc Leishman have both withdrawn from the Rio Games due to concerns over the virus but McIlroy remains optimistic over his participation as he continues to monitor the situation. — Reuters

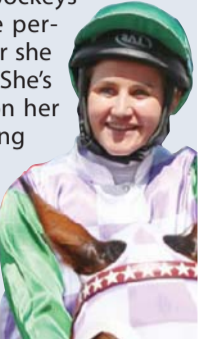


NERVOUS FRANCE TO DEPLOY 23,000 POLICE FOR 'LE TOUR'

PARIS: Some 23,000 police will be deployed for the Tour de France, Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said yesterday, as the world's premier cycling race takes place under the post-attacks state of emergency. For the first time, members of the elite GIGN paramilitary police will be stationed along the route, "ready to intervene at any moment if needed," Cazeneuve said after meeting with the organizers near Paris. The race takes place from July 2 to 24, and this year covers a route of 3,519 kilometers. "Everyone understands that this year the Tour de France is taking place in a particular context," said Cazeneuve, stressing that the "terrorist threat" remains "very high". France introduced a state of emergency following the November jihadist attacks in Paris that killed 130 people, giving police greater powers of arrest and detention. Last week, parliament confirmed a two-month extension of the state of emergency to cover next month's Euro 2016 football tournament as well as the Tour de France. The race, which has been running nearly continuously since 1903, draws up to 12 million spectators along the route. — AFP

RACING: PIONEERING PAYNE HAS SURGERY AFTER RACE FALL

SYDNEY: Melbourne Cup-winning jockey Michelle Payne underwent surgery yesterday for internal abdominal injuries after falling during a race and complaining of acute pain, racing officials said. Australia's Payne—the first woman to win the 155-year-old Melbourne Cup—underwent surgery at Melbourne's The Alfred hospital after tumbling from her horse Dutch Courage at Mildura in the northwest of Victoria state on Monday. She was taken to hospital in Mildura for scans after complaining of acute abdominal pain before being transferred to The Alfred for further tests, said Victorian Jockeys Association chief executive Des O'Keefe. "Doctors have performed a number of tests and scans on Michelle today after she complained of acute abdominal pain," O'Keefe told AFP. "She's actually undergone surgery here at The Alfred Hospital on her abdomen on some (internal) injuries there," he said, adding that the operation had gone ahead "without complication and she's done well in recovery". "Doctors advise they are happy with the outcome but they will monitor her really closely over the next few days." The 30-year-old was in serious but stable condition and expected to remain in hospital for at least a week, O'Keefe said. — AFP



TEXAS: Texas Rangers Elvis Andrus (1) dives back to first base against Los Angeles Angels first baseman Albert Pujols (5) during the ninth inning of a baseball game on Monday, May 23, 2016. — AP

KERSHAW LIFTS DODGERS OVER REDS

LOS ANGELES: Clayton Kershaw tossed a two-hitter for his third shutout of the season, pitching the Los Angeles Dodgers past Cincinnati 1-0 Monday night for their eighth straight win over the Reds. Kershaw (7-1) struck out seven, ending his franchise-record streak of six starts in a row with at least 10 strikeouts. He gave the bullpen some much-needed rest after the Dodgers used a combined 13 relievers in consecutive extra-inning games at San Diego last weekend. The left-hander retired his final 17 batters after issuing just his fifth walk of the season to Joey Votto leading off the fourth. Kershaw threw 102 pitches. The Dodgers won back-to-back games for the first time since taking three in a row May 12-14. They needed just 2 hours, 11 minutes, to beat the Reds after outlasting San Diego in 5:47 on Sunday. Brandon Finnegan (1-3) allowed five hits in his first career complete game for Cincinnati. The left-hander, who struck out two and walked four, hasn't won since April 16.

replace his power. Point taken, as Wright hit a three-run shot off Nationals starter Gio Gonzalez (3-2) during a five-run third inning, and Cespedes and Walker went back-to-back in the fifth. Asdrubal Cabrera also drove in a run with the Mets' fifth consecutive hit in the third, and fill-in first baseman Eric Campbell produced another with a sacrifice fly.

MARLINS 7, RAYS 6

Ichiro Suzuki had four hits, including a single in Miami's two-run eighth inning, and the Marlins rallied past Tampa Bay. The 42-year-old Suzuki has 10 hits in the past three games to raise his average to .417 and increase his career hit total to 2,960. Struggling Marlins slugger Giancarlo Stanton put the ball in play in all three at-bats and reached on a single and walk. Marcell Ozuna had three hits for Miami, including his ninth homer. The Marlins trailed

as the go-ahead run scored. David Phelps (3-2) pitched a perfect eighth. AJ Ramos pitched around a one-out single in the ninth for his 14th save.

CARDINALS 4, CUBS 3

Randal Grichuk hit a tiebreaking solo homer in the ninth to lift St Louis past Chicago. Matt Adams tied the score with a two-run homer off in the seventh for St Louis' major league-leading ninth pinch-hit homer of the season. It also ended a streak of 13 innings of one-run pitching by Chicago starter John Lackey against his former team. Grichuk drove a 2-2 pitch off of Adam Warren (3-1) for the win. Trevor Rosenthal (2-1) pitched a scoreless ninth. The Cubs' Ben Zobrist had three singles and a walk, extending his streak to 29 starts with reaching safely. He is hitting .387 during that span.

him for 12th in career homers with Rafael Palmeiro. Tropeano (3-2) allowed four hits and one walk while striking out six. He has held opponents to two runs or fewer in seven of nine starts and lowered his ERA to 2.86. Texas' Derek Holland (3-4) pitched 6 2/3 innings, matching his longest outing of the season, and allowed two runs on seven hits. Joe Smith earned his sixth save of the season.

TIGERS 5, PHILLIES 4

Miguel Cabrera hit two of Detroit's four solo homers, then scored the tiebreaking run on Victor Martinez's seventh-inning single to lift the Detroit past Philadelphia. JD Martinez and Nick Castellanos also homered for Detroit, which has won seven of eight. Maikel Franco and Tommy Joseph hit solo shots for the Phillies, who fell to 14-4 in one-run games this season. Cabrera, who is 6 for 6 over his last two games, doubled with one out in the seventh. After moving to third on a wild pitch, he scored on Victor Martinez's hit off Colton Murray (0-1). Justin Wilson (1-1) got the win in relief for Detroit, and Francisco Rodriguez struck out two in a perfect ninth for his 13th save in 14 chances.

WHITE SOX 7, INDIANS 6, 1ST GAME INDIANS 5, WHITE SOX 1, 2ND GAME

Rajai Davis' two-run homer in the fifth inning of the second game put Cleveland ahead to stay. Jose Ramirez hit his second long ball of the day and Juan Uribe also went deep and the Indians earned a split of their doubleheader with the Chicago White Sox. Davis' shot to left field off Erik Johnson (0-2) on a 3-0 fast-ball snapped a three-game skid. That was enough offense for Cody Anderson (1-3), who struck out a career-best nine over seven innings as the Indians snapped a three-game skid. In the opener, Brett Lawrie broke a fifth-inning tie with a three-run homer, Todd Frazier hit his 14th of the season and the White Sox held on for a 7-6 victory. Ramirez homered on the last pitch he saw in the opener and the first of the second game for Cleveland, which finished the day with six homers. Austin Jackson added three hits and two RBIs, Mat Latos (6-1) allowed three runs over six innings in the first game, and David Robertson pitched a hitless ninth for his 12th save. Marlon Byrd's two-run homer in the fifth off Latos tied it at 3 a half-inning before Lawrie sent Mike Clevinger's fastball into the left-field seats. Clevinger (0-1) gave up seven hits over five innings in his sec-

ond big league start. Mike Napoli had a solo homer and an RBI groundout.

PIRATES 6, ROCKIES 3

Pirates starter Ryan Vogelsong was carted off the field after getting struck in the head by a pitch in the second inning of Pittsburgh's win over Colorado. With the bases loaded and Pittsburgh leading 1-0, Rockies starter Jordan Lyles (1-2) hit Vogelsong in the left cheek with a 92 mph fastball. Vogelsong was making his second start of the season, filling in because of a rainout Sunday. The Pirates later said he was admitted to the hospital for injuries to his left eye. Vogelsong was replaced by Wilfredo Boscan (1-0), who got the win in relief. Besides hitting Vogelsong, the right-hander walked three, allowed two stolen bases, threw a wild pitch and gave up six runs over 2 1/3 innings.

ROYALS 10, TWINS 4

Salvador Perez had a career-high five hits, including a double, a triple and an RBI, to lead Kansas City past Minnesota. Paulo Orlando added three hits and two RBIs in the rain-delayed game for the Royals, who put All-Star outfielder Alex Gordon on the disabled list earlier in the day with a fractured right wrist. Ricky Nolasco (1-3) gave up six runs on eight hits and struck out three in 2 2/3 innings for the Twins (11-33), who have the worst record in the majors. Peter Moylan (1-0) picked up the win in relief of Ian Kennedy, who gave up two runs on five hits in 3 1/3 innings of a start that had to be cut short thanks to the 41-minute rain delay in the third inning.

ATHLETICS 5, MARINERS 0

Rich Hill pitched eight innings to win his fourth straight start, Stephen Vogt hit a leadoff homer in the seventh inning to snap a scoreless tie and Oakland ended a four-game skid. Taijuan Walker (2-4) held the A's to two hits through six innings, but then Vogt opened the seventh by driving a 3-1 pitch deep over the right field wall for his fourth homer. Hill (7-3) allowed six hits over the first three innings, then retired 14 consecutive batters before Chris Taylor's bloop single to shallow center with one out in the eighth. Hill allowed eight hits, struck out six and walked none, throwing 81 of 107 pitches for strikes. The A's broke it open with four unearned runs in the eighth, aided by two throwing errors from shortstop Taylor, called up Sunday to replace injured Ketel Marte. — AP

MLB Results/Standings

Pittsburgh 6, Colorado 3; Chicago White Sox 7, Cleveland 6; NY Mets 7, Washington 1; Detroit 5, Philadelphia 4; Miami 7, Tampa Bay 6; LA Angels 2, Texas 0; Cleveland 5, Chicago White Sox 1; Kansas City 10, Minnesota 4; St. Louis 4, Chicago Cubs 3; LA Dodgers 1, Cincinnati 0; Oakland 5, Seattle 0; San Francisco 1, San Diego 0.

| American League   |    |    |      |     | National League  |    |    |      |      |
|-------------------|----|----|------|-----|------------------|----|----|------|------|
| Eastern Division  |    |    |      |     | Eastern Division |    |    |      |      |
|                   | W  | L  | PCT  | GB  |                  | W  | L  | PCT  | GB   |
| Baltimore         | 26 | 16 | .619 | -   | Washington       | 27 | 18 | .600 | -    |
| Boston            | 27 | 17 | .614 | -   | NY Mets          | 26 | 18 | .591 | 0.5  |
| NY Yankees        | 21 | 22 | .488 | 5.5 | Philadelphia     | 25 | 20 | .556 | 2    |
| Toronto           | 22 | 24 | .478 | 6   | Miami            | 23 | 21 | .523 | 3.5  |
| Tampa Bay         | 20 | 22 | .476 | 6   | Atlanta          | 12 | 31 | .279 | 14   |
| Central Division  |    |    |      |     | Central Division |    |    |      |      |
| Chicago White Sox | 27 | 19 | .587 | -   | Chicago Cubs     | 29 | 14 | .674 | -    |
| Cleveland         | 23 | 20 | .535 | 2.5 | Pittsburgh       | 24 | 19 | .558 | 5    |
| Kansas City       | 23 | 21 | .523 | 3   | St. Louis        | 24 | 21 | .533 | 6    |
| Detroit           | 22 | 22 | .500 | 4   | Milwaukee        | 18 | 26 | .409 | 11.5 |
| Minnesota         | 11 | 33 | .250 | 15  | Cincinnati       | 15 | 30 | .333 | 15   |
| Western Division  |    |    |      |     | Western Division |    |    |      |      |
| Seattle           | 26 | 18 | .591 | -   | San Francisco    | 28 | 19 | .596 | -    |
| Texas             | 25 | 20 | .556 | 1.5 | LA Dodgers       | 23 | 23 | .500 | 4.5  |
| LA Angels         | 21 | 24 | .467 | 5.5 | Colorado         | 21 | 22 | .488 | 5    |
| Oakland           | 20 | 26 | .435 | 7   | Arizona          | 21 | 25 | .457 | 6.5  |
| Houston           | 17 | 28 | .378 | 9.5 | San Diego        | 19 | 27 | .413 | 8.5  |

6-5 in the eighth, but their first two hitters singled off Erasmo Ramirez (6-2). Pinch hitter Cole Gillespie's sacrifice fly tied the game, and Suzuki singled to put runners on the corners with one out. Martin Prado then hit a one-hopper that deflected off the glove of reliever Alex Colome. He had to settle for an out at first

ANGELS 2, RANGERS 0

Albert Pujols hit a two-run home run, the 569th of his career, and Nick Tropeano threw 6 2/3 strong innings to help Los Angeles beat Texas. The Angels have won eight of their last 11 games. Pujols' homer in the third inning

## A LOOK AT THE RETESTS OF OLYMPIC DRUG SAMPLES

**GENEVA:** Inside a non-descript concrete building in a Swiss parking lot lies evidence that could take down dozens of Olympic athletes. The anti-doping laboratory in Lausanne holds the stored urine and blood samples from the 2008 and 2012 Olympics that are being retested with improved techniques to catch drug cheats who escaped detection at the time and to keep them out of this summer's games in Rio de Janeiro. So far, 31 unidentified athletes in six sports from 12 countries have been caught during retests of samples from the 2008 Beijing Games. Results on tests of 250 samples from the 2012 London Olympics will be known soon. Some things to know about the retesting program:

### The Lausanne lab

It's officially called the Swiss Laboratory for Doping Analyses, or by its French acronym LAD. It's one of 34 labs around the globe accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency and is affiliated with the University Hospital of Lausanne. The lab is located in a drab building near a small Coop supermarket, beside a main road and at the end of the M2 metro line. Visitors have to be buzzed in to take the elevator up the three-story building. The lab director is Martial Saugy, a Swiss scientist with long hair and a soul patch above his chin that gives him the look of a jazz musician. Saugy and his lab have often been caught up in major doping cases. Lawyers for Lance Armstrong tried to undermine Saugy's evidence about the cyclist's suspect samples from the 2001 Tour de Suisse. Saugy also met with Armstrong's entourage ahead of the 2002 Tour de France when he was a witness for anti-doping authorities in their case against the American rider.

### The Russian connection

Links between Russia and the Lausanne lab were questioned by the World Anti-Doping Agency inquiry team that detailed state-sponsored cheating in a report last November. Panel chairman Dick Pound said the lab did not have a convincing explanation for destroying 67 samples that were sent from Moscow in 2013. An inquiry witness in Russia implicated Moscow lab director Grigory Rodchenkov in a plot to retain clean samples for 67 athletes ahead of the London Olympics. If any of the athletes later produced a positive sample, it would be replaced by their clean sample and the athlete would pay Rodchenkov.

In late 2012, WADA asked for all 67 samples to be retested in Lausanne. One tested positive for low levels of a banned substance, 54 were clean and 12 had too little volume for proper testing. The Lausanne lab destroyed the samples after a standard three-month storage period despite a request from WADA to keep them. An investigation by the Lausanne hospital, opened within days of the Pound report, cleared the lab of wrongdoing. Rodchenkov is now at the center of a scandal over Russian doping at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi. He says he helped Russian athletes dope before Sochi and

switched their tainted samples for clean ones during the games. Sochi samples are also stored at the Lausanne lab and the International Olympic Committee says it plans to retest those as well.

### Sample process

By the end of any Olympics, IOC testers are in control of as many as 5,000 urine samples. Samples are divided into "A" and "B" bottles, and the "B" samples are available in case they're needed to corroborate a positive result in the "A" bottle. The initial tests take place in the lab located in the Olympic city. Because of the huge number of samples and tests that need to be conducted in a short period of time, not every sample is tested for every drug. Experts take educated guesses on which set of athletes are more likely to use certain drugs and run the accordingly tests.

### 'Chain of custody'

After those tests, the leftover urine is placed into a cargo container that's refrigerated, then loaded on an airplane that goes to Geneva. From there, the samples are transported to the lab in Lausanne and stored in a large vault, where they can be stored in a locked freezer at one of two temperatures - minus 20 or minus 80 Celsius, depending on the type of freezers the lab buys. "Chain of custody" is a critical part of the anti-doping process, and every time the bottles change hands, or locations, forms must be filled out to acknowledge who has been in contact with the bottles. A missing link in that process can invalidate a positive test. Under new rules, the IOC can hold the bottles for up to 10 years, and can thaw the urine for a retest any time during that window.

The limit was recently raised from eight years, which gives scientists more time to identify new drugs, then develop new tests to identify them. Also, scientists can develop more sensitive tests for metabolites - residue - of known drugs that are found in urine. And, if a test for a certain drug wasn't completed at the Olympics, it can be done in a retest years later. "The anti-doping guys have an arsenal that they don't make public," said Tom Brenna, a Cornell University professor and an expert on anti-doping laboratories. An example Brenna gave was the discovery of a test for plastic residue from the bags some cyclists used for EPO-laden blood transfusions. Because EPO has been notoriously difficult to detect, the test for the "plasticizer" gave the drug-fighters a back-door method to prove someone was using the drug.

### Medal reallocation

The IOC is notifying the 12 national Olympic committees whose athletes have been caught in the Beijing retests. Names and details have been kept confidential for legal reasons. If athletes are found guilty of doping and stripped of medals, any reallocation won't take place immediately. The IOC will retest the samples of those athletes who stand to move up in the medals to make sure they were clean.—AP



ST LOUIS: Jake Allen #34 of the St Louis Blues makes a save against Joe Thornton #19 of the San Jose Sharks as Colton Parayko #55 of the St Louis Blues and Carl Gunnarsson #4 defend during the 2016 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs on May 23, 2016. — AFP

# SHARKS ON THE BRINK; BLUES OVERPOWERED

**ST LOUIS:** San Jose captain Joe Pavelski scored the tying and go-ahead goals to lift the Sharks to a 6-3 win at St Louis on Monday, giving them a 3-2 lead in the NHL Western Conference finals. The Sharks host Game 7 today and are in a prime position to advance to the Stanley Cup decider. "His ability to get his stick on pucks in front of the net from different angles is as good as anybody I've ever seen," coach Peter DeBoer said. "His biggest asset is he works at it." With the Sharks trailing by a goal, Pavelski tied the game late in the second period and then scored the go-ahead goal in the opening minute of the third. "You play a good game like that, you want to ride that," Pavelski said. "Everyone's played a key role so far and it's going to have to continue."

Joel Ward also scored twice, including one of two empty-netters, in the final minute for San Jose, while Joe Thornton had three assists. Pavelski leads all players in the playoffs with 12 goals and has three two-goal games, one in each series. The Sharks' captain added an assist and is tied with teammate Logan Couture for the postseason points lead, each with a franchise-record 21 points. Rookie Robby Fabbri scored and David Backes had an assist for St. Louis. Both were questionable coming off injuries in Game 4. But star forward Vladimir Tarasenko was silent again. Tarasenko was minus-2 with one shot and is scoreless in the series after getting seven goals and 13 points in the first two rounds. "He's struggled this series," Blues coach Ken Hitchcock said. "He hasn't gotten the looks that he normally gets. But he's one shift away from breaking it open." The Blues are just 4-6 at home in the postseason, and failed to hold leads of 2-1 and 3-2 in Game 5. They're 6-3 on the road and need another win to bring the series home for Game 7. "We did it in Game 4," Backes said. "Now, we've got to go in there and do it again."

The Sharks were 2 for 3 on the power play after previously being 2 for 15 in the series. The Sharks scored first on Marc-Edouard Vlasic's first goal of the postseason from the point at 3:51 of the first period. St. Louis' Jaden Schwartz snapped a 13-game goal drought to tie it on a rebound at 7:04 of the first. Troy Brouwer batted in a rebound from midair for St. Louis and Ward scored a similar goal for San Jose with his first of the game. Brouwer leads St. Louis with eight goals in 19 games this postseason after totaling seven in his first 78 playoff games.

Pavelski was left alone in the slot on a power play at 18:33 of the second and beat Jake Allen to tie it at 3-3. He redirected Brent Burns' drive from the point 16 seconds into the third to put the Sharks in front to stay. San Jose goalie Martin Jones allowed three goals on the Blues' first 13 shots, but stopped all seven shots in the third period. "He's a great goalie," defenseman Roman Polak said. "He's mentally strong. No matter what happened in the first or second, it doesn't matter." Blues goalie Jake Allen made 21 saves in his second straight start. Hitchcock said he hadn't decided whether Allen or Brian Elliott would start in Game 6.—AP

## SEPTUAGENARIAN DREAMS OF TOKYO AFTER RIO BLOW

**BERLIN:** Japan's Hiroshi Hoketsu will miss out on a chance to become the oldest ever Olympian at Rio due to his horse's ill health but the 75-year-old remains hopeful of establishing the record at Tokyo 2020, some 56 years after his first Games. Hoketsu, who made his Olympic debut in show jumping at the 1964 Tokyo Games before turning to dressage and riding in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and 2012 London Games, said a spot in Tokyo would see his career come full circle. "If I can do it and be in Tokyo, that would be marvelous," Hoketsu told Reuters in an interview, days after he conceded defeat in his bid to reach Rio. "Four years from now I will be 79 and I have to see if it will be physically possible."

Hoketsu's 2012 appearance made him the third oldest Olympian, with Swedish shooter Oscar Swahn currently the oldest when he competed at the 1920 Antwerp Games aged 72. Instead of being in Rio this August, the soft-spoken Hoketsu, who has lived in Europe for 13 years, will be treating his horse Brioni W for a nagging cough and watching from afar with his hopes of a fourth Games appearance dashed for now. "That's life, you can't do anything about it," Hoketsu, who rode Whisper in 2008 and 2012, said. "I am sorry for myself, ok, but that is the situation." Brioni W, a 15-year-old gelding acquired a few months ago as Hoketsu focused on finding a competitive partner for Rio, developed a cough recently that would make combining proper treatment and attempting to qualify impossible. "When a horse coughs they stretch their neck and put the head down," the Germany-based

horseman said. "When he starts coughing you cannot ride. When they start coughing during the competition you have to give up," he added, opting to treat his horse without the burden of competing in Olympic qualifiers.

This, however, is not the first Olympic setback for the retired former pharmaceutical company executive, nicknamed the "Hope of Old Men" in the Asian media. After swapping show-jumping for dressage in his mid-thirties, Hoketsu made the cut for the 1988 Seoul Olympics but after making the trip to the South Korean capital with his horse, was ruled out of the Games due to quarantine problems. In 2003, he moved to Europe and started competing internationally, improving his chances of a dressage spot on Japan's Olympic team and earning two more Games appearances in 2008 and 2012. "I left my business at 63 and I decided to move to Germany to compete internationally," he added.

Despite the Rio Games disappointment, Hoketsu is not prepared to bury his Olympics dreams just yet and has cast an eye on Tokyo. "My strongest motivation is the feeling I get from riding every day and that I can say, ok, it looks like I am making some progress in riding. That's my biggest motivation," he said. The Tokyo native is already fairly certain which horse could be ready by then. "It won't be Brioni W, he is going to be too old," he said. "But another horse I have, that one could be it." With 44 years separating Hoketsu's first and second Games, few will be betting against him making his fourth Olympics in four years time.— Reuters



Handout photo released by RIO2016 of the Olympic torch as it visits the Chapada Diamantina National Park in the Northeast Brazilian state of Bahia, ahead of the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. — AFP



BRUSSELS: In this file photo Anna Chicherova from Russia competes at the women's high jump at Brussels' King Baudouin stadium, Belgium. The coach of 2012 Olympic high jump champion Anna Chicherova, Yevgeny Zagorulko, told Russian state news agency Tass, the Russian athlete is suspected of doping at the 2008 Beijing Games. — AP

# RED STAR BELGRADE TRIUMPH - YUGOSLAV GLORY AND REQUIEM

**BELGRADE:** Dragan Djajic hid his eyes before the last shot in Red Star Belgrade's European Cup final 25 years ago and opened them to joyous celebrations, but the triumph would soon turn sour. Darko Pancev scored a fifth penalty to secure the Yugoslav side a 5-3 shootout win over Olympique Marseille of France. Djajic, who was Red Star's technical director at the time, had planned for that win on May 29, 1991 to launch a new era of domination of European football.

But history dictated otherwise. Red Star Belgrade was built around a team of stars from different republics in the communist federation that was on the road to collapse. Goalkeeper-captain Stevan Stojanovic, who saved Manuel Amoros's penalty, was a Kosovo-Serb, like coach Ljubo Petrovic. Refik Sabanovic was a Bosnian, Pancev from Macedonia, Robert Prosinecki from Croatia, Dejan Savicevic from Montenegro.

Djajic said the tension of the moment at the Stadio San Nicola in Bari left him exhausted. After Pancev's decisive penalty, he opened his eyes to fall into the arms of coach Petrovic. The European title had eluded Djajic as a player and he was one of the best to ever come out of Yugoslavia. But he had been building this generation of new players for five years to win the European Cup, now the Champions League. He was expecting a long reign. "That was the plan," he said. "Red Star has been

working for a long time to reach the top and when it was reached, the country vanished," he added. On the eve of the Bari match, at another stadium at Kranjceviceva street in the Croatian capital Zagreb, the Croatian National Guard staged its first parade.

### 'Nasty things will happen'

On June 25, 1991, Croatia and Slovenia proclaimed independence from Yugoslavia, in moves opposed by Belgrade which controlled the Yugoslav army. The multi-ethnic federation founded by Josip Broz Tito after World War II imploded in wars that up to 1999 claimed more than 130,000 lives, mostly civilians. "The players had no idea that the country would disappear," Djajic said. "We were only thinking about sport," said Stojanovic. Others had an inkling of what was happening in the country however.

Stojanovic remembered a club official whom he had spoken with about an offer from Belgian side Antwerp. "He replied: 'Kids, there is nothing here anymore. Very nasty things will happen. Go to find work elsewhere.' 'A team that we have been building for five years disappeared overnight.' 'We had plans, we wanted to sign Davor Suker from Dinamo Zagreb,'" recalled Petrovic. Suker wanted to move as well. Lubovic was aiming to "rule two, three years in European football." "We had no problems to attract players from across the

country, Muslims and Croats. We selected the best," Djajic said. The club, where he remains the top scorer, is now only a shadow of what it once was. The same as its Marakana stadium with its huge 100,000 capacity.

### Arkan's shadow

The graffiti on the walls of the stadium with paint peeling off, are in contrast with the legendary games of Djajic or Dragan Stojkovic, or the history of the club founded in 1945 by anti-fascist youth. "Justice for Uros" reads one, referring to a hooligan jailed after beating and seriously injuring a policeman. Another portrays a hooded hooligan wielding a stick. Above the stadium is a colonnaded house in neo-kitsch style. It is the home of Serbian warlord Zeljko 'Arkan' Raznatovic, killed in 2000. Before becoming a paramilitary leader Arkan led 'Delije', fans of the northern stand. Among them he recruited some of his 'Tigers', notorious paramilitaries who led ethnic cleansing campaigns during the wars in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo. Red Star have just won their 27th Yugoslav or Serbian national title. However, not many are interested. It was won in empty stadiums against insignificant rivals. Serbia's football and Red Star, its most prominent representative, have never returned to the glorious days of the 1990s. "I cannot believe that I am watching matches that I do after having played and watched the matches

that I had played in and watched," sighed Djajic. "We only have this title. If Yugoslavia had survived, there would have been others," he insisted.

The 69-year-old concluded that "no company lost as much as Red Star" with the disappearance of Yugoslavia.— AFP



APULIA, Italy: File photo taken on May 29, 1991 shows Red Star Belgrade's players celebrating after winning the European Champions Cup final football match between Olympique de Marseille and Belgrade in Bari. — AFP





# RED BULL'S NEYMAR JRS FIVE FINAL TOURNAMENT

## ONE TEAM TO REPRESENT KUWAIT AT WORLD FINAL IN BRAZIL

**KUWAIT:** Red Bull's Neymar Jr Five will be hosting its final tournament tomorrow at Al Kout Mall after 8 qualifiers alive with excitement which took place throughout May. The 16 qualified teams will compete during Kuwait's final tournament out of which the winning team will be flying to Brazil to represent Kuwait in the world final. The side who comes out on top in the World Final will win an extra special prize; the chance to meet Neymar Jr and watch a Barca match at the Camp Nou in the VIP area. In Kuwait and in partnership with Nissan, Shop & Ship, Acqua Eva, Sun & Sand Sports and Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr, eight qualifiers gave 128 teams the opportunity to participate in this global competition starting with Hassan Abul football, Goal! Football fields in Fahaheel, Al Shaab, Al Jahra and Kuwait University Adailiya towards the final at Al Kout Mall. Neymar Jr has teamed up with Red Bull to create a 5-a-side street football competition in more than 35 countries around the world - a championship open to amateur and semi-professional footballers aged between the age of 16 and 25. The tournament was contested first at a local level, then in a national final and will be concluded in a global final in Praia Grande, Sao Paulo, where the Brazil and Barcelona star's career started.

Neymar Jr's Five features one twist compared to normal 5-a-side football - every time a team scores, the opposition loses a player. The games will last for ten minutes, however, if a team manages to eliminate all players on the other side, they take the victory before the full time ends. "I always dreamed of putting on my own signature tournament and invite the best teams over to my hometown. I'm really looking forward to seeing what these players can do and have a great time doing it," said Neymar Jr.

The top 4 players that Neymar Jr.

would team up with in a 5-a-side football. To celebrate the launch of Neymar Jr's new signature football tournament "Neymar Jr's Five", we asked the Brazil captain to pick the four current players he would want alongside him in a five-man team. Which players would Neymar Jr choose to play alongside him if he was limited to a five-a-side team? Read on to discover the awesome foursome he would pick to join him. Lionel Messi: "Right from the start, Messi helped me a lot at Barcelona, both on and off the field. We have a great relationship and I want to continue playing and getting better alongside him. He's the best player in the world." - Neymar Jr on Messi

Luis Suarez: "Luis is a great player and should've been on the podium for the Ballon d'Or as well. With Luis and Leo [Messi], the secret is that we enjoy playing together and we try to play well and have fun at the same time." - Neymar Jr on Suarez Thiago Silva: "Thiago Silva is one of the toughest defenders I've ever had to play against and someone I've always admired. He's also a great man and a great captain." - Neymar Jr on Silva Dani Alves: "When I arrived at Barcelona, he was my partner on the right wing and we struck up a great relationship. Dani is one of my best friends in football as well, so it would be fantastic to have him in the team." - Neymar Jr on Alves

### Interesting facts about Neymar Jr

By the age of 10, Neymar Jr was already considered a rising star of the football world. His unforgettable performances on the pitch have earned him the adoration of the Brazilian fans, scoring within 28 minutes on his debut match for the national team did much to cement his place among the greats. He is often compared to legends Robinho and Pele and, as such, he has attracted some very generous bids from many European



### Neymar Jr's Five Rules

teams. Neymar Jr started his career with the Sao Paulo-based club Santos in 2003, having been promoted to the first team aged 17. His debut match was in March 2009 against Oeste and the following week he scored his first goal with the team against Mogi

Mirim. Neymar Jr is credited with helping to reinvigorate the Brazilian nation's passion for the sport through his creativity and spontaneous style on the pitch. In August 2010, he made his international debut for Brazil against the USA and scored his

### Neymar Jr's achievements and football career in a picture

first goal (28 mins) and secured a 1-0 victory for the team. "A hint that I would give to everybody is to enjoy yourselves playing in this tournament... I know that everybody wants to win, wants to be the champion, but it's only one team that will win it!

So enjoy yourself, enjoy that unique moment of playing or even watching those games... And believe in your dream. I believe that with a soccer ball and a goal, or even with a soccer ball and two pair of flip-flops you can be very happy" - Neymar Jr.

# INDY 500 CHAMPIONS CALL SAFETY MEASURES GREATEST INNOVATION

**INDIANAPOLIS:** Imagine climbing into your sedan in the driveway and not putting on a seatbelt, then trying to back out onto a busy street without the benefit of a rear-view mirror. Odd exercise? Sure. Unsafe? You bet. Seat belts and rear-view mirrors, two developments that are taken for granted these days, trace their roots to the earliest days of the Indianapolis 500 - back when a couple of intrepid drivers decided to make an inherently dangerous endeavor just a little bit safer. "If you look at all the innovations at the Indy 500, the No 1 greatest is safety," said 1996 champion Buddy Lazier. "You can argue everything from seatbelts to disc brakes filtered down to the auto industry and now,

every single American car enjoys them." In the lead-up to the 100th running of the "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing," The Associated Press interviewed the 27 living race winners on topics ranging from the greatest driver to most memorable moment. Lazier was among 10 drivers who singled out safety measures as the race's greatest innovation. Six chose the development of rear-engine cars and six others chose the outrageous turbine cars of the 1960s and '70s, while four former winners identified aerodynamics as the greatest advancement.

It makes sense that safety won out considering such innovations began with the very first race. In 1911, when most drivers were

accompanied by a mechanic who served as a spotter, Ray Harroun mounted a mirror to his car to save the weight of an extra body. It rattled so much it was virtually useless, but the concept took root and soon became common on passenger cars. Seat belts weren't introduced until 1922, when Barney Oldfield ordered a harness from a parachute manufacturer after seeing many drivers ejected - even killed - in crashes at Indy. The idea was slower to take hold, but most auto manufacturers had made them standard by 1964. There have also been race-specific advancements in safety at Indy, most notably SAFER barriers that are now common at racetracks and are designed to absorb much of the energy from an impact.

Indianapolis Motor Speedway executives, working with engineers and officials from the Indy Racing League and NASCAR, spent millions of dollars over four years to develop the walls. They were installed at Indy in May 2002, just in time for that year's race won by Helio Castroneves. The three-time winner was among those who chose safety as the Indy 500's enduring innovation, calling the walls "something that would translate to all the other ovals we have in America." "Anyone who has ever hit the SAFER barrier and the concrete barrier has felt the difference," added three-time champion Dario Franchitti. "It's saved a lot of lives and prevented many injuries."

Jack Brabham brought the first rear-engine car to Indy in 1961, and its advantages in power and handling were quickly realized. Jim Clark drove one to victory in 1965, and within four years, not a single front-engine roadster would qualify for the race.—AP



**INDIANAPOLIS:** This May 30, 1973 file photo, shows Swede Savage amid the burning wreckage of his race car after a crash during the Indianapolis 500 auto race in Indianapolis, Ind.—AP

# WITH ONE STREAK OVER, NICO ROSBERG AIMS FOR ANOTHER

**MONACO:** One winning streak ended with a bang for Nico Rosberg in Spain but Monaco's tight, metal-fenced streets could see the continuation of another remarkable run for the Formula One championship leader on Sunday. Only one man-triple world champion Ayrton Senna has won more than three times in a row in the Mediterranean principality's showcase race but Rosberg is on the cusp of stepping up alongside the late Brazilian.

The Mercedes driver, whose hopes of an eighth successive win ended at the previous race in Barcelona when he and triple world champion team mate Lewis Hamilton collided on the opening lap while fighting for the lead, completed his hat-trick last year. Four wins would still be one behind the Brazilian, who won five in a row and six in total, but still a sequence that multiple champions like Graham Hill, Alain Prost and Michael Schumacher never managed. Monaco is a home race for most of the drivers but even more so for Rosberg, the German-born son of Finland's 1982 world champion Keke, who grew up and went to school there and this time returns in the form of his life. "I have memories from every corner going right back to my school days and I always have great support there from my family, my friends and the fans, which gives you that extra boost through the weekend," he said. "It's been amazing to win there for the past three years - but I know it will be tough to repeat that with Lewis, the Ferraris and the Red Bulls all so strong now."

Hamilton has not won since he took his third world championship in Texas last October, and the collision at the Circuit de Catalunya left him 43 points behind the

German with 16 races remaining, but he is still the bookmakers' favorite. Monaco-the glamour highlight of the season-is also special for him, a race the boyhood Senna fan has always loved, and he needs to start reeling in Rosberg as soon as possible. "Barcelona was the worst feeling but, like I always say, the true test is how you get back up when you've been knocked down," said the Briton, who won in Monaco with McLaren in 2008.

"It was a tough moment for all of us after the race but it's now chapter closed and looking ahead to Monaco. It's an incredible feeling making a car dance through those streets, one of the purest thrills you can have in a racing car. "I'm approaching this weekend with only one result in mind." Ferrari and resurgent Red Bull can hope to be contenders as well at a track where outright engine power matters less than driveability. The new ultrasoft Pirelli tyres, making their debut, could also help. Both the current Ferrari drivers Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen-second in the standings and 39 points off the pace - have won in Monaco before, but not for the Italian team, whose last victory there was with Schumacher in 2001. Red Bull, whose Australian driver Daniel Ricciardo set the race lap record last year, had already targeted Monaco as their best chance of a victory before 18-year-old Dutch driver Max Verstappen won in Spain on his debut with the team. "The trend now is we're coming stronger and stronger," said Ricciardo. "Monaco is for me the best circuit to drive one... there's no circuit on the calendar that gives me that same feeling, that same adrenaline and that feeling of wanting more."— Reuters



# EURO 2016 TERROR THREAT WORRIES DESAILLY

**CARDIFF:** France's World Cup winner Marcel Desailly is worried about security for Euro 2016 after the deadly attacks on Paris last November. "Of course, there is a little fear," the 1998 World Cup winner and Euro 2000 champion said. "Because of the level of security, we hope nothing will happen, but it's a very difficult thing to be able to check everyone." It's not just the stadiums, it can happen anywhere in any city. His comments came amid a new scare over security breaches at the Stade de France in Paris during the French Cup final on Saturday. The stadium, which will host the opening match on June 10 plus the July 10 final, was targeted by suicide bombers during the November 13 attacks that left 130 dead.

Desailly, a key member of the side that won the 1998 World Cup final in the stadium, said he hopes France can win the European championships on home soil to lift the whole country. "If France win the title, it will boost more than just football, it will boost the economy, it will boost the hope," said the 47-year-old. "People are quite sad, life is difficult and football will bring some smiles to the faces, like we did in 2000 and 1998." The former Chelsea and AC Milan defender hopes Didier Deschamps' squad can win a third European crown after their 1984 and 2000 triumphs.

## 'A big blow'

Desailly said the absence of experienced striker Karim Benzema could hurt France, but they have the talent to cope. Benzema was suspended by France in December because of his alleged role in an attempt to blackmail 'Les Bleus' teammate Mathieu Valbuena over a sex-tape. Desailly said it is now up to Olivier Giroud and Andre-Pierre Gignac to support Atletico Madrid's in-form forward Antoine Griezmann. "Yes, it hurts France, because he (Benzema) is a very good player, he's a point of reference at the front of the attack for France, so it's a big blow," said Desailly.

"Didier will still play a 4-3-3, but he just has to hope a player like Griezmann will show up well to allow France to win the games," Desailly compared the French squad to where world champions Germany were six years ago before beginning their rise to the 2014 World Cup crown. "Didier Deschamps has a very, very good generation of players, you can see the talent is there," said Desailly. "We are just missing a little bit of experience at the high level, but that will come. The strength is there, from (goalkeeper Hugo) Lloris to (midfielder Paul) Pogba to (defender Raphael) Varane to Griezmann, they are the spine of the team, so we hope it will work."

"They are trying to build up a team similar to how Germany was in 2010, which was the start of a new generation," Desailly said Group A "should be easy" for France, who face Switzerland, Romania and Albania, but the hosts have to cope with national expectations. "It's huge pressure, an amazing pressure. You can't really quantify it," said Desailly, who was sent off in the 3-0 win over Brazil in the 1998 World Cup final. "The players have to be united and keep the pressure internally to try to use it positively and create a good performance. If they don't do that, they will have the fear and be too scared to perform."

## 'A real weapon'

Desailly is tipping Bayern Munich teenager Kingsley Coman, 19, to shine. "I'm not sure he will start all of the games, but when he has the opportunity, he has to show he's maybe the man for the moment, whether on the left or right wing. In the friendly against Russia, he showed he is a real weapon for Didier Deschamps." While tipping France to win Euro 2016, Desailly said Belgium and England could also go far and Germany remain strong. "If you want a surprise, Belgium have built up some experience from the last World Cup, they have individual players who are amazing," he said. "England, they have no fear and maybe this generation can make it, like Greece did in 2004. Everyone will tell you Germany has the weight and the experience behind them, they don't really have a striker, but they have a great experience in their team." —AFP

## UNDERDOGS ALBANIA HOPE THE EURO DREAM WILL STRETCH BEYOND GROUPS

**TRIANA:** Albania have already achieved their dream by simply qualifying for their first major tournament and they hope that the lack of psychological pressure in France might even take them beyond the group stage. Seemingly the eternal also-rans, Albania had never previously reached the World Cup or European Championship and the 3-0 win over Armenia that clinched their place in Euro 2016 sparked wild scenes at home and among thousands of Albanians abroad. "Getting to the finals means we have already won our European Championship. We managed to qualify directly," said national soccer federation spokesman Tritan Kokona. "We have a weapon we intend to use: we carry no psychological burdens," Kokona said.

Albania will play hosts France, Romania and Switzerland in Group A and, outgunned by rivals with more experience and international stars, no-one is setting their sights absurdly high. All the same, Italian coach Gianni De Biasi and soccer federation chief Armando Duka harbour hopes of making it through the group stage. "We shall go to France to play football, not as tourists, but we are not making plans. Our group is difficult, but we have proved we can beat anyone," said Duka. The Albanian diaspora in Europe, home to most of the team's players from Kosovo and Macedonia, have already bought 26,000 tickets for the group matches. However, it will be understandable in Albania's first match against Switzerland if some supporters feel a clash of loyalties. Almost half of Switzerland's main line-up are of ethnic Albanian origin from Kosovo and Granit Xhaka, a pillar of the Swiss team, is likely to be playing against his own brother Taulant. In his four years as coach, De Biasi has tried various players to find the perfect combination but though Albania play a strong defensive game their attack lacks punch. Striker Bekim Balaj sealed victory over Portugal in their opening group match with a powerful shot from an Odise Roshi cross that wrong-footed an experienced Portuguese defense. — Reuters

## VULNERABLE ENGLAND SET TO EXTEND '50 YEARS OF HURT'

**LONDON:** When England fans sang about "30 years of hurt" at Euro '96 they had high hopes of ending the pain with a first trophy since the 1966 World Cup but 20 years on from that agonizing near miss there is precious little optimism in the air. To a buoyant chart-topping Three Lions soundtrack of "football's coming home" England came within the width of Paul Gascoigne's bootlace of securing a place in the Euro '96 final on home soil.

The midfielder's extra-time, open-goal miss against Germany led to penalties, which England lost, just as they did in their only other semi-final appearance since 1966 at the 1990 World Cup. Since then England have been serially unsuccessful despite the virtually biennial routine of excitable build-up followed by dispiriting exit. That see-saw frustration was summed up in the space of four days by England's two most recent friendlies in March. Having reached the Euro 2016 finals by winning all 10 qualifiers, scoring 31 goals and conceding three, England put the icing on the cake with an uplifting 3-2 away win over world champions Germany. However, with predictions of glory still filling the back pages, a flat performance and 2-1 Wembley defeat by a Dutch team who did not even make the Euros brought everyone down to earth. Ironically, as England have gradually adopted a more continental style of play, and can now keep the ball and build patient attacks with the best of them, their traditional strengths have been left behind. Since John Terry left the scene England have looked horribly vulnerable in the centre of defense and, having been bundled out of the 2014 World Cup group stage on the back of the most basic errors in that department, they were caught out in both friendlies in exactly the same way. — Reuters



**OEIRAS, Portugal:** Portugal's players take part in the first training session of Portugal's team in preparation for the Euro 2016 at Portugal's team training center 'Cidade do Futebol' (Football City) in Oeiras, outskirts of Lisbon. — AFP

# SPOTLIGHT BACK ON PITCH FOR THE EXPANDED EUROS

**LONDON:** Bigger than ever, the European Championship kicks off in Paris next month with a four-week feast of football that promises to elevate the game above the corruption scandals and security fears that have overshadowed its build-up. All eyes will be on hosts France when they get the ball rolling against Romania in the Stade de France on June 10 - 210 days after suicide bombers at the same venue triggered a night of horror across the capital which killed 130 people. It should have been a proud moment for former UEFA president Michel Platini. The France great, who inspired his country's 1984 title on home soil, achieved his wish of expanding the tournament to a record 24 nations. But a four-year ban, handed down after becoming engulfed by the FIFA corruption scandal that has rocked the sport, means he will be a notable absentee.

Against such a backdrop it can only be hoped that the tournament, the first since the sleaze hit the fan last summer and the last with a single host before it goes continent-wide in 2020, can deliver some memorable moments on the pitch. It certainly has the potential to do so with 51 matches in 31 days spread across France from the coal-mining country of Lens in the north to the Mediterranean port of Marseille. Unfamiliar qualifiers will be hoping to show they belong and vindicate Platini's brainchild, criticised by

some as substituting quality for quantity. The establishment should prove again, however, that the cream inevitably rises to the top and that Greece's surprise triumph in 2004 was an anomaly.

Spain retained the title four years ago in Poland and Ukraine, a tournament comprising only 16 nations, and will be among the favorites to make it a hat-trick, although three-times champions Germany, 2012 runners-up Italy, France and a resurgent England will all fancy their chances. Northern Ireland, Albania, Iceland, Slovakia and Wales are all appearing for the first time in the tournament which is second only to the World Cup in terms of prestige and not too far behind in quality. For Spain's old guard, players such as Andres Iniesta, Sergio Busquets, Gerard Pique and Sergio Ramos, Euro 2016 could be their last hurrah after the disappointment of the Brazil World Cup two years ago, and with old sage Vicente del Bosque at the helm, they will take some stopping.

France, winners in 1984 and 2000, will carry the hopes of a nation still coming to terms with last year's militant attacks. Manager Didier Deschamps has some enviable quality at his disposal in Juventus midfielder Paul Pogba and forwards Kingsley Coman and Antoine Griezmann. World champions Germany will be targeting a first Euro title in 20 years while England seek their first

international success since the World Cup of 1966.

Roy Hodgson's youthful side went through qualifying with a 100 percent record and have real goal threat in the form of Jamie Vardy, one of the stars for unlikely champions Leicester City, and Tottenham Hotspur's Harry Kane. One consequence of the fatter format means only eight teams will be eliminated from the six initial groups of four, with even third place likely to seal a last-16 spot. Spain's group looks the toughest on paper, with the Czech Republic, Turkey and Croatia, while France should comfortably top a section including Albania, Romania and Switzerland.

Italy will also have to be on their guard against a dangerous-looking Belgium squad, Ireland and Sweden who in Zlatan Ibrahimovic have one of the tournament's A-listers. Others vying for the limelight include Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo who endured a disappointing World Cup and is running out of time to claim a first title for his country. Of the debutants, Iceland's appearance will add novelty value although having finished above the Netherlands in qualifying they will need to be taken seriously by group rivals Portugal, Austria and Hungary. Wales, too, will not just be making up the numbers if talisman Gareth Bale, who has led them to their first finals since the 1958 World Cup, is fit and firing. — Reuters



**ASCONA:** A tourist boat sails from the town of Ascona on Lago Maggiore also called Lake Langen. The German national football team will train here from May 24 until June 3, 2016 for the EURO 2016 taking place in France. — AFP

## INJURY-HIT GERMANY TO REDISCOVER FORM

**BERLIN:** The German side setting their sights on Euro 2016, 20 years after their last continental trophy, may be completely different from the one that won the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. Although coach Joachim Loew has kept a core of the players who won the country's fourth World Cup, he will need to mould them back into a tournament team if they are to knock holders Spain off the champions' pedestal after eight years. The manager will also need to quickly integrate a group of younger players, including the talented but uncapped Joshua Kimmich and Julian Weigl among others, to deliver a competitive unit.

"We are confident but not arrogant. We are strong but not invincible," Loew said ahead of a training camp in Italy. The manager's biggest headache is his back line where the qualifiers

exposed an alarming lack of consistency. Germany conceded five goals in their last four games and left it unexpectedly late to top their group. Central defender Jerome Boateng has only just come back for Bayern Munich after more than three months out injured. Fellow defender Benedikt Hoewedes also missed much of 2016 through injury, returning to action only weeks ago for Schalke.

Loew has another headache in front of the defense, with captain Bastian Schweinsteiger racing to overcome an injury and fellow holding midfielder Ilkay Guendogan already ruled out with a knee cap injury. "These injuries are a bit of a concern for me," Loew said. "You have such problems before every tournament but I really hope that we now can all remain healthy and those injured at the moment can come

back." Germany's midfield, overflowing with talent, remains awe-inspiring, with players such as Mesut Ozil, Marco Reus, Karim Bellarabi, Lukas Podolski and Andre Schuerle jostling for position alongside definite starters Sami Khedira and Toni Kroos.

Thomas Mueller, who has enjoyed his most prolific scoring season at Bayern having produced 20 league goals, will lead their attack along with in-form Mario Gomez and World Cup final scorer Mario Goetze, desperate for games after spending most of the season on the Bayern bench. Few expect the Germans to have any problems against Ukraine, Northern Ireland and Poland, who beat them once in qualifying, in Group C where they are overwhelming favorites. Beyond that, much will depend on what sort of team Loew can field. — Reuters



NUREMBERG: Frankfurt's players celebrate after the German Bundesliga second-leg relegation football match FC Nuremberg vs Eintracht Frankfurt on May 23, 2014.—AFP

## SEFEROVIC'S STRIKE KEEPS EINTRACHT IN BUNDESLIGA



NUREMBERG: Nuremberg and Frankfurt players jump for the ball during a German first division Bundesliga soccer relegation second leg match between FC Nuremberg and Eintracht Frankfurt on Monday, May 23, 2016. — AP

BERLIN: Switzerland striker Haris Seferovic threw down a marker for Euro 2016 on Monday by scoring the crucial goal in Eintracht Frankfurt's 1-0 play-off win at Nuremberg to keep them in the German league. After last Thursday's relegation play-off first-leg in Frankfurt finished in a 1-1 draw, Seferovic netted at Nuremberg's sold-out Grundig Stadium to the delight of the travelling fans in the 50,000 crowd.

It was only Seferovic's fourth goal of the season, his first since November, but he proved his form to Swiss coach Vladimir Petkovic for next month's Euro 2016 by netting Frankfurt's all-important goal to seal a 2-1 aggregate win. The striker struck in the 66th minute, converting a cross from Mijat Gacinovic, who scored Frankfurt's equalizer in the first leg, to Eintracht's delight. It means Frankfurt coach Niko Kovac has succeeded in his mission of keeping Eintracht up having taken over with nine games left last March and his team in the bottom three.

For Nuremberg, they face another season in Germany's second division as they miss out on promotion having finished

third in the second Bundesliga. "Thank god we're still in the first division," said Kovac, whose team entered the play-off by finishing third from bottom in Germany's top flight while Hanover and VfB Stuttgart went down. "I am pleased that we've managed it, but I have some sympathy for Nuremberg. "It would have been tragic if we'd gone down, with that goal, we can forget about the entire season."

The only bad news was an early injury to midfielder Marc Stendera with a suspected torn cruciate knee ligament, but he insisted on staying at the stadium, instead of going to hospital, to watch his club fight to stay up. There was already plenty of drama in last Thursday's first leg when Eintracht's captain Marco Russ scored an own-goal, a day after discovering he has a tumor. He was due to undergo surgery on Monday. The growth's location has not been disclosed, but Russ insisted on playing last Thursday, only to score Nuremberg's first-half goal before picking up a booking which saw him suspended for Monday's return.—AFP

## FIFA SACK TOP OFFICIAL OVER BONUSES WORTH MILLIONS

ZURICH: FIFA has sacked deputy general secretary Markus Kattner for financial 'breaches' involving secret bonuses worth millions of dollars, according to sources close to an inquiry by the world body. Kattner's downfall topples another member of ex-president Sepp Blatter's inner circle at football's world body. Kattner, a 45-year-old German-Swiss national, had been acting general secretary after previous general secretary Jerome Valcke was also dismissed for irregularities. "Kattner has been dismissed from his position effective immediately," the world body said in a statement. "FIFA's internal investigation uncovered breaches of his fiduciary responsibilities in connection with his employment contract," it added.

"There was enough to determine there was a breach of his responsibilities and to take action against Mr Kattner," a source close to an internal FIFA investigation said. "We are talking about significant sums of money, millions of dollars," the source added. The source said the money came from bonuses under a contract whose terms were kept secret from FIFA's audit committees. The internal FIFA inquiry, carried out by the Quinn Emanuel law firm, "covers the period from 2008 to 2014," the source said. "There was sufficient evidence to demonstrate shortcomings in his fiduciary responsibilities and to take action," the same source revealed, adding that "only a small group of people knew about these payments".

According to another source familiar with the workings of FIFA, these bonuses would have been approved by the world body's financial committee, who decided how much the president, general secretary and deputy general secretary were paid. The president of this committee was for-

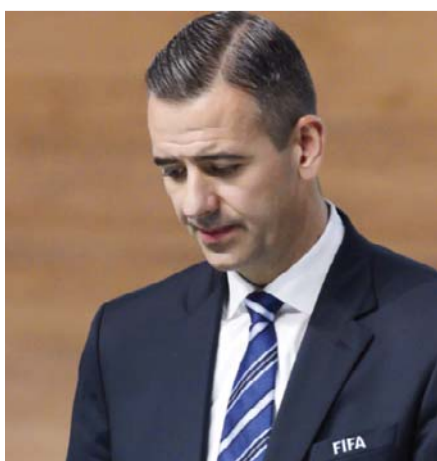
mer FIFA finance chief Julio Grondona, an Argentine and close ally of Blatter. Grondona died aged 82 in 2014 and has been largely implicated in the scandal which has embroiled FIFA over the past year. "FIFA will not comment further on any of the details, but will continue its cooperation with the relevant authorities," said the FIFA statement. The Swiss justice ministry, meanwhile said that "as of today, Mr M Kattner is not under investigation" by prosecutors.

### Restoring FIFA's image

Swiss prosecutors are already investigating Blatter, who is serving a six year ban imposed by FIFA, and Valcke. Valcke was sacked and suspended from football activities for 12 years after being linked to the sale of black market World Cup tickets. Swiss police are following up FIFA's investigation against Valcke. Kattner had said several times, after taking over as acting general secretary from Valcke, that FIFA wanted to be "recognized as a modern, trusted professional organization" by 2018. Blatter is under investigation for making a "disloyal" payment of \$2 million to ex-UEFA leader Michel Platini, who has also been banned from football activities. Kattner, as finance director, signed off on that payment that Blatter ordered made to Platini in 2011 that led to their downfall.

The latest sacking is a new blow to FIFA's reputation as it seeks to redeem its scandal-tainted name under new president Gianni Infantino who was elected in February. Infantino only this month named Senegalese Fatma Samoura as its new general secretary. Samoura is the body's first woman secretary general and FIFA also wanted her United Nations background to give a sign of football's new direction. Infantino has repeatedly said he wants to bring a new era of "transparency," "honesty" and "professionalism." But Kattner's dismissal is a new sign that FIFA's past misdeeds have still not all been brought out into the open.

Swiss prosecutors are investigating the awarding of the 2018 and 2022 World Cups to Russia and Qatar. Court hearings in the United States after the detention of a host of top football officials from South and North America are set to bring new embarrassment. Acting under US warrants, Swiss police detained seven FIFA officials in a dawn raid on a Zurich hotel on May 27 last year. US authorities have charged 39 individuals and two companies over more than \$200 million in bribes paid for television and marketing deals.—AFP



Markus Kattner

## MOURINHO ON THE VERGE OF FULFILLING HIS UNITED DREAM

MANCHESTER: Jose Mourinho was on the verge of fulfilling his dream of managing Manchester United yesterday after Louis van Gaal's troubled two-year reign came to a bitter end. The path was clear for the former Chelsea manager to be confirmed as the new United boss after Van Gaal was sacked Monday—the price of failing to get one of the world's biggest clubs into the Champions League. Mourinho's agent Jorge Mendes was reported by British media to be in negotiations to tie up a deal. It sets the stage for one of the sport's most intriguing characters to at last manage the Red Devils after a glittering career that so far features 21 major trophies, including three English Premier League crowns and two Champions League titles.

Mourinho was sacked by Chelsea in December after a miserable campaign marred by rifts with the club's star players that eventually became intolerable to owner Roman Abramovich as the team, champions just months earlier, languished near the relegation zone. Now the colorful and controversial 53-year-old will hope to restore his reputation by bringing back the sparkle to United. A casually-dressed Mourinho declined to answer reporters' questions as he left his London home and got into a car on Tuesday morning. The BBC said the Portuguese manager's appointment was unlikely to be finalised Tuesday but was expected to be completed within the week.

### Mourinho 'tipped off' Van Gaal

For his part, Van Gaal said he was "very disappointed" to be sacked just 48 hours after leading United to victory in the FA Cup final against Crystal Palace on Saturday. But United had finished fifth in the Premier League and thereby missed out on a lucrative Champions League place, which proved the final straw for the club's US-based owners. The Glazer family didn't let United's first piece of silverware since the 2013 retirement of legendary boss Alex Ferguson stop them from wielding the axe on 64-year-old Van Gaal. The Dutchman cleared out his office at United's Carrington training ground on Monday after talks over a settlement for the final year of his three-year contract—worth a reported £6.4 million (\$9.2 million, 8.2 million euros) per year. The Daily Mirror newspaper reported that Mourinho called Van Gaal in the last few weeks to warn him that United had sounded him out about the Old Trafford job.

Mourinho worked under Van Gaal at Barcelona in the late 1990s and made the call to preserve their long-standing friendship, the tabloid said. The Times newspaper

said it understood Van Gaal would have left United without a pay-off—as he has at previous clubs—had the Red Devils handled his dismissal better. It said he finally agreed a severance package of £4.55 million. United goalkeeper legend Peter Schmeichel believes Mourinho is the right man to get the club back on track. "They have a guy that is supposed to be the biggest manager in the world, the one that really could save Manchester United," the Dane told the BBC. "It has been a brave decision but one that is long overdue."

### Challenge of remoulding squad

Mourinho seemed destined to manage United ever since his Porto side eliminated Ferguson's men from the 2004 Champions League. He thought his time had come when Ferguson retired in 2013, but concerns over his volatile nature prompted United to turn to the more reserved David Moyes instead. But with that move proving a disaster and Van Gaal faring little better, United's powerbrokers have decided to take a chance on Mourinho. Mourinho will hope to have significantly improved an unbalanced and often lacklustre United squad by the time the new season begins in August.

Outgoing Paris Saint-Germain forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Sporting Lisbon midfielder Joao Mario, Everton defender John Stones, Chelsea midfielder Nemanja Matic and Atletico Madrid forward Antoine Griezmann are reportedly among the names on his wanted list. But Mourinho might also have to deal with skepticism from the squad at Old Trafford after a report that some senior players have already expressed concern the tactically defensive coach might prove too similar to Van Gaal, whose dull tactics frustrated United fans. If he can rebuild the confidence of his squad and make United champions for the first time since 2013, Mourinho may regard it as his finest achievement yet.—AFP

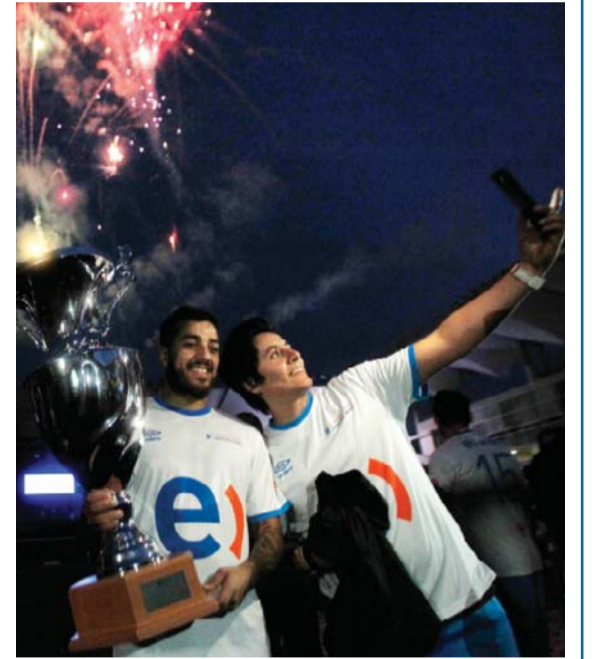


Jose Mourinho

## Extras

### Two-goal Leonardo paints Victory out of the picture

SEOUL: Brazilian maestro Leonardo bagged a classic brace as Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors beat Melbourne Victory 2-1 to reach the AFC Champions League quarter-finals yesterday. The dead-ball specialist, who buried a superb free kick in last week's last 16 first leg, fired home another in the opening half before scoring a sizzling second goal after the break. Besart Berisha gave Victory hope but his late strike on 84 minutes proved to be the visitors' best moment as they went down 3-2 on aggregate, after the first leg finished 1-1. The South Korean team, Asian champions in 2006, are now into their seventh Champions League quarter-final in 10 appearances, while Kevin Muscat's Victory remain in search of their first. Veteran striker Archie Thompson nearly opened the scoring in what would turn out to be his last game for Victory, but his fourth-minute double header-and-shot were scrambled away. Leonardo fizzed a free kick into the side-netting on 19 minutes before he recalibrated and was bang on target from a tight angle 10 minutes later. From the left edge of the box, the midfielder bent his place-kick past the two-man wall and into the far top corner, defying goalkeeper Lawrence Thomas's attempted fingertip save.



SANTIAGO: Professional and amateur players from Chile celebrate after setting a new record for the longest football match at the Bicentenario stadium in Santiago. — AFP

### Chile breaks world record for 'most soccer players'

SANTIAGO: Chile has broken the world record for the most participants in a soccer match. The mark was achieved Sunday night after a match that featured 2,357 people who took turns to keep the ball rolling during more than 120 hours. The score? A close 505-504. The record was recorded by Guinness World Record adjudicator Evelyn Carrera. The feat took place at Bicentenario stadium in La Florida, a neighborhood in the Chilean capital. Most players were amateurs, but professionals also joined the end of the game. Goalkeeper Gabriel Castellon of the Chilean first division Wanderers club said he was elated to be part of a world record for Chile.

### Off-form Swiss may miss out at the Euro

BERN: Switzerland's young, multicultural team are often regarded as a success story both in sporting and political terms, yet a cloud has descended over them as they head to the European Championship in France. The future certainly looked bright for Switzerland two years ago when they beat Ecuador and Honduras at the World Cup and took Argentina to within a minute of a penalty shootout. However, the Swiss seem to have lost their way since veteran coach Ottmar Hitzfeld retired and was replaced by Vladimir Petkovic. Petkovic said when he took over that he wanted Switzerland to dominate their matches against all opponents with an aggressive, attacking game, yet has struggled to impose that style. Instead, Switzerland still look more comfortable when the opposition take the initiative. The club form of many players, a perennial problem, has also dipped. Captain Gokhan Inler has been unable to force his way into the Leicester City team this season following his move from Napoli and is at risk of being left out altogether. The form of Switzerland's forwards, who all play in the Bundesliga, is another worry with Haris Seferovic and Admir Mehmedi both struggling for goals and Josip Drmic likely to miss the tournament through injury.

### Highly-respected Puel resigns as Nice coach

NICE: Highly-respected French coach Claude Puel has resigned from his job in the dug-out at Ligue 1's Nice, a joint statement revealed yesterday. Puel has previously coached Lyon and famously took Monaco to the 2004 Champions League final, while this season he gave a free role to France forward Hatem Ben Arfa as the side finished fourth in France. "We came to a common decision not to continue our adventure," a statement said on Nice's website on the end of a four year collaboration. The move will likely be taken badly by the club's fans, who are also set to lose their star player Ben Arfa in June after their highest league finish for 30 years. As well as his run to the Champions League and French League victory at Monaco, Puel also led Lyon to the Champions League semi-final in 2010, and guided Lille to a 2004 Intertoto Cup and a French league runners up spot in 2005.

### Slovakia look to hit the ground running

PRAGUE: If Slovakia start the European Championship finals the way they did the qualifiers the rest of Group B had better beware. Six straight wins, including victory against champions Spain, set them on the way to qualifying in second place in their group for what will be their first Euro finals since becoming an independent nation in 1993. However, they face a tough task in France against group opponents England, Russia and fellow Euro debutants Wales, all ranked higher than the Slovaks. First up they must muzzle the rampaging threat of Real Madrid winger Gareth Bale, who netted seven of Wales's 11 goals in qualifying, on June 11. Bale has fond memories of Slovakia's defense, having scored his first international goal against them in a Euro 2008 qualifier. Although Slovakia have sometimes struggled to score, failing to find the net for three successive games midway through their qualifying campaign, they are not reliant on one source of goals with nine different scorers chipping in on the road to France.

# Sports

Sharks on the  
brink; Blues  
overpowered



Seferovic's strike  
keeps Eintracht  
in Bundesliga



WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2016

EURO 2016 TERROR THREAT WORRIES DESAILLY

Page 18



TORONTO: Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry (7) and forward DeMarre Carroll (5) battles for the ball against Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James (23) during second half Eastern Conference final playoff on Monday, May 23, 2016. — AP

## RAPTORS HOLD OFF CAVALIERS 105-99

CAVS LOSS PUTS LEBRON'S FINALS STREAK IN JEOPARDY

**TORONTO:** Kyle Lowry scored 35 points and DeMar DeRozan added 32 as the Toronto Raptors defeated the Cleveland Cavaliers 105-99 on Monday to tie the Eastern Conference finals at two wins each. In winning their second consecutive game, the Raptors led by as many as 18 points during the second quarter and were ahead by 16 at halftime. However, the Cavaliers trimmed the lead to one early in the fourth quarter. The teams changed one-point leads in the fourth quarter, but when Lowry made a driving layup with 22.5 seconds to play, the Raptors led by six points.

The Raptors stopped the Cavaliers on their next possession. Bismack Biyombo, who finished with five points and 14 rebounds, missed two free throws with 4.3 seconds left, but it made no difference. DeMarre Carroll

added 11 points for Toronto. LeBron James led Cleveland with 29 points and grabbed nine rebounds, and Kyrie Irving added 26 points. Channing Frye scored 12 points and Kevin Love 10 for the Cavaliers. The Raptors led 27-24 after the first quarter after being up by as many as eight points. Carroll had seven first-quarter points to top the Raptors, and the Cavaliers got seven points from Irving.

Toronto led by 13 points with 4:35 to play in the second quarter when Patrick Patterson put in a layup on a pass from Lowry, who hit a 3-pointer or the Raptors' next possession to boost the lead to 16. Lowry's step-back jumper with 31.9 seconds to play in the half put the Raptors into an 18-point lead. Biyombo picked up his third personal foul with 8.9 seconds left when he blocked

James going for the hoop. James made both free throws, and the first half ended with Toronto leading 57-41. Lowry had 20 points in the first half for Toronto. James led Cleveland with 16. DeRozan opened the scoring in the third quarter, and Toronto led by 18.

Irving made two 3-pointers in the third minute to trim the lead to 10, and JR Smith's 3-pointer cut the margin to seven with just under nine minutes left in the quarter. DeRozan made two free throws with 6:13 left in the third to increase the edge to 13. The lead was 15 with 3:59 left on Lowry's layup. Smith's 3-pointer with 1:43 left cut Toronto's lead to eight. The Raptors led 78-69 after three quarters. The Cavs scored the first five points of the fourth quarter. The lead was down to one point with 10:15 to play when Frye made his second straight 3-

pointer. James gave the Cavaliers a brief one-point lead, and the advantage alternated as the teams exchanged hoops in the middle minutes of the fourth quarter.

A dunk by Richard Jefferson with 6:24 to play and two free throws by James 20 seconds later put Cleveland ahead 92-89. Lowry tied the game on a layup and made the free throw to tie the game. DeRozan made two free throws with 3:59 to play, and Toronto led by two points. After a Cleveland turnover, Carroll made one of two free throws for a three-point lead. With 2:43 left, Lowry made one of two free throws for a four-point Toronto lead. Biyombo sank one of two free throws with 2:22 left, and the Raptors led by five points. Irving hit a 3-pointer with two minutes to play, trimming the lead to two. DeRozan's short jumper got the lead up to four. — Reuters

## DJOKOVIC, MURRAY CRUISE THROUGH AS KERBER EXITS

**PARIS:** Top seed Novak Djokovic launched his bid for a first French Open title with a routine victory as Andy Murray battled through to round two yesterday, while Australian Open champion Angelique Kerber crashed out. Djokovic, a three-time Roland Garros finalist, faced little resistance from Taiwan's world number 95 Lu Yen-Hsun as he eased to a 6-4, 6-1, 6-1 victory. The Serb, bidding to become just the eighth man to secure a career Grand Slam, needed just 90 minutes on Court Philippe Chatrier to book a second-round encounter with Belgian qualifier Steve Darcis.

However, Murray was forced to recover from a two-set deficit to overcome 37-year-old Radek Stepánek 3-6, 3-6, 6-0, 6-3, 7-5 in a match lasting three hours 41 minutes in total. The second seed had been trailing by two sets to one but up a break in the fourth when play was suspended on Monday due to darkness. The Scot duly returned to complete the job after making the crucial breakthrough at 5-all in the decider to set up a second-round encounter with 164th-ranked French wildcard Mathias Bourgue. "He's always been extremely difficult to play," said Murray after a ninth career comeback from two sets down.

"He was playing drop shots, hitting the ball very flat, it was very difficult to get into a rhythm. That's credit to him and the way he played." While Murray toiled, there were no such problems for nine-time champion Rafael Nadal who extended his record at Roland Garros to 71 wins against just two losses. The fourth-seeded Spaniard made quick work of 100th-ranked Sam Groth, taming the Australian's powerful serve with eight breaks in a resounding 6-1, 6-1, 6-1 win. "It's obvious that was a good start for me,"

said Nadal. "I managed to break him very quickly. It was important because against such an opponent it's not easy to take his serve."

### Kerber dumped out

However, Kerber became the tournament's first major casualty as Dutchwoman Bertens consigned the German third seed to a 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 defeat. "The first rounds are always tough in the tournament, especially for me, but, yeah, what can I say? It happens," lamented Kerber, who was hampered by an ongoing shoulder problem. "She's a tough opponent. I was ready. But, yeah, at the end she made the important points." Czech seventh seed Tomas Berdych, a former French Open semi-finalist, cruised to a straight-sets win over Canada's Vasek Pospisil. Austria's Dominic Thiem struggled initially against Inigo Cervantes, dropping the opening set to the Spaniard, but the 13th seed rallied to claim a 3-6, 6-2, 7-5, 6-1 victory.

Thiem, who retained his Nice title over the weekend, is one of just three players alongside Nadal and Pablo Cuevas with multiple clay-court tournament wins this season. John Isner fired 40 aces to advance 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (14/12), 7-6 (9/7), 7-5 over Australian John Millman, while Bernard Tomic put recent struggles behind him to dispatch American Brian Baker in three sets. Swiss eighth seed Timea Bacsinszky swept past Spanish lucky loser Silvia Soler-Espinosa 6-3, 6-1, while 12th seed Carla Suarez Navarro needed three sets to beat Czech qualifier Katerina Siniakova.

Seven-time major winner Venus Williams, who lost the 2002 final to sister Serena, edged out Estonia's Anett Kontaveit 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/4),



PARIS: Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns the ball to Taiwan's Lu Yen-Hsun during their men's first round match at the Roland Garros 2016 French Tennis Open yesterday. — AFP

while 2008 champion Ana Ivanovic held off French wildcard Oceane Dodin in three sets. Former runner-up Sam Stosur overcame Misaki Doi of Japan 6-2, 4-6, 6-3, but Francesca Schiavone, the 2010 champion, bowed out in straight sets to French 26th seed Kristina Mladenovic. Jelena Jankovic also made an early exit, the Serbian 23rd seed dumped out by Tatjana Maria as the German won for the first time in Paris. Women's defending champion Serena Williams, who is one Grand Slam title shy of Steffi Graf's Open era record of 22, was later due to open her campaign against 77th-ranked Slovak Magdalena Rybarikova. — AFP

## RONALDO LIMPS OUT OF MADRID TRAINING

**MADRID:** Cristiano Ronaldo played down fears over his fitness ahead of Real Madrid's Champions League final against Atletico Madrid on Saturday after the three-time World Player of the Year limped off towards the end of training yesterday. "I am fine. I had a little problem in training, a dead leg as they say here, but tomorrow or the next day I will be fine," he said. Ronaldo will be aiming to break his own record of 17 Champions League goals in a season in Milan having already netted 16 in the competition so far this campaign.

His 17th two years ago came in the final against Atletico as Real ran out 4-1 winners after extra-time. "It would be nice to equal or even pass the record, but I am not obsessed with that because the most important thing is to win," he added. And Ronaldo insisted Real will show they are the kings of the Spanish capital once more despite winning just once in 10 games against Atletico since lifting their 10th European Cup in Lisbon. "We will see who is the best. I am positive. I think Real are better than Atletico, but we have to show it on the pitch."

To do so Real must break down a rock solid Atletico defense that has kept 35 clean sheets in 56 games this season, including shutouts at home to Barcelona and Bayern Munich in dumping the Spanish and German champions out at the quarter-final and semi-final stages respectively. Atletico also managed a 1-0 win at Real's Santiago Bernabeu to inflict Real coach Zinedine Zidane's only La Liga defeat in four months in charge when the sides last met in

February. "Atletico always play the same way. We know there will be very few opportunities because they all play behind the ball," continued Ronaldo. "It is no coincidence that Barca and Bayern couldn't score many goals against them."

Ronaldo has been dogged by a persistent thigh injury which forced him to miss three games last month. He also came off at half-time of Real's final La Liga game of the season having scored twice in the first-half to take his tally for the season to 51 - at Deportivo la Coruna 10 days ago. Zidane confirmed Ronaldo also didn't play in a practice match on Saturday as a precaution, but expects him to be fully fit for the final. "There will be no problem. He felt something on Saturday when we had a game between us and he didn't play as a precaution," said Zidane. "He will be ready for Saturday and I think we are in good shape physically."

However, there isn't such good news for French defender Raphael Varane as Zidane confirmed he will miss Saturday's final and his participation at Euro 2016 is now in jeopardy due to a hamstring injury. Varane was unlikely to start at the San Siro in any case with captain Sergio Ramos and Pepe Zidane's preferred central defensive partnership. An 11th European Cup would cap a sensational start to Zidane's senior management career having turned around Real's fortunes with 21 wins from 26 games since replacing the sacked Rafael Benitez in January. "I think everybody feels the fun comes back a little bit when he arrived," said Real midfielder Toni Kroos. — AFP



## NISSAN UNVEILS KICKS - ALL-NEW GLOBAL COMPACT CROSSOVER



DOHA: A Qatari man walks past the country's Ministry of Energy and Industry in Doha yesterday. — AP

# QATAR ENERGY MINISTER WANTS 'FAIR' OIL PRICE

## AL-SADA WARNS OF RISKS AHEAD OF OPEC MEETING

**DOHA:** The oil market is slowly recovering from its steep drop over the past two years but crude is still not trading at a "fair price" to encourage necessary investment, Qatar's energy and industry minister said yesterday, ahead of next week's meeting of OPEC producers. Speaking to The Associated Press from his high-rise office in the capital, Doha, Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Sada said a minimum price of \$65 a barrel is "badly needed at the moment." He cautioned that the security of future supplies is at risk because of the price slump that has squeezed oil producers since 2014. "The oil market is recovering slowly but steadily. Luckily, the fundamentals show it is heading in the right direction," Al-Sada said. "I don't think we are yet at a fair price. We need to have a fairer price so that we can have the ability to invest more in order to secure the energy supply to the world and avoid any price shock."

In the interview, Al-Sada did not rule out reviving talks of a freeze in production among major producers after similar negotiations collapsed in Doha last month. He currently serves as president of the 13-member OPEC. "Nothing actually is canceled but we are reacting to the parameters of the market," he said. "If OPEC and non-OPEC major producers think that the revival of it is necessary, it's all open and on the table all the time."

The idea for a production freeze grew out of meeting between Russia and OPEC members Saudi Arabia, Venezuela and Qatar in February as they attempted to

stem a slide that at the time had pushed prices to around \$30 a barrel from over \$100 in the summer of 2014.

Other major producers gathered in Qatar to discuss the proposal last month but failed to agree on a cap after Iran, which wants to boost exports after years of sanctions, refused to join in.

### Freeze plan

Al-Sada was careful not to blame Iran for the collapse of the freeze plan, saying the April meeting was nonetheless productive because it gave producers a chance to discuss "new market fundamentals." Even without an output freeze, prices have been clawing their way back, settling Monday above \$48 a barrel. That's still less than half their level less than two years ago. Qatar and other OPEC member states will gather in Vienna next week to discuss what to do next, though industry observers are not expecting a major shift in policy. It will be the first such gathering where kingpin Saudi Arabia is represented by Khaled Al-Falih, who was recently named energy minister in a surprise Cabinet shakeup.

Venezuela has suggested that non-OPEC producers might also take part in the June meeting. Al-Sada did not rule that out. "We are in the consultation about it, whether it is appropriate to have it in the meeting, parallel to the meeting, or after the meeting," he said.

Saudi Arabia and other influential OPEC members

responded to the drop since 2014 not by cutting back supply, which they've done before to try to prop up prices, but by keeping output high in an attempt to hold onto market share. The aim is to force higher-cost oil producers, particularly U.S. shale drillers, out of the market. The plunge is straining the budgets of countries that depend heavily on oil. Venezuela is being gripped by a full-blown economic crisis, and even wealthy Gulf states - including Qatar - are

cutting back spending and laying off workers. Al-Sada insisted Qatar's economy remains healthy even at current oil prices and that major infrastructure projects are on track. That includes preparations for the 2022 World Cup, which will require billions of dollars' worth of additional stadiums, transport links and hotels - some of which are now being raised just outside Al-Sada's office - to be built over the next eight years.

"Everything is on schedule," he said. Qatar is able to manage some of the volatility of the energy markets better than other producers because it is also the world's largest supplier of liquefied natural gas, much of which is sold in long-term contracts and shipped aboard the Gulf nation's own massive tankers. But competition is coming. Australia is on track to overtake Qatar within the next two years, and it has the advantage of being closer to major Asian customers such as Japan and South Korea. US production is increasing too. State-run Qatar Petroleum has a 70 percent stake in an existing LNG receiving terminal in Texas that is also backed by ExxonMobil Corp. and ConocoPhillips Co. That joint venture, Golden Pass, is seeking US government approval to expand the facility so it can export 15.6 million tons of LNG per year. Al-Sada says the LNG competition is manageable, particularly because of Qatar's relatively low production costs. "We are enjoying first-mover advantage," he said. "We know that it is just impossible that we remain alone in the market." — AP



DOHA: Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Sada, Qatar's minister of energy and industry, speaks to The AP at his office in Doha yesterday. — AP

# GREEK BAILOUT WITHOUT IMF NOT AN OPTION: DIJSSELBLOEM

**BRUSSELS:** The eurozone needs the IMF on board in Greece's massive bailout despite deep divisions over debt relief, Eurogroup head Jeroen Dijsselbloem said yesterday. "It's not an option to go on without the IMF," Dijsselbloem said as he arrived for talks with eurozone finance ministers to end a row between Europe and the International Monetary Fund over how to proceed with Greece's 86-billion-euro (\$96 billion) bailout. "There is a reason to look at debt relief because the debt is very high and there will be some problems in the future. I think the debt analysis shows that," Dijsselbloem, who is also Dutch Finance Minister, added.

"How big these problems are and how we can deal with them and when we can deal with them, that's today's topic," he said. Slovakian Finance Minister Peter Kazimir warned the meeting "is not going to be an easy one." "I'm afraid we will spend the night together," he said, harking back to the long nights of talks that led up to last year's bailout.

The ministers will also decide whether to conclude the first review of Greece's third bailout to unlock up to 11 billion euros in desperately needed

loans. "I hope this Eurogroup will be an important step forward as regards the conclusion of the first review of the Greek program," said Valdis Dombrovskis, the EU Commission's vice-president in charge of the euro. "We hope we will be able to really reach agreement in principle," he added. The talks came two days after Greek lawmakers narrowly adopted another batch of controversial reform commit-



BRUSSELS: Spanish Economy Minister Cristobal Montoro Romero (left) talks with Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos (right) during an Eurogroup meeting at the European Union headquarters in Brussels yesterday. — AFP

ments in order to deliver the much needed payout. Greece needs the next tranche of bailout money to repay big loans to the European Central Bank (ECB) and IMF in July, and has already fallen behind in paying for everyday government duties and public sector wages.

German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble agreed that he was "confident" for a deal in principle at yester-

day's talks on the payout. Greece urgently needs the next tranche of bailout money to repay big loans to the European Central Bank (ECB) and IMF in July, and has already fallen behind in paying for everyday government duties and wages.

But the hardest part of the talks will be the effort to diffuse the row between Greece's creditors, the eurozone governments and the International Monetary Fund, over the state of the Greek economy and debt relief. "It's not an option to go on without the IMF," Dijsselbloem said, signalling that Germany would be forced to compromise on the issue.

### 'Spend the night together'

Germany, the eurozone's economic powerhouse, is deeply opposed to alleviating any of Athens' debt and claims it is not necessary for now. But fortunately for Athens, Germany also firmly wants the pro-reform IMF to remain in the bailout and Berlin will have to cede ground on debt relief to achieve that. "Without the IMF on board, there is no program," Schauble conceded, adding that "we have no quarrel with the IMF." — AFP

# GULF MOSTLY RISES, QUIETER AS RAMADAN APPROACHES

## MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

**DUBAI:** Most Gulf stock markets rose yesterday but trading volumes were small as some investors stayed away because of the approach of the holy month of Ramadan and summer holidays, when activity tends to decrease in some bourses. Dubai's index spent most of the day little changed but closed 1.0 percent higher after a surge in the final half-hour.

Investment bank Shuaa Capital jumped 3.7 percent in unusually heavy trade after sources told Reuters that it cut about 15 percent of its workforce at the end of last week, ahead of a possible sale of a stake in the company by Dubai Group. Dubai Group mandated Emirates NBD in April to arrange a sales process for its 48 percent stake in Shuaa. There is speculation in the market that a major financial firm in Dubai or the Middle East could buy the stake; Shuaa did not respond to requests for comment.

GFH Financial, the most heavily traded stock, added 2.1 percent after it invited its shareholders and investors to attend a briefing by senior management in Dubai

today afternoon on its future prospects. Saudi Arabia's index rose 0.8 percent in its thinnest volume since early January, with the petrochemical sector index climbing 1.1 percent.

But Al Yamamah Steel, which had jumped 15 percent in its first two days of trade since listing on Sunday, fell back 2.4 percent. Abu Dhabi's index rose 0.6 percent. Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank climbed 1.5 percent but seven of the 10 most heavily traded stocks were flat or lower. Qatar fell 0.2 percent as real estate firm Ezdan lost 0.9 percent but drilling rig provider Gulf International Services, again the most heavily traded stock, surged 2.6 percent. Egypt's index rebounded 1.1 percent, buoyed by Global Telecom, which added 1.3 percent. Real estate firm Medinet Nasr, which rose 2.0 percent on Monday when it reported that quarterly net profit jumped 90 percent, gained a further 1.7 percent after saying it was considering taking out a 1 billion Egyptian pound (\$113 million) loan to speed up development of one of its plots. — Reuters





SHARES CLIMB AS MARKETS PLAY FED WAITING GAME

LONDON: Oil prices fell for a fifth consecutive day yesterday and financial markets were volatile as investors wait to see whether US interest rates will be raised next month.

Britain's FTSE 100, Germany's DAX and France's CAC climbed 0.8 to 1 percent as even markets like Russia shrugged off the dip in commodity prices

to carve out gains. In currency markets, the dollar continued to feed off revived US rate hike bets although it was the Aussie dollar that caught the eye as speculation about more rate cuts there triggered its heftiest fall in 4-1/2 years.

Aussie's movements, also fell 0.7 percent to a two-month low of \$0.6706, while oil exporter Canada's dollar hit a seven-week low to underscore the ongoing market uncertainty.

said trading is likely to remain dull for a while amid economic sluggishness. "The current economic environment doesn't justify a sustainable rebound. In addition, regulators are reducing leverage in the asset management industry so money is not flowing in."

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report
Tuesday 24 May 2016
Index Change Closing Last Closing High Low
Price Index 8.12 5,322.62 5,314.50 5,324.51 5,312.45
Weighted Index 1.41 356.08 354.67 356.09 354.37
KSX 15 4.93 829.83 824.90 830.62 824.30

"I think what is more important is the language if they do hike. Do they continue or do they stop after June, and what is the trajectory for the Fed funds rate in 2017?"
Europe's government bond markets saw a broad fall in yields. Greek yields hovered at six-month lows on hopes that eurozone finance ministers may be able to agree a new aid plan for Athens without any last minute panics.

The US currency clawed back some of Monday's 1 percent losses against the yen and was last up 0.3 percent at 109.50 yen and at \$1.11 to the euro. Philadelphia Fed President Patrick Harker said on Monday a rate hike in June would be appropriate unless data weakens, while St. Louis Fed President James Bullard said holding rates too low for too long could cause financial instability.

WILTING COMMODITIES
Stocks in China and Japan lost 0.7 percent apiece, leading Asian markets down, though some investors were wary of chasing markets lower after their recent retreat.

Fed Chair Janet Yellen will appear at a panel at Harvard University on Friday, a day on which investors will also see the second estimate of US first-quarter growth. "We are seeing more dollar strength and a lot of it against the smaller currencies," said Saxo Bank FX strategist John Hardy.



Global Stock Indices
Index Previous Close Last Price Change Daily Performance % Yearly Performance %
Dow Jones 17,500.94 17,492.93 8.01 -0.05 1.53
NASDAQ 4,769.56 4,765.78 -3.78 -0.08 -4.83

MENA Stock Indices
Index Previous Close Last Price Change Daily Performance % Yearly Performance %
Kuwait 5,317.03 5,314.50 -2.53 -0.05 -5.61
Saudi Arabia 6,425.23 6,462.71 37.48 0.58 7.04

Global Currencies Exchange Rate
Currency Kuwait Dinar Saudi Riyal US Dollar Euro Sterling Pound Swiss Franc Japanese Yen Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar 12.3071 3.2954 2.9468 2.2565 3.2651 361.21 4.6032

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate
Currency US Dollar Kuwaiti Dinar Saudi Riyal Bahraini Dinar Qatari Riyal Omani Rial Emirati Dirham Egyptian Pound
US Dollar 0.30345 3.7346 0.8942 0.6847 0.9908 109.61 1.3968

Global Interest Rates
Currency 1 Week 1 Month 3 Month 6 Month 1 Year
Kuwait Dinar 0.00 1.19 1.44 1.63 1.94
US Dollar 0.40 0.44 0.66 0.96 1.31

Global Bond Yields
Country 2-Year 5-Year 10-Year 30-Year
United States 0.91 1.38 1.84 2.63
Europe -0.52 -0.36 0.16 0.88

Commodities
Index Previous Close Last Price Change Daily Performance % Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil 42.00 42.01 0.01 0.02 31.55
Brent 47.98 47.77 -0.21 -0.44 21.65

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



## NO 1 PAINT BRAND IN KUWAIT, HEMPEL EYES EXPANSION

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** Hempel is celebrating its 50th anniversary as it ushers in a new chapter in its history by opening a multi-million dollar paint factory in Kuwait next year, said Karsten Pedersen, Group Vice President, Hempel CEO-Dahna Paint Middle East. He was talking to the Kuwait Times in an interview recently. Excerpts:

**Kuwait Times: Are you planning to open a new factory in Kuwait? Is it part of your expansion plan?**

**Pedersen:** The new factory is an extension of the present one. Just about 200 meters away from where we are seating right now, we have the oldest Hempel factory in Kuwait which we opened 40 years ago. We have factories in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. What we see now in Kuwait is a need to have bigger facilities to



Karsten Pedersen

meet the rising demand for our products. The existing factory is reaching its capacity limit so we need a bigger place; what is very obvious now is that we are expanding rapidly and we are very optimistic that growth rate will continue.

**KT: What is the difference between Hempel brand and the other brands of paint in the market?**

**Pedersen:** In Kuwait, we are number one in terms of value and quality. We are the market leader in marine and steel paint, we developed the concept in the Middle East; our paint is always top quality as compared to other brands. We never compromise on quality, the paint that we sell in the Middle East is exactly the same formula which we use in the USA, Germany, Denmark and the rest of Europe. Hempel is known for the long-lasting paint and protection from harsh weather conditions in Kuwait.

**KT: Can you tell how the paints evolve from the time you started as Hempel brand?**

**Pedersen:** Until a few years ago, you could have strongly smelt the paint when you use them. That is not the case of Hempel anymore. With Hempel we now have odorless paints; we have now the anti-bacterial and anti-fungus paints. We use now a paint to isolate heat; we have paints that can stand with various kinds of weather problems; 50 years ago, we do not have such kinds. Now, technology really

has evolved and in fact we have the environmentally-friendly paints nowadays. Kuwait now is very concerned about environment and pollution. We know we could really help a lot in protecting the environment. Now, we can wash colors easily too.

**KT: What is the so-called regenerative thermal oxidizer?**

**Pedersen:** That is part of the new paint factory we are building in Kuwait. Normally when you produce paint there are small particles left in the paint, not now.

**KT: Since this factory will be the biggest factory of your brand in the Middle East, should this be the Hempel headquarters?**

**Pedersen:** Maybe, although we have a presence in many countries in the region as well. The place is big, so some of our products can be delivered to our neighboring countries. However only some specialized paints will be distributed so since we do have factories in their own locations as well. So, we are going to mass produce for Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon; Kuwaiti market is going to deliver the best for their customers though.

**KT: What is the importance of today's event?**

**Pedersen:** Many people here do not know we have a factory here from a long while. The new factory which we are going to open in 2017 has bigger and better facilities. We are part of the international companies that set up factories in Kuwait. We believe strongly in this market. We invested \$15 million in the new factory because we expect that the market here will continue to grow. We are a witness to the turn of events in Kuwait and we are very committed to the Kuwaiti market.

**KT: There is so much trouble in this part of the world; political crises in many areas in the region, the ups and down of oil prices etc. What are the possible impacts of these factors on your business?**

**Pedersen:** Absolutely nothing. This is Middle East and Kuwait in particular has been growing for many years. It is true that whatever happens on the ground we are directly affected, be it political or economic. But even with all these troubles, the market is still growing. The Kuwaiti market is very strong and growing rapidly; we will see more constructions in the coming months/years. We expect a lot of things to happen in Kuwait. There are lots of infrastructure projects coming up and huge investments are being made.

**KT: Globally, how do you see your brand?**

**Pedersen:** We are the leading brand of paints globally and right now number ten in the world. We are number one in Kuwait, and number one and market leader in other countries in the Middle East.

**KT: What is your expansion strategy?**

**Pedersen:** We built a new factory in Jeddah three years ago. We are planning to build a new factory in Oman as well. The expansion will continue. I thank personally the Al-Rashed family for helping us build the presence in this part of the world. We have a very strong commitment to this region and will continue to do so.



KUWAIT: Hempel senior officials in a group picture.

## HEMPEL KUWAIT TO OPEN NEW PLANT IN 2017, BOOST CAPACITY

**KUWAIT:** HEMPEL Kuwait will increase its production next year with the opening of a 20,000-square meter state of the art factory in 2017, with a production capacity rising to 19 million liters in two shifts.

The new factory will produce solvent borne as well as water borne products. HEMPEL is also installing a regenerative thermal oxidizer in the paint production unit that removes the volatile organic compounds to prevent atmospheric pollution. And in order to create the best possible working atmosphere, the factory will also come with cooling facilities, helping the workers in the factory to cope with the extreme summer heat in Kuwait.

The expansion plan coincides with HEMPEL's golden jubilee anniversary in Kuwait as a result of an alliance with the Al-Rashed family, which for the past 50 years has witnessed great developments and has strengthened its position as a leading coating and paints company in the country. Khaled Al-Rashed, Member of the Board of Directors at HEMPEL Middle East-West, said: "We look forward to the big celebration of the five decades here in Kuwait this coming October. Additionally, the establishment of the Mina Abdallah factory in 2017 will increase our productivity by 40 percent and will really put us on the map in the region."

He added: "We at HEMPEL realize that our customers' requirements vary from one country to another, and therefore, based on our extensive experience in the region, we provide our customers with products and services that match their specific needs."

With the new factory, HEMPEL Kuwait seeks to expand the strategic leverage to a number of regional countries like Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan. Henrik Andersen, Group President and CEO of HEMPEL Global, said: "The Middle East region and



KUWAIT: Khaled Al-Khaled Al-Rashed, Henrik Andersen, Essam Al-Suhaymi, Karsten Pedersen and Pierre Yves Julien during the cake-cutting ceremony marking the 50th anniversary celebration.

Kuwait, in particular, play a very important part of the history of HEMPEL as 2015 marked our global centennial celebration. During our 50 years in Kuwait, we have built an excellent partnership with local firms, not only in the Oil & Gas industry, but also when it comes to contractors, architects and consultants. We have dedicated 15 global R&D centers which continuously provide local market with newly developed products that cater to special climatic conditions in Kuwait and the region."

He concluded: "I would like to thank our valued partners and shareholders in Kuwait and the Middle East for their vision, support and business acumen over the last 50 years."

HEMPEL Paints' decorative sector has a

full range of indoor and outdoor products that are the choice of home-owners, architects and contractors. These products were made to withstand various weather conditions including pollution and humidity. Some of the decorative sector includes products like Contex, which promises protection in a large range of attractive colors that are accredited with certificates from global test centers; as it is ideally suited for buildings and bridges. Topaz, another product by HEMPEL, gives the walls a touch of aesthetics. Casa is another product which provides a form of complete innovative and distinctive external surfaces.

Moreover, HEMPEL Kuwait contributed in major projects including hospitals, Governmental buildings, institutes and residential developments.



## ABK LAUNCHES 'ABK SECUREPAY' FOR VISA CARDHOLDERS

**KUWAIT:** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced the launch of 'ABK SecurePay', a secure online shopping service for its Visa cardholders powered by 'Verified by Visa'. The launch of this technology is in line with the Bank's efforts to enhance consumer confidence and offer customers a more secure, convenient and speedy service. Based on the 3-D secure protocol, the 'ABK SecurePay' technology verifies the authenticity of cardholders to participating merchants. It acts as an additional security layer and allows cardholders to choose a unique password through their card issuer, and use it to authenticate themselves while making a purchase.

To benefit from the service, ABK Visa cardholders will be prompted to register and authenticate their cards when they

shop online. Upon completion of the registration process, the information entered will be validated by ABK immediately and the customer will be prompted to create a password to activate the service. Customers are only required to register once per card to benefit from the service, and can then enjoy a more secure online shopping experience using their special password created during registration.

ABK will continue to adopt and apply the latest technology that presents customers with a more secure and reliable Banking service, as part of its overall 'Simpler Banking' strategy.

For more information about SecurePay or other products and services please visit [eahli.com](http://eahli.com) or contact a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.

## BUHARI'S LAGOS NO-SHOW DISMAYS NIGERIAN BUSINESS

**LAGOS:** At least the taxi drivers of Lagos are happy, even if businessmen in Nigeria's commercial capital are not. A year after becoming president, Muhammad Buhari pulled out of his first official visit to Lagos on Monday, averting citywide gridlock but angering business leaders who say the 73-year-old former military ruler is deaf to their plight.

With Africa's largest economy now contracting, the foreign exchange market frozen by red tape and a new Niger Delta insurgency sending oil output to a 20-year low, it is a plight that gets worse by the day. Yet businessmen say Buhari, who swept to power in an election a year ago, remains oblivious and continues to sacrifice short-term growth in pursuit of his long-term dream of overhauling the way Africa's most populous nation works.

To many, sending Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, a Lagos commercial lawyer, to the meeting in his place - despite thousands of posters welcoming "the People's President to No1 Africa's mega city" - is another sign of his disdain. "It is rather unfortunate that the federal government would raise the expectations of the people... only to cancel the presidential showing, seemingly with no obvious cogent reasons being given," said Yemi Adeleke, director of World Trade Center, a trade and investment agency. Buhari's spokesman Garba Shehu said the president, who is based in the capital, Abuja, was forced to postpone his visit after being "faced with scheduling difficulties". Buhari will visit the port city after the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan which ends at the start of July, he added. Foremost among private sector complaints are foreign exchange curbs initially introduced to protect currency reserves hammered by the decline in the price of oil, but which are now a pillar of Buhari's vision of a transformed economy.

### SHOCK

In order to keep the naira at 197 to the dollar, the central bank has scuppered the interbank foreign exchange market, blocking access to dollars for anybody not armed with a valid overseas invoice. Buhari argues that this is about ending speculation, as well as a decades-long cycle of devaluations that has hit ordinary Nigerians in the form of high inflation and discouraged the investment needed to build a serious domestic factory sector. "It is extraordinarily frustrating for those of us in the business community who supported him that he has chosen to be intransigent about something it seems as if he doesn't really understand,"

said Timi Soley, president of CRYO Gas and Power. Critics, including the International Monetary Fund, point to a currency trading at almost half its official value on the black market, fuelling expectations of a devaluation that are now so widespread that investment has dried up.

This view received support on Friday, when the National Bureau of Statistics revealed the economy shrank 0.4 percent in the first quarter, with industry and manufacturing shrinking 5.5 percent and 7 percent respectively. "It is now clear that the adverse effects of the oil price shock have filtered through to the demand side of the economy, and we maintain our view that Abuja's current policy framework only serves to exacerbate the oil shock," Cape Town-based NKC African Economists said.

"The economy might still find itself on a slightly firmer footing towards year-end, but this will largely depend on Abuja abandoning some of its unconventional economic policies."

Vice President Osinbajo hinted at changes when he called this month for a "substantial" review of foreign exchange policy, but there are few signs of this

filtering down to the Central Bank of Nigeria, which announces its latest monetary policy decision yesterday. Over the last year, Governor Godwin Emeifele's speeches have chimed closely with Buhari's views on the economy and currency, and this month the bank explicitly denied an online media report of an imminent devaluation to 290 to the dollar. One-month deliverable forwards - essentially a view on the currency one month out - hit 245 to the dollar on May 16 after the devaluation report, but have retraced to 224 this week, reflecting a more sober analysis of the chances of a weaker naira.

All but one of 12 analysts polled by Reuters this month said the currency would be devalued, with a median expectation of a 15 percent weakening - although many were reluctant to be pinned down on the timing. Analysts also say Buhari's actions now closely mirror his behaviour as a military ruler in the early 1980s. Besides sending in soldiers with bullwhips to bring order to chaotic queues at bus-stops, he tried to stimulate domestic manufacturing by banning imports and rebuffed IMF pressure to devalue the currency. — Reuters

## DE LA RUE SEEKS PARTNERS FOR BANKNOTE PAPER BUSINESS

**LONDON:** De La Rue Plc, the world's largest commercial banknote printer, is scouting for potential joint venture partners for its business that makes paper for banknotes, its chief executive said. The company would also look at small bolt-in acquisitions in its personal identification business, as it looks to grow the business that also makes UK passports, CEO Martin Sutherland told Reuters.

Shares in De La Rue rose as much as 7 percent on Tuesday, after the company reported a higher full-year profit, indicating that it had made strategic progress in the first year of a five-year turnaround program. As part of the cost-saving plans, De La Rue is working to reduce its paper production over the next few years to bring production in line with falling demand for paper banknotes.

Sutherland said De La Rue was making good progress against the plans, which include reducing production lines to four from eight and print capacity by 25 percent to 6 billion banknotes a year. The company on Monday announced the sale of its loss-making cash processing business

for up to 10.1 million pounds (\$15 million).

P Morgan Cazenove analysts hiked their operating profit estimates for the current financial year by 7 percent to 65.6 million pounds, citing the benefits from the sale of the non-profitable business. De La Rue, which prints over 150 national currencies, said on Tuesday underlying operating profit from continuing operations rose 2 percent to 70.4 million pounds in the year ended March 26.

Currency, the company's largest business unit, was the driver of growth, benefiting from overspill contracts that bumped up banknotes volume by 9 percent to 7.1 billion and banknote paper by 6 percent to 10,000 tons. Sutherland forecast a growth of about 3 percent to 4 percent a year in the banknote business this year. "It's a lumpy business, but the long term trend is a clear growth one and there are more bank notes in circulation today than there have been historically," Sutherland said. De La Rue shares were up about 4 percent at 529.5 pence at 0846 GMT. — Reuters

## OUT OF ORDER: INDIA BANK SAYS THIRD OF ATMS DON'T WORK

**MUMBAI:** A third of India's cash machines don't work, the central bank said, posing a challenge for the government as it strives to provide banking services to millions of poor citizens living in rural areas.

The Reserve Bank of India surveyed almost 4,000 ATMs across the country with a "sample size fairly representing geographies and bank categories", according to Deputy Governor S.S Mundra.

"Survey results are not comforting in

any way. Almost one third of the ATMs were found to be not working at that point," he said in a speech in Mumbai late Monday.

Many ATMs did not make provisions for disabled citizens, the deputy governor added. "Violation of regulatory instructions on display material, facilities for differently abled etc. were also observed. We will be taking necessary supervisory action in this regard," Mundra said. — AFP



## NISSAN UNVEILS KICKS - ALL-NEW GLOBAL COMPACT CROSSOVER KICKS READY TO TACKLE THE INTENSITY OF THE URBAN JUNGLE

**DUBAI:** Nissan's global leadership in the crossover segment will be further strengthened by the arrival of the all new Nissan Kicks. The production Nissan Kicks retains the basic design cues taken from the Kicks Concept - first shown at the Sao Paulo Motor Show in 2014 - and is a stylish crossover built for busy city-dwellers to tackle everything the city can throw at it.

To meet initial Brazilian demand, Kicks will be produced at Nissan's benchmark plant in Aguascalientes, Mexico. Ramp-up to full production will start within FY16 at the Nissan facility in Resende, Rio de Janeiro - the site of a \$192 million (R\$750 million) investment to prepare for Kicks. Kicks features established design signatures, such as Nissan's V-motion grille, boomerang

head and taillights, and the floating roof with a "wraparound visor" look to the windscreen and side glass.

During the engineering process, much attention was paid to the car's overall aerodynamic performance - not only to benefit its dynamic performance, but also its overall refinement by reducing wind noise. Inside, the story is one of quality and futuristic design in a cabin full of innovative features expected by a target audience who are technology hungry. The interior promises best in class passenger space in the rear - despite the coupé-like roofline - as well as one of the largest load areas in its class.

Front seat occupants face the latest version of Nissan's mod-

ern and simple Gliding Wing dashboard design, which is dominated by a centrally mounted seven-inch full color display housing a comprehensive infotainment system with Smartphone connectivity. Among the other technology on-board, Kicks will feature Around View Monitor and Moving Object Detection, which use four on-board cameras to present a view of the car and to warn the driver of any unseen hazards. This is a segment first in the region and, taken together, offers a step on the road to Nissan Intelligent Mobility.

A sporting flavor is provided by the flat-bottom steering wheel, while the crossover stance provides a high eye point to give the driver an empowering viewpoint of the road ahead.

"With Kicks, we have developed a compact crossover in the best Nissan tradition, and thanks to the unmatched experience, we have in creating vehicles to meet the needs of car-buyers around the world," said Ken Kato, corporate vice president, Product Planning, Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. "Kicks will offer best-in-class design, convenience and technological innovation. And, it will demonstrate Nissan's commitment to Nissan Intelligent Mobility. Kicks is a car to confidently take on the city."

Nissan Kicks sales will begin first in Brazil in August, followed by Latin American left-hand drive markets later in fiscal year 2016. And ultimately, it will be introduced in more than 80 global markets.

## GCC BOARDS MUST FOCUS MORE ON DIVERSITY: BDI

A BOARD CAN ONLY BE AS EFFECTIVE AS ITS DIRECTORS: AL-RAWAS



Dr Amer Al-Rawas.

**KUWAIT:** Influenced by shifting economic, social and regulatory trends, diversity of thought is becoming increasingly important at board level, as highlighted during the 22nd edition of the Foundation of Directorship Workshop conducted by the GCC Board Directors Institute (BDI) on 23 and 24 May 2016.

The workshop participants, board directors and senior executives from leading regional businesses, represent companies including Saudi Mechanical Industries Co, TASNEE, Saudi Telecom Company, Premier Group, Shahini Holding Group, General Organization for Social Insurance, ACWA Power, RAK Gas, Commercial Bank International and IPIC.

"The characteristics of a model board do not stop at specific industry knowledge or detailed expert understanding," said Jane Valls, Executive Director, GCC Board Directors Institute (BDI). "To ensure corporate governance is effective, diverse thinking and authentic dialogue at board level is required; it is important for companies to diversify the type of thinkers in the boardroom, going beyond characteristics like age, gender, skills and life experiences; with the right mix of attitudes and behaviour, coupled with a charismatic chairman, boardrooms can better steer the discussions and challenge each other with candour when things are not going the right way."

According to the BDI 2015 report on Board Effectiveness in the Gulf, 59 per cent of respondents do not believe that all board members make meaningful contributions during board meetings in the GCC.

"I think a board can only be as effective as its directors. This is why making sure there is a right mix not only of skills and expertise but also of personalities and diversity of thought is essential, along with a culture of trust and mutual respect so as to foster open and constructive discussions," said Dr Amer Al-Rawas, CEO, Tasneea Oil & Gas Technology, during his keynote speech at the GCC BDI alumni dinner, which preceded the workshop.

"Effective boards are essential for the sustainability of economies and prosperity of societies. BDI is playing a pivotal role in promoting professional directorship through effective learning programs, knowledge sharing platforms, and networking events in our region. With a regionally focused mission and very well balanced agenda, BDI provides an excellent platform for a constructive dialogue amongst ourselves and with the regulatory authorities to share best governance practices," continued Dr. Amer.

The GCC Board Directors Institute has established one of the region's largest and most influential networks of close to 700 board members in the region.



## GULF BANK ANNOUNCES MIDEAST'S FIRST 'BLINKING TO BANK' BIOMETRIC MOBILE BANKING APP

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank is happy to announce the launch of its new, innovative, and easy-to-use product, the Middle East's first facial recognition mobile banking app. Gulf Bank customers can now access their personal accounts and any number of services by logging into this new banking app through one of two methods: By blinking their eyes at their smartphone camera ('Blinking to Bank') following their fingerprint recognition (Touch ID), or through the use of a traditional password registration. This bilingual Arabic and English app is available for download onto smartphone devices through the Apple App store and the Android Play store today.

Cesar Gonzalez-Bueno, Gulf Bank Chief Executive Officer said: "When designing our new mobile banking app and updating our online banking site, we used global best practices and the latest technology to ensure they are more flexible, include a wider range of banking services, and are easier to use. With our 'Blinking to Bank' mobile app and online banking, customers can bank anytime, from anywhere in the world, and perform any number of transactions safely and securely, never being more than three clicks away from what they want to do. Customers with an existing ATM card can immediately start using online banking, or download and begin using the new mobile banking app. These new digital offerings underline our commitment to delivering transformative products and services to our customers."

From a security perspective biometric technology is simple and is widely accepted as the most fail-safe way of authentication. The system works by measuring and analysing body characteristics that are

unique to each individual and thus reduces the vulnerability of duplication, unauthorized access, and risks associated with lost or stolen passwords. The Gulf Bank app uses a combination of both fingerprint ID and facial recognition for its biometric login. However, using the biometric registration is not necessary, customers can still use a traditional password registration to use Gulf Bank's mobile banking app.

The services included in the mobile app and online banking are: checking account details; making ad-hoc transfers; biometric verification for transfers; automatic IBAN data population; creating a standing order; setting future-dated transactions; and adding and managing beneficiaries, eliminating the need to visit a branch or call the contact center. Transferring funds is also simplified since the application will populate the remaining IBAN Beneficiary Bank details automatically. Customers can also use the app to securely share information including IBAN number and account holder name sharing, IBAN certificate sharing and printing, transaction confirmation sharing, and statement sharing; and much more.

Additionally, Gulf Bank's credit card customers can check their Gulf Rewards point balances, as well as instantly redeem their Gulf Points for free travel and hotel stays. Customers can also pay their credit card bills; receive cash advances from credit cards; apply for new ATM and debit cards; activate new credit cards; as well as report and block stolen or lost cards (debit and credit). Furthermore, the new app allows customers to review their AI Danah chances, view and share their AI Danah certificate, or even open an AI Danah account.

## 50% OF YOUNG ARABS SAY THIS GENERATION IS MORE ENTREPRENEURIAL THAN THE ONE BEFORE ASDA'A BURSON-MARSTELLER ARAB YOUTH SURVEY

**DUBAI:** Young Arabs are increasingly positive about entrepreneurship with more than half believing members of this generation are more likely to start a business than the previous one.

The key finding from the Eighth Annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey was unveiled by Sunil John, the founder and CEO of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller and a panelist at the multi-stakeholder panel on Addressing Youth Unemployment at the Ta'atheer MENA Social Impact and CSR Forum, held in Dubai on May 22-23.

The survey revealed that when asked "do you feel people in this generation are more likely to start a business than in previous generations," 54 per cent agreed, with youth in the

GCC most enthusiastic at 62 per cent, compared to 54 per cent of North African youth and 44 per cent of youth in the Levant.

In a separate response, the survey found that 36 per cent of young Arabs said they themselves intend to start their own business in the next five years - 37 per cent of youth in the GCC, 39 per cent in North Africa and 31 per cent in the Levant. For the 2016 survey, international polling firm Penn Schoen Berland (PSB) conducted 3,500 face-to-face interviews with exclusively Arab national men and women aged 18-24 in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain; Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Yemen. The

interviews were conducted in the period January 11 to February 22, 2016.

Real estate, technology and retail were the top three sectors in which Arab youth would like to start a new business venture. Real estate is the preferred choice for a start-up in the Gulf states, where 24 per cent of youth said they would opt to launch a property-related company, whereas technology was the top choice for would-be entrepreneurs in the Levant (15 per cent) and North Africa (18 per cent). Retail is the second most popular choice in Levant and North Africa for 15 per cent and 16 per cent of respondents respectively; however in the Gulf only 9 per cent would opt to start a retail operation.

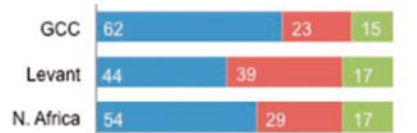
Across the whole Middle East 34 per cent said they did not intend to launch their own business, while 30 per cent didn't know. Lack of financial resources to start a business was cited as the main reason overall, by 20 per cent of young people, however in the GCC only 8 per cent believed they lacked the means to go it alone, while in North Africa, 37 per cent saw this as the biggest hurdle.

Young Arabs believe governments can do more to support young entrepreneurs, with 39 per cent saying that encouraging affordable lending should be made a priority; 25 per cent calling for education and training to be improved and made more available; and 19 per cent asking for government regulations and red tape to be cut. "These findings suggest governments in the Middle East have an excellent opportunity to really help kick-start an entrepreneurial culture in the region," said Sunil John. "With the Arab world needing to provide 80 to 100 million jobs by 2020, according to the World Bank, this represents a rich resource of largely untapped talent who can help drive the Arab world's transformation to knowledge-based economies, and provide the opportunities of the future."

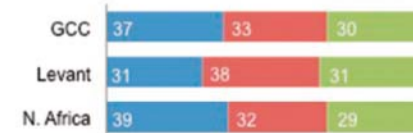
Now in its eighth year, the ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey has established itself as a key referral source for businesses and policymakers across the world.

### 54% OF YOUNG ARABS SAY THIS GENERATION IS MORE ENTREPRENEURIAL THAN ONE BEFORE, WHILE 36% WANT TO START THEIR OWN BUSINESS IN NEXT 5 YEARS

Do you feel people in this generation are more likely to start a business than in previous generation?



Do you intend to start your own business in the next 5 years?



## KFH NAMES 7 WINNERS OF BANKING CARDS' 4TH DRAW

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) named 7 winners of the fourth 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 Khazna Alrashidi, Eqbal Albassam, Omar Aljaser, Nouf Saafaq, Amer Alfawaz, Nadra Alabd AlMughne, and Abdullah Mohammad.

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.



## MANY USERS STILL USE ONLY ONE PASSWORD FOR ALL ACCOUNTS, KASPERSKY LAB QUIZ SHOWS

**DUBAI:** Testing of user cyber savviness carried out by Kaspersky Lab has demonstrated that many people are still not sufficiently careful about their passwords. Only 38 percent create strong new passwords for each account, while one in seven (14 percent) has just one password for all accounts. These users risk having several accounts simultaneously compromised in the event of a data leak.

The level of risk is not much lower for those who use just a few passwords for a larger number of accounts (36 percent) and those who use variations of the same password pattern (12 percent). What further complicates the situation is that, according to another Kaspersky Lab survey, one user in 10 comes up with passwords that are less than eight characters in length, while 12 percent do not try to make their passwords more difficult to guess by using, for instance, upper-case letters, numbers mixed with letters, punctuation signs or other similar tricks.

To make matters worse, the study also revealed that consumers are putting the safety at risk by storing their passwords in easy to access or insecure places. Over half (57 percent) of respondents admitted they kept their passwords on a piece of paper, on their phones, in text files on their computers, or saved them in the browser. And when the browser offers to save a login and password, a third (36 percent) are ready to agree, thus playing into the hands of cybercriminals or dishonest people who may get hold of their device.

This careless attitude towards passwords can be explained by many users being convinced they have no confidential information stored on their computers. This is what 27 percent of respondents believe, without realizing that passwords and logins are in themselves a favorite target of cybercriminals. In addition, one more Kaspersky Lab's recent study showed that 73 percent of users would rather reveal their passwords than go without underwear. As a result, an alarming 25 percent of those users surveyed have had their accounts hijacked in the last year.

"Unfortunately, many people don't have a very good understanding of the scale of Internet threats and are not serious enough about protecting their personal data online, significantly increasing the risk of losing it," explains David Emm, Principal Security Researcher at Kaspersky Lab. "A strong password that differs for each account is an important basic element of protecting your digital identity. You can think of and apply a single algorithm to create passwords which are not easily cracked but which you can easily remember. There are also special programs that make creating and storing passwords easier."

Dealing with passwords can be made much easier with Kaspersky Password Manager, which is included in Kaspersky Total Security - multi-device. Kaspersky Password Manager creates strong passwords, stores them securely, and automatically synchronizes and inserts passwords on all of the user's devices.

## FRENCH INVESTIGATORS RAID GOOGLE'S PARIS HQ OVER TAX CASE

**PARIS:** French investigators raided Google's Paris headquarters yesterday as part of a probe over tax payments, a source close to the finance ministry told Reuters. Investigators have been probing Google's offices in central Paris since 0500 am (0300 GMT), said the source, who declined to be named.

"A raid is underway at Google's," the source said, confirming a report in French daily Le Parisien. About 100 investigators are part of the raid, Le Parisien wrote. A spokesman for Google was not immediately available for comment. France, Britain and other countries have long complained at the way Google, Yahoo! and other digital giants generate profits in their countries but have their tax base in other countries, where corporate tax rates are far lower.

France is seeking some 1.6 billion euros (\$1.79 billion) in back taxes from US Internet giant Google, criticised for its use of aggressive tax optimisation techniques, another finance ministry source had said in February. Google had in January agreed to pay 130 million pounds in back taxes to Britain, prompting criticism from opposition lawmakers and campaigners. — Reuters



**PARIS:** Members of the press stand outside the Paris offices of US Internet giant Google yesterday in Paris, as police carry out a search as part of a tax fraud investigation. — AFP

## APPLE BOSS TIM COOK: APPS ARE FUTURE OF TV

**AMSTERDAM:** Apple CEO Tim Cook said yesterday that apps are the future of television and that the company wants to help change the entertainment industry. Cook was speaking at a meeting of tech and other startups in Amsterdam, two months after Apple announced software enhancements for its TV system, Apple TV, and knocked \$50 off the price of its smart watch.

Since launching Apple TV, "it's clear to us as we pull that string that there's a lot left to do and we'd like to be a catalyst in changing the world of entertainment," said Cook, whose company already radically changed the music industry with its iTunes store. The Apple boss told a meeting in the Dutch capital that the Apple Watch also should become a vital tool for wearers to keep a check on their health.

"The holy grail of the watch is being able to monitor more and more of what's going on in your body," he said. "It's not possible technologically to do it today to the degree that we can imagine it, but it will be." Cook said that health is a field Apple is focused on now and into the future. In March it announced CareKit, a set of tools for developers who create mobile apps for medical use. Such apps could help patients monitor chronic conditions such as Parkinson's disease and share that data with their doctors.

Apple remains the world's most valuable company, but sales of both its iPhones and iPads have been falling as consumers increasingly hold off on upgrading their devices. That sales slowdown is the main reason Apple's stock has fallen by nearly 30 percent during the past year. — AP



**KUWAIT:** Jean-Philippe Courtois -President, Microsoft International (left), with journalists. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

# MICROSOFT: BRINGING THE BEST INNOVATIONS WITH OFFICE 365

## HOLELENS PUTS CUSTOMER INTO AN IMMERSIVE VIRTUAL WORLD

By Islam Al-Sharrah

**KUWAIT:** As a cloud-based company, Microsoft is bringing the best innovations - boosting productivity with the Office 365 platform, and building intelligent services with smart connections, agents, internal scenarios. We are also advancing the accessibility and capabilities of personal computing to any application and any device, and the most interesting of these is the innovative interface of HoloLens, which puts the customer into an immersive virtual world to interact with content or each other.



**Jean-Philippe Courtois speaks during the interview.**

gies, he explained how Microsoft is enabling businesses of various sizes to become digital and spoke about the company's strong partnership with government authorities in Kuwait. Excerpts:

**Kuwait Times: Can you explain how Microsoft is at the forefront of today's digital and cloud transformation?**

**Jean-Philippe Courtois:** We are clearly growing as a cloud-based company, and are enabling businesses of various sizes to become digital. In order to achieve this, we

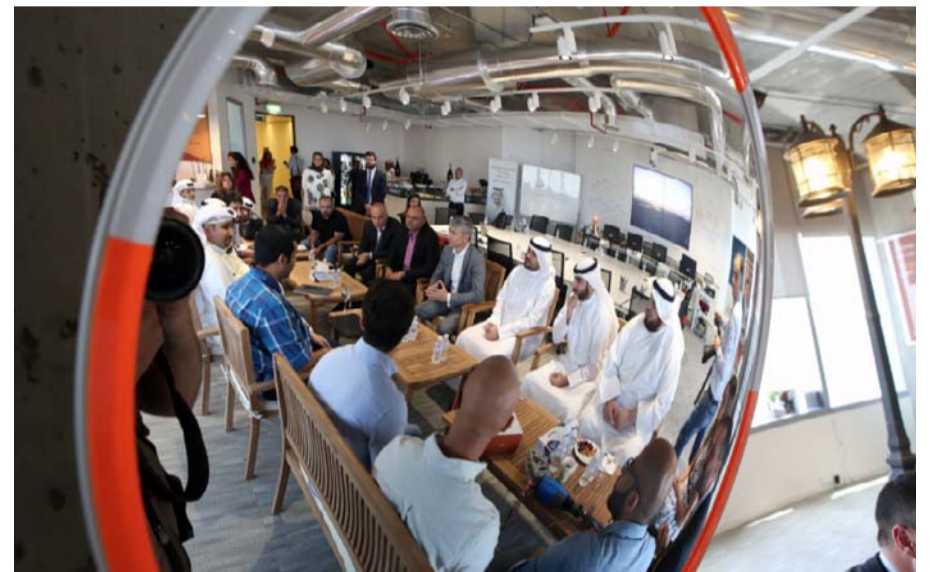
are bringing the best innovations - boosting productivity with the Office 365 platform, and building intelligent services with smart connections, agents, internal scenarios. We are also advancing the accessibility and capabilities of personal computing to any application and any device, and the most interesting of these is the innovative interface of HoloLens, which puts the customer into an immersive virtual world to interact with content or each other.

**KT: Can you elaborate on how Microsoft empowers public sector in Kuwait to leverage cloud solution in cutting down on cost?**

**Courtois:** We have a strong partnership with the government authorities in Kuwait. A great example of this is our work with the Ministry of Finance to digitize its forms and processes using Microsoft Cloud. The Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT) as well as a very important government body using Cloud, and the Ministry of Education is a great example as well. We have helped various public authorities in Kuwait to leverage the cloud and do more with less.

**KT: How Microsoft is supporting Kuwait government's future growth plans?**

**Courtois:** We believe that growth is enabled by using and leveraging the core of innovation and combining the cloud with business agility principles. We see this approach as fitting well with the national growth agenda, and will help the Kuwait economy. This unified approach will help and ignite youth and entrepreneurs, young developers, and the start-up community. There is a wealth of great skills and human capital in Kuwait that needs to be ignited and we work with them as well. We also see efficiencies that we can bring to the table for existing natural resources companies (Oil and Gas) to do an even better job - at lower cost - with the help of the cloud. For the government, the focus is in helping them to be



more efficient in serving citizens and offering new services, specifically around e-Government and its immense possibilities.

**KT: What are Microsoft's long-term investment goals in research and commitment to product innovation?**

**Courtois:** As a company, we are one of the largest product innovators in terms of investment, spending more than \$10 billion annually. One of the biggest focus areas is innovation in the cloud and its potential. Some of our newer services can be extremely sector-specific, for example, an Oil & Gas company can connect their drilling engines, capture all the data on seismic exploration, and can ultimately predict what the outcome of the drilling would be, from a production and a financial perspective. All of this means that there is a lot of innovation we do, to provide solutions, services, and platforms to customers and developers. We will consistently grow our innovation investments globally, and in the Gulf states, we will use and

leverage these investments for futuristic solutions relevant to the Government, the business community, and the youth.

**KT: Explain how Microsoft helps create new technologies that explore the frontiers of next-generation computing.**

**Courtois:** The HoloLens is a perfect example of how we help create new technologies that explore - and redefine - the frontiers of next-generation computing. With our vision for HoloLens, we are providing a developer kit. It is not a consumer product yet, but we are sure that it is just a matter of time. We are looking at the various applications that the technology can have, from designing new cars and new engines for jets, to internal collaboration for people of the same company but in different countries. We believe that there is immense potential with all of our technology, not only what is immediately evident. This is where we have the edge in terms of innovation - finding unique and innovative applications for technology.

# FINANCIAL TECH STARTUPS COMPETE FOR OVERLOOKED US IMMIGRANT MARKET

**MEXICO CITY:** For two decades, Noe Sanchez sent money from California to his father in Mexico City through storefront outlets of traditional remittance firms such as Western Union. Now he grabs his smartphone and uses Remitly, one of several new competing mobile apps promoting cheap and quick international transfers. Sanchez quickly got over his initial unease of sending money through an unfamiliar company.

"If it goes badly, I'll cancel it and try another," said Sanchez, a 44-year-old Mexican technical support professional in Oakland. Founded in 2011 and backed by Amazon.com Inc Chief Executive Jeff Bezos's venture capital arm, Remitly is among a vanguard of financial technology, or fintech, companies targeting what they view as an underserved immigrant market - traditionally disregarded as high-risk and low-margin.

The upstart firms - along with expanding digital and mobile options from Western Union Co and MoneyGram International Inc - are helping immigrants deepen their roots in the United States at a time when incendiary anti-immigration rhetoric dominates national politics. Presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump recently attacked remittances from illegal immigrants as a form of "welfare" for Mexicans. Trump threatened to impound such money transfers unless Mexico agreed to pay up to \$10 billion for his proposed wall on the southern US border. Many emerging companies in the fast-growing fintech sector, by contrast, view financial services for immigrants as an untapped source of revenue. They include remittance apps, such as Remitly, TransferWise and Xoom - an early player bought last year by PayPal Holdings Inc for \$890 million - along with companies such as Lendup and Oportun, which lend to high-

risk borrowers. "We're part of a community of companies that is helping (immigrant) customers understand the landscape of financial services" in the US, said Raul Vazquez, chief executive of Oportun.

### GLOBAL CASH FLOW

It remains unclear whether Trump's campaign attacks represent a real threat to the remittance industry. He proposes regulating remittance firms through US anti-terrorism laws that now apply to banks and other financial institutions. The plan has been criticized in part because of the difficulty in differentiating between the transfers of legal and illegal immigrants. "Good luck with that," US President Barack Obama quipped, reacting to Trump's proposal at a recent news conference. Trump's campaign did not respond to request for comment from Reuters.

Many financial technology companies expect a continuing boom in cross-border transfers and other financial services for US immigrants. According to the World Bank, remittances to Mexico totaled nearly \$25 billion in 2015, their highest level since 2008. Globally, nearly \$600 billion is transferred each year. The World Bank reported that 700 million people opened bank accounts globally between 2011 and 2014 - making them more likely to use financial technology - and about 2 billion more people remained unbanked, representing huge growth potential.

Immigrant communities increasingly access financial services through phones. Thirteen percent of Latinos in the US are dependent on smartphones as their only source of internet access, compared to just 4 percent of white people, according to a 2015 Pew study. Those trends play into the strategy of remittance apps like Remitly and Xoom. Many other finan-



**AMSTERDAM:** Dutch businesswoman, former politician and European commissioner, Neelie Kroes, reacts as she tries on a Virtual Reality (VR) headset during the StartupDelta at the Startup Fest Europe in Amsterdam yesterday. — AFP

cial tech firms are private and not required to share financial results, but some claim fast growth in customers or revenue when releasing selective data. Remitly said it transferred five times the amount of money in the first quarter of 2016 as it did in the same period a year earlier. The company said it recently surpassed \$1 billion in annual transfers. Western Union, a \$9.36-billion public company, acknowledged new threats in its 2015 annual report. "We are seeing increased competition from, and increased market acceptance of, electronic, mobile, and Internet-based money transfer services," the company told investors.

In a statement to Reuters, the company

said the transfer industry is teeming with new players and that competition had contributed to falling prices. Western Union's digital money transfer sales reached about \$300 million in 2015, and the company expects online and mobile transfers to be a "major driver of overall remittance market growth," it said.

Arjan Schutte, the CEO of fintech investor Core Innovation Capital, said he'd seen more than 100 different business plans for companies wanting to disrupt Western Union or Moneygram, but that's "not nearly enough relative to the market opportunity."

### ECONOMIES OF SCALE

Smaller financial technology companies can be flexible in crafting creative solutions to serve customers on the margins, said Lisa McFarland, an executive vice president at Ingo Money, which charges between 1 and 4 percent to deposit paychecks through a mobile app. McFarland previously worked at Visa Inc setting up prepaid products for the immigrant market. She said more established financial companies have long struggled to serve lower-income markets because of high development costs and low profit margins.

"The problems have to be solved, in many cases, in unique ways," she said. "That's what opens the door to technology players." Oportun and Lendup, for instance, use their own underwriting formulas rather than traditional credit scores to underwrite risky borrowers, and they offer declining interest rates over time for those who pay reliably.

The alternative online lending sector as a whole has faced new scrutiny in recent months in the wake of scandals at industry leader Lending Club. But Lendup says its customer base of half a million borrowers is growing at 15 percent per month. — Reuters



GENEVA: Christiana Figueres, executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), addresses her statement, during the 69th World Health Assembly at the European headquarters of the United Nations in Switzerland. — AFP

## AS DISASTER RISKS RISE, 20 VULNERABLE NATIONS GET HELP TO PREPARE

ISTANBUL: A new scheme launched by UN agencies, the World Bank and countries most vulnerable to climate change yesterday is seeking funding of up to \$130 million to help 20 at-risk nations prepare better for natural disasters. The Global Partnership for Preparedness, launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul yesterday, aims to help the countries attain a basic level of readiness by 2020 for future disaster risks mainly caused by climate change. The money will enable the countries to access risk analysis and early warning systems, put together contingency plans, including pre-committed finance, and respond better to shocks such as floods and droughts.

"The aim is to save lives, safeguard development gains, and reduce the economic impacts of crises," said United Nations Development Program Administrator Helen Clark. Development gains, in particular, "can otherwise be lost with each disaster", she said. The countries will be selected from the 43 nations belonging to the Climate Vulnerable Forum, a group that spans Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific. Backers hope to expand the program to 50 countries within five years.

Funding for the first phase has yet to be put in place but is likely to come from international institutions, UN agencies and government donors. Supporters hope the scheme will get off the ground by October. One government likely to benefit from the partnership is the Philippines, which is looking to improve its ability to identify at-risk areas, and to bolster systems to respond to disasters, working alongside business and communities, said Roberto B Tan, the country's treasurer.

"If we plan ahead, we will create a situation where instead of wave after wave of climate-driven natural disasters destroying what gains communities have made, they can pick up their lives again as soon as possible," he said. The World Bank, which plans to bring to the table its expertise, including in social protection and assessing hazards, emphasized the current low level of international funding for disaster preparedness.

Less than 0.5 percent of development assistance today goes to averting disasters and preparing for them, according to estimates. But Laura Tuck, the World Bank's vice president for sustainable development, said there was growing evidence that donor governments and the aid community have grasped the need to increase that investment, not least due to mass migration around the world in the past year. "One of the most exciting things from this summit is the emphasis moving from responding to humanitarian disasters to addressing situations up front," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Building resilience helps to address disasters, population movements, conflict, fragile countries - all that can be mitigated through investments in resilience."

### Disaster insurance

Separately, the World Food Program (WFP) said it would extend disaster insurance coverage for African countries to help transform how they cope with drought and floods by improving their ability to manage risks before they hit. It will use a commitment of \$1.6 million from the Danish government to double the number of people insured in countries that have already taken out cover under the African Risk Capacity scheme. By 2030, WFP aims to buy insurance cover capable of providing half its natural disaster aid expenditures in Asia and Africa each year, with payouts varying from year to year according to the disasters experienced.

Elhadj As Sy, secretary general of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, said a new commitment made in Istanbul by donor governments to tie less of the humanitarian aid they give to particular crises could give agencies more freedom to invest in reducing disaster risk. "It makes a lot of sense to do something today to have the outcome you want tomorrow rather than waiting for the shock to arrive," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. He recently visited southern Africa, which has been hit by its worst drought in the last 30 years, but the aid response is not yet at the level required, he said. "It will be a shame again if we wait until we see the pictures of dying babies before we start rushing in and responding," he said. — Reuters

# UP AGAINST STRICT ABORTION LAWS, TEXAS WOMEN LEARN DO-IT-YOURSELF

## OVER 100,000 WOMEN HAVE DONE A SELF-INDUCED ABORTION

NEW YORK: Susanna was young, single, broke and pregnant in southern Texas where, thanks to the state's strict laws, her chances of getting a surgical abortion at a clinic were slim to none. So she did what an estimated 100,000 women or more in Texas have done - had a self-induced abortion. With the help of a friend, some online instructions and quick dash across the Mexican border for some pills, she addressed the issue of unwanted pregnancy in a state where women are finding abortion services too expensive and too far away.

Restrictive laws took hold in Texas in 2013, forcing so many clinic closings that fewer than 20 remain to serve 5.4 million women of reproductive age. Supporters of the laws say they protect women's health. The regulations require clinics to upgrade to hospital standards and doctors performing abortions to have formal agreements to admit patients to local hospitals.

But experts say that if the US Supreme Court upholds Texas' restrictive abortion laws, the numbers of self-induced abortions will escalate.

So far, the number of Texas women who have taken that option could be as high as 100,000 to 240,000, depending on how it is calculated, experts say. "We certainly hypothesize that if there is a bad ruling from the Supreme Court that leads to more clinic closures, yes, this will only become more common," said Dr. Daniel Grossman of Ibis Reproductive Health in California and researcher with the Texas Policy Evaluation Project at the University of Texas at Austin. Susanna, a musician in Texas' Rio Grande Valley who chose to use an alias to protect her identity, described her self-induced abortion two years ago at age 23 as "almost primal."

"It was like we were back in the days of the Wild West, like we have to figure this out by ourselves and just grit our teeth and get through it," she said. Research shows US women opt to self-induce due to the closing of their local

clinic, the expense of a clinical procedure or the costs of traveling to a distant facility. Most commonly they take misoprostol, available in Mexico without a prescription, at home. Educating themselves on the procedure, women like Susanna's friend Selena, also not her real name, have stepped in to teach other women to do what clinics can no longer provide.

### Do-it-yourself

Selena said she and a handful of friends decided to learn the do-it-yourself method after their local clinic, Whole Woman's Health in McAllen, shut down in the midst of its legal fight. Whole Woman's Health is challenging the Texas abortion law before the US Supreme Court. With that clinic closed, the closest option was four hours away in San Antonio, Selena said. But how-to instructions are easily found online on websites belonging to Women on Waves and Women on Web, Dutch reproductive rights groups, and the World Health Organization, said the 28-year-old social worker. "Our objective was to share this knowledge with our friends and hope that from there, they will take that information and branch out and help other people," she said.

For Susanna, a surgical abortion at a clinic, if it were even open, would have cost nearly \$600. "I wouldn't be able to afford it," she said. She earned money cleaning houses and at night played trombone in a band. So Susanna drove across the border to the small town of Nuevo Progreso in Mexico to buy misoprostol over the counter at a pharmacy for US\$19. "This is a trend we only anticipate growing in light of many factors, including this spate of state-level provisions on access that are resulting in clinic closures," said Jill Adams, a legal expert on self-induced abortions and executive director of the Center on Reproductive Rights and Justice at the University of California, Berkeley Law School.

### Instructions

Misoprostol, originally prescribed to treat ulcers and arthritis, induces abortions with contractions and heavy bleeding. The process lasted about 12 hours, said Susanna. "It sucked," she said. Self-inducing is not risky so long as women have the right information and follow medical instructions carefully, experts say. "This is not the coat hanger abortion of the days of yore," said Adams. But Grossman added: "We also hear of women using ineffective methods like herbs or doing things that are potentially dangerous like getting punched in the stomach."

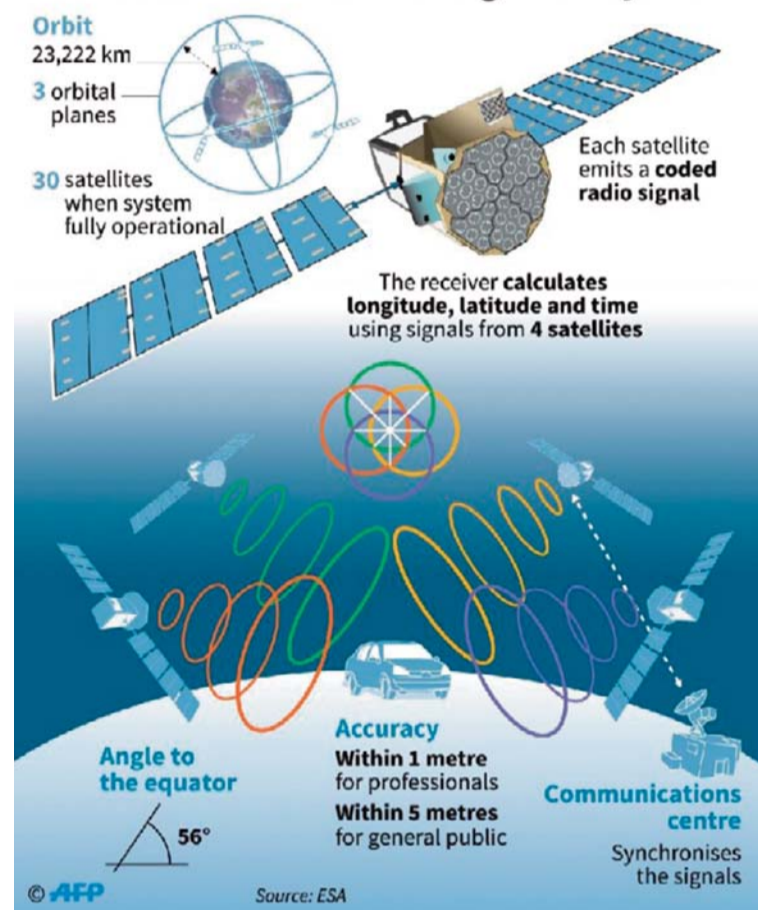
Whether self-induced abortions are legal or not depends on an array of factors, Adams said. While seven states not including Texas explicitly ban self-induced abortions, others may have pertinent laws on the books such as the unauthorized practice of medicine or drug charges, she said. Susanna keeps her story secret from her family but said she has helped other women undergo the same process, directing them to websites or helping obtain misoprostol. "A child is a very important, precious thing, and to just bring it into the world willy-nilly is I think a preposterous idea," she said.

The paucity of clinics in Texas is especially hard in the poor and largely Hispanic Rio Grande Valley, which stretches along the river separating the United States from Mexico. "They're trying to make us jump through all these hoops," Susanna said. "It's like a war on the poor people." Selena says she sees self-induced abortions as a good solution if the Texas abortion laws remain in place. "Some people may feel more secure because they get to be in the comfort of their own home, and it's more affordable," she said. "And it's something they do more on their own terms." — Reuters



PARIS: A Soyuz rocket carrying a pair of Galileo In-Orbit Validation satellites lifts off from Europe's Spaceport in Sinnamary, French Guiana on October 12, 2012. — AFP photos

## The Galileo satellite navigation system



PARIS: A graphic explaining the Galileo satellite system and how it functions.

# EUROPE'S SAT-NAV SYSTEM LAUNCHES FRESH PAIR OF SATELLITES

PARIS: Europe's Galileo sat-nav system, a rival to America's GPS, took a step closer to becoming operational with the launch yesterday of a fresh pair of satellites to join a dozen already in space. Orbiters 13 and 14 blasted off on a Russian Soyuz rocket from Europe's spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, at 0848 GMT as planned, according to a live broadcast by space firm ArianeSpace. After a journey of nearly four hours, the pair should enter Earth orbit at an altitude of 23,522 kilometers. "Up, up and away! An on-time liftoff for @Arianespace's medium-lift #Soyuz," the company tweeted.

Ultimately, the multi-billion-euro constellation is meant to comprise 30-odd satellites—the final number is yet to be determined—providing navigation and search-and-rescue services. Another launch, this time of four orbiters on a single rocket, is expected to boost the constellation to 18 by year-end, allowing for Galileo to start providing usable signals. More modern than the US Global Positioning System

(GPS), Galileo's high-tech instruments should allow it to provide a more precise signal.

But the project has been plagued by delays, technical glitches and budgetary difficulties. The launch of the seventh and eighth orbiters in March last year was about three months late to allow engineers time to probe an August 2014 mishap which sent satellites five and six into a lopsided orbit. That incident was blamed on frozen fuel pipes on the Soyuz rocket's fourth stage, called Fregat—a problem the European Space Agency (ESA) says has since been fixed. The first four, so-called In-Orbit Validation (IOV) satellites, were hoisted in 2011 and 2012. In March 2013, the quartet managed to pinpoint their first-ever ground location with an accuracy of between 10-15 meters (32 to 49 feet).

### Catching up

However, the launch of satellites five and six—meant to have

been the first fully operational Galileo constituents—was delayed by more than a year due to "technical difficulties". This was followed by the mislaunch of orbiters seven and eight, which ESA says have since been nudged closer to their intended orbit, although their usefulness to the constellation has yet to be determined.

Another satellite dubbed IOV4, among the first four launched, has since developed antenna problems, according to ESA, but is still able to transmit on one frequency. The space agency had initially hoped for early navigation services to be available from 2014. Yesterday's launch, the seventh for Galileo, was a late addition to the schedule in a bid to speed up deployment of the project funded by the European Commission, the European Union's executive body. It had budgeted some seven billion euros (\$7.8 billion) for Galileo until 2020. The next 12 satellites will be launched with Europe's own Ariane 5 ES launcher, especially adapted to handle four at a time. — AFP

# SPECIALISTS CALL FOR GASTRIC SURGERY TO BE STANDARD DIABETES TREATMENT

LONDON: Gastric surgery should be offered as a standard treatment option for people with diabetes and could help them control their condition for years without medication, the world's leading diabetes organizations said yesterday. In a joint statement which they said constituted one of the biggest shifts in diabetes treatment guidelines since the advent of insulin, the 45-strong group said bariatric, or metabolic, surgery could have a significant benefit for thousands of patients.

Francesco Rubino, a professor and chair of metabolic and bariatric surgery at King's College London and one of the authors of the new guidelines, said many countries across the world are in the midst of "an epidemic of diabetes". While surgery would not be suitable for all, and should not be seen as a silver bullet solution for the global diabetes problem, Rubino said patients should be offered a range of options - including lifestyle changes, medications and surgery.

"For some, surgery may be the best choice,"

he told reporters at a briefing in London. Type 2 diabetes is a long-term condition characterized by insulin resistance. Many patients can manage their diabetes with medication and diet, but the disease is often life-long and is a major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, stroke and lower limb amputation.

A recent World Health Organization study found that the number of adults with diabetes has quadrupled in the past four decades to 422 million. International Diabetes Federation (IDF) estimates that by 2040 this will rise to 642 million.

The new guidelines say surgery designed to reduce the stomach and induce weight loss should be recommended to treat all diabetes patients whose body mass index (BMI) is 40 or over, regardless of their blood glucose control, as well as those with a BMI of 30 and over whose blood sugar levels are not being controlled by lifestyle changes or medications. The guidelines, published in the journal *Diabetes Care*, were endorsed by 45 international organ-

izations, diabetes specialists and researchers, including the IDF, the American Diabetes Association, the Chinese Diabetes Society and Diabetes India.

Obesity surgery involves the removal of part of the stomach or the re-routing of the small intestine in a bypass operation. The guidelines are based on a substantial body of evidence, including 11 randomized trials, showing that in most cases surgery can lead to reductions in blood glucose levels below the Type 2 diabetes diagnosis threshold or to a substantial improvement in blood glucose levels. In many cases this would lead to patients being able to give up or significantly reduce their diabetes medications.

Novo Nordisk, Sanofi and Eli Lilly are the world's leading suppliers of insulin and other diabetes drugs. "Surgery represents a radical departure from conventional approaches to diabetes," Rubino said. "These new guidelines effectively introduce...one of the biggest changes for diabetes care in modern times." — Reuters

# COLOMBIA PEACE COULD REVEAL JUNGLE SPECIES' SECRETS

BOGOTA: Countless rare insects and flowers are said to inhabit the jungles of Colombia, but decades of war have stopped naturalists from discovering them—until now. The promise of a peace deal has scientists hoping they may soon explore tropical forests that they have long avoided for fear of being kidnapped or killed. "When you look at the map of Colombia in terms of biodiversity, you see incredible gaps," says the biologist Brigitte Baptiste, director of the Humboldt Institute, a Colombian research group. "That clearly reflects the difficulties researchers have in moving around" the country, where parts of the jungle are no-go zones controlled by rebels or criminal gangs.

She recalls having to flee when she came under fire while carrying out fieldwork near the Inirida river in the Amazon. She had unwittingly drawn near a clandestine cocaine factory in a remote area. Other naturalists have been less lucky. In 2011 a gang killed two students, Margarita Gomez and Mateo Matamala, who were researching in swamps in the north of the country. "Sometimes

researchers are a bit too daring," Baptiste said. "They fail to judge the risk and don't take account of the fact that the country is in a serious armed conflict."

### Bird-watching hostage

In 2004 the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) kidnapped the ornithologist Diego Alarcon in the northeastern Sierra del Perija. The communist guerrillas marched him hundreds of miles, giving him the chance to observe unfamiliar bird species. He secretly made notes about them on cigarette papers. "He never stopped doing his job as a biologist," said Lina Tono, author of a study on nature research in the conflict, which recounts the story of Alarcon.

Colombia's jungles are considered one of the most biologically diverse regions in the world. Scientists would like to know more about the movement of fauna between Central America and the tip of South America, says Maria Angela Echeverry, head of a conservation program at Javeriana University in Bogota. —AFP

## CAMBODIA'S ROYAL OXEN PREDICT A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST AMID DROUGHT

**PHNOM PENH:** Cambodia may be suffering the worst drought for half a century but a ritual involving royal oxen yesterday nevertheless predicted a bountiful harvest this year. The ploughing ceremony, presided over by King Norodom Sihamoni, was held at the famed Angkor temple complex in the northwestern province of Siem Reap. Thousands of locals and tourists gathered to observe the ancient rite, which marks the start of

the harvest season. After the symbolic ploughing of a portion of the field, a pair of decorated oxen were led over to seven dishes containing food or drink and laid out on trays. The dishes of rice, corn, beans and sesame represent the harvest, and the more the oxen eat, the better it is expected to be. However if the beasts choose the offerings of grass, water or alcohol, it suggests illness, floods or war are on the way. The oxen ate most of the

rice, beans and corn, prompting the palace's chief astrologer Kang Ken to declare to a crowd that those crops would see "bountiful harvests".

The astrologer did however warn it was "just a prediction". He then appealed to holy spirits to bless the country with regular rain so that "the kingdom of Cambodia avoids any natural disaster that would affect agricultural products, which are the life of the people and the nation".

The Greater Mekong region was scorched by an unusually hot dry season this year, with temperatures regularly hitting 40C (104 Fahrenheit). Cambodian officials said the country was suffering the worst drought in 50 years, forcing authorities to assist 18 out of 25 provinces with water supply. Some 2.5 million people were affected by the dry spell, which also led to the deaths of cattle, monkeys and tons of fish, according to officials. Despite the

royal oxen's prophecy, a spokesman for Cambodia's disaster management centre said he expected a weaker agricultural yield this year. "Due to bad weather, I think the harvests this year will be reduced," Keo Vy told AFP, explaining that farmers across the country have delayed planting rice-an irrigation-intensive crop-due to the drought. "Rice exporters have voiced concerns there would won't be enough milled rice for export," he added. — AFP

## US E-CIGARETTE USE STALLS AS HEALTH CONCERNS GROW

**NEW YORK:** Use of electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices has stalled in the United States as more Americans question their safety, according to a new online Reuters/Ipsos poll. About 10 percent of the 9,766 adults surveyed between April 19 and May 16 use the devices, the same percentage as in a similar Reuters/Ipsos poll in May, 2015. This year, however, a growing percentage of participants expressed negative attitudes toward e-cigarettes. Forty-seven percent of respondents said vaping was not healthier than smoking conventional cigarettes compared with 38 percent who felt that way a year ago.

Forty-three percent said they did not believe vaping could help people quit smoking compared with 39 percent who held that view in 2015. A majority of participants - 66 percent - say that vaping can be addictive compared with 61 percent in 2015. Additionally, 49 percent said this year that it could have a similar effect to that of second-hand tobacco smoke compared with 42 percent last year.

The growing concerns about the devices could hit their already slowing sales, especially for smaller e-cigarette and vaping companies. Many of these brands have lost market share to big tobacco companies, such as Altria and Reynolds American Inc. Some do not expect to survive with new U.S. rules to regulate the e-cigarette market. "In some ways, a move away from e-cigarettes is actually positive for Altria and Reynolds," said Morningstar analyst Adam Fleck, pointing out it may help sustain sales of conventional cigarettes, whose margins are much higher.

Sharra Morris, 42, a mental health counselor in Moore, Oklahoma, started using e-cigarettes in February despite some misgivings about their safety. She tried vaping to help her quit smoking regular cigarettes. "The question now is: are they really safe?" said Morris, who likes to vape using liquids

flavored to taste like Fruit Loops cereal and Snickerdoodle cookies. "What will they tell us in 20 years?" E-cigarettes are metal tubes that heat liquids typically laced with nicotine and deliver vapor when inhaled. The liquids come in thousands of flavors, from cotton candy to pizza.

Use of the devices has grown quickly in the last decade, with US sales expected to reach \$4.1 billion in 2016, according to Wells Fargo Securities. Sales were down 6 percent in the first quarter of 2016, however. The healthcare community remains deeply divided over the devices. Some healthcare experts are concerned about how little is known about the potential health risks. They are especially worried about rising teen e-cigarette use, and fear that may get a new generation hooked on nicotine.

Some support them as a safer alternative to tobacco smoke for smokers who have been unable to quit. Dr Michael Siegel, a professor at the Boston University School of Public Health, has advocated vaping as a way to wean smokers off conventional cigarettes. He blames negative publicity for the growing concerns about the devices, and believes most are unwarranted. "There have been public health scares, and they are working," said Siegel. "They are dissuading a lot of people from trying these products."

### Changing attitudes

The US Food and Drug Administration issued its first rules regulating e-cigarettes earlier this month, banning their sale and advertising to minors and requiring that manufacturers submit their products for approval. At least one lawsuit has been filed in response to the new rules and more are expected. Many smaller companies say the testing requirement is too burdensome because it will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars per product, and they often manufacture dozens. — Reuters



## AL-JOTHEN LAUNCHES KEVIN MURPHY IN KUWAIT'S EXCLUSIVELY SELECTED TOP-NOTCH SALONS!



**KUWAIT:** Al-Jothen, one of the top distributors of world-leading professional beauty brands across the Middle East and in Kuwait, recently unveiled Kevin Murphy; the first hair care brand that uses skin care ingredients and regimens and adapts their practices into modern luxurious hair care treatments. The royal event was hosted at the Sky lounge roof top, Radisson Blu, in a magical setup on the 17th of May 2016 and was well attended by Kuwait's cherry picked top-notch salons categorized as A+. The event was also hosted by Kuwait's most influential bloggers in presence of the media in full coverage and the Kevin Murphy style masters whom have travelled all the way from Australia and USA to be part of the big launch.

A master of his profession, no one understands the transformative power of hair more than Kevin Murphy. His work has graced the covers of all major global publications and he has directed hair teams for countless high

profile fashion houses. Today, the lack of products that performed as Kevin needed them to perform on a Vogue magazine shoot had forced him to go beyond the conventional hair care products and look into the advancements being made with skincare.

Working on a molecular level, Kevin Murphy treatments vow to improve the texture, shine, moisture

and overall health of your hair and scalp. Think of this as a facial for your hair. Kevin Murphy treatments will slough away dead and rough particles using AHAs and replace lost moisture and strength to reveal soft touchable glowing healthy hair. During the event, the Kevin Murphy style masters unveiled Kevin's award winning hair care collections starting

with repair, nourishment, color protection moving forward to plumping & densifying, anti-ageing, thickening and strengthening. They have literally indulged attendants in a theoretical facial for their hair with a Kevin Murphy experience.

The launching was not over yet until the very next day as all invitees were also invited to be part of a full day Kevin Murphy workshop held at Jumeirah Messila on the 18th of May 2016. The purpose of the workshop was to cover the technical and theoretical perspectives of the "Skincare for hair" Kevin Murphy concept; it was a full house!

Kevin Murphy in collaboration with Al-Jothen believe in maintaining and developing the best professional hair products inspired by fashion, performance and nature. However this time, the products are not the traditional ones that we all know! They're twisted with skincare ingredients and regimens and will definitely take the world of hair care to ultimate levels.



**KARACHI, Pakistan:** A Pakistani health worker administers polio vaccine drops to a child during a door-to-door polio campaign in Karachi yesterday. Pakistan is one of only three countries in the world where polio remains endemic but years of efforts to stamp it out have been badly hit by reluctance from parents, opposition from militants and attacks on immunization teams. — AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
248 33 199





Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem  
استشاري أطفال  
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



Alrazi Albudaiwi, AVP, Markaz receives a certificate from Kuwait Red Crescent Society representatives, Lama Al-Othman and Shaymaa Al-Shatti.

## MARKAZ RENEWS ITS COLLABORATION WITH KRCS AS HUMANITARIAN PARTNER

Out of its belief in the important role of the private sector in serving the society and humanity, Kuwait Financial Centre KPSC 'Markaz' has renewed recently its partnership as a 'Humanitarian Partner' with Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) to support the organization in helping the needy patients in Kuwait. This partnership is a continuation of cooperation between KRCS and Markaz over the past years. Alrazi Yousef Albudaiwi, Assistant Vice President, Media and Communications at Markaz said: "Markaz is really proud of its partnership with Kuwait Red Crescent Society, which is one of the credible, well-reputed non-profit organizations locally and globally that acts as a link between humanitarian action and partners who are committed to their social responsibilities. We truly thank the people behind it and its staff for the dedicated efforts to serve humanity in Kuwait and around the world."

Albudaiwi added: "This partnerships comes from Markaz's corporate social responsibility strategy that aims at fulfilling the company's CSR responsibilities through three main pillars, which are building human capabilities, aligning our business environment with the principles of sustainable development, and promoting good governance in the business environment. Our activities within this strategy includes a variety of topics that targets achieving sustainability; among which is the humanitarian and health side for the society we work in." Lama Al-Othman, Director of Resources Development Department in Kuwait Red Crescent Society thanked Markaz on behalf of the Society's Board and volunteers for their continuous support stating: "The Kuwaiti Private Sector institutes' role in supporting social and humanitarian causes is embodied through the integration of their CSR activities to the overall strategies, or

through their corporate philanthropy that aim at highlighting their humanitarian role and spread these values among its employees, clients and society."

She added: "We appreciate Markaz's valuable role in serving the society through consistently supporting KRCS and its activities. We are very pleased with our continuous partnership with such reputable institute that is committed to extend a hand of help to those in distress, whether their weakness is caused by a certain social status or the occurrence of wars or natural disasters, without distinction between religion or doctrine or gender or color, and without discrimination based on the political and intellectual beliefs, in addition to its dedication to building human capacities and contribution in humanitarian initiatives."



## WATER WONDERLAND ART EXHIBITION AT THE SUNSHINE KINDERGARTEN

During Art Week, the children from The Sunshine Kindergarten (TSK) in Salwa set about creating individual masterpieces to display in the 'galleries' situated inside the nursery building.

Children aged 2 to 4 years of age, decorated canvases using paints, feathers, plastic gems, glitter, googly eyes and other mixed media, to produce works of art for the exhibition on the theme of 'Water Wonderland.'

As TSK are always looking for ways in which to support local charities, for the second year running they have been selling the children's canvases to their parents in order

to raise money for the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) who are doing a fabulous job of making sure that people in need get the help they desperately deserve.

At the end of an exciting and inspirational two weeks, all the canvases were unveiled and the dignitaries arrived to officially open the event. TSK were delighted that Michelle Blackett, wife of the Ambassador of Liberia, President of the International Women's Group, was able to attend and cut the ribbon to officially open the exhibition. Michelle was amazed at the work the TSK children had done and on receiving a bouquet of yellow

roses from the children enthused about how cute and smart they were.

Also present at the opening of the exhibition was Dr Nivin, representing the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), who will be receiving a cheque from the sale of the children's art work, and Viv Anthony, President of The British Ladies Society (BLS) in Kuwait.

TSK Principal Joanne Wild was immensely proud of the hard work and effort that the children and their teachers had put into making the exhibition such a success. She stated "We are very fortunate to live in a world where we do not have to think about

where the next drop of water will come from. We use water for drinking, watering plants, washing our clothes, washing our cars etc. often without thinking about the need to conserve it, but for some people this is not the case. At TSK we are aiming to make our children environmentally responsible and socially aware, even at this young age, and our Art Exhibition Event will help our children focus on the importance of raising money to help others whilst promoting the understanding of the importance of water in all our lives".

TSK follows The Early Years Foundation

Stage Curriculum (EYFS), a dynamic curriculum for young children which allows them to develop their strengths and skills as they learn through play based activities, active learning and creative arts sessions. It is the dedication of the teaching team and the support and enthusiasm of the parents and their children that ensures that events such as the Water Wonderland Exhibition continue to highlight The Sunshine Kindergarten's position as Kuwait's Premier Early Years Centre.



## FIRST WOW EVENT IN KUWAIT

Tamilnadu Engineers Forum (TEF), a leading Engineers Association in Kuwait organized Kuwait's 1st Women Of Wisdom (WOW) Event; an exclusive event for Ladies at Fintas Auditorium recently.

The event was designed to groom the Powerful Feminine Identity and supporting them to find sources of own hope and courage, personality, inspiration and energy for action during any challenging times.

The event supported the ladies and girls to be self-dependent, transforming their personal, collective consciousness and making them to be Women of Wisdom - The Virtuous Women.

Motivational speakers and leaders were invited from India who delivered inspirational lectures and conducted energetic Workshops on

'Knowledge . Wealth and Strength' - the Three Main Ingredients for a wonderful life.

- Entrepreneurship Skills Development for Women by Dr Jayaraman from Center for Entrepreneurship Development Institute, India
- Self Defense Techniques for Women by Sreeram from KravMaga, Chennai, India.
- Enthusiasm Runs in my Blood - Motivational Workshop by India's No 1 Motivational and Leadership Coach Naseer Khan from Elevate Global Training Solutions, India.

Speakers were honored by Ananthi Natarajan, Latha Jeyakumar and Shanthi Krishna Jegan respectively.

The event started at 9.00 am with a melodious Tamil Prayer song by Sanaa Rafeek, followed by Thirukkural snippet by Praveena Makesh.

Welcome address by TEF's General Secretary Dr Shan Senthil and ended at 3.30 pm with Vote of thanks by Shahul Hameed. Total event was anchored by Aishwarya Jeyakumar in an exemplary manner.

The delicious breakfast and a sumptuous lunch was sponsored by Hotel Saravana Bhavan, Kuwait. The 1st WOW initiative in Kuwait by TEF 2016 Team is a 'Benchmark Event for Ladies in Kuwait' and expected to spread its wings globally positioning Ladies as the professional leaders in the Society. TEF is the only non-profitable engineering association in Kuwait with ISO certification. www.tefkuwait.com.





## INDIAN BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL CELEBRATES 13TH ANNIVERSARY

A grand 13th anniversary function was held at The Regency Hotel Kuwait on 19th May by the Indian Business and Professional Council, Kuwait. The function was attended by the top Indian and Kuwaiti businessmen, senior executives and managers of various companies and establishments with attendance of 350. Ambassador of India Sunil Jain presided over the function. Anant Kapadiya, Hon Secretary of Indian Business and Professional Council, Kuwait welcomed the guests and introduced the Council's Aims and Objectives in detail. It was followed by speeches by Tony Jashnamal, Chairman of the Council and Ambassador of India Sunil Jain.

The Chief Guest of the Evening BVR Mohan Reddy who is the founder and Executive Chairman of CYIENT LTD (formally INFOTECH Limited), Chairman Of IIT, Chairman of NASSCOM, chairman of CII spoke elaborately the evolving of present technology and the progress it has made over the recent past and what to expect in the years ahead.

He spoke elaborately on how India has been progressing technologically and the present favorable environment the Government of India has created for the entrepreneurs, investors and industrialists. He went on saying that



India's population at 1.25 billion is an advantage for businesses with so many mouths to feed, clothe, transport and to be provided with basic necessities like water, power, transportation, education, medical care, etc. The usage of electronic gadgets including cell phones is growing much faster than expected. Technological innovations are helping medical practitioners earlier diagnosis of diseases or help treat the patients

better. The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence and 3D imaging and the future it holds. India has a young population technically qualified and trained to contribute to the progress in innovations and support.

The speech was followed by the Awards Ceremony. This year five Kuwaitis and six Indians made it to the list for their distinct leadership and cooperation in increasing ties with India in



various ways. The awardees were present to receive their well deserving recognition from the Ambassador of India and the chief guest Mohan Reddy. Following persons were selected for this year:

- 1- Dr Hilal Al-Sayer
- 2- Hamad Abdulbahar
- 3- Fahad Al-Maillem
- 4- Hamad Al-Ateeqi

- 5- Aadeb Shuhaiber
  - 6- Shapoorji Pallonji Mistry
  - 7- S K Wadhawan
  - 8- K G Abraham
  - 9- Minoo Patel
  - 10- Dr Narayanan Nampoory
  - 11- Mohd Merchant.
- The award function was followed by a sumptuous dinner.



## INTERNATIONAL DAY AT KNES

The Early Years children at Kuwait National English School (KNES) recently celebrated its annual International Day. For the youngest of our children it was an opportunity to share their home culture and talk about their native countries. The student body at Kuwait National English School represents over 40 different nationalities and it is our mission that each child be proud

of their heritage and is able to share what they all have in common. As global citizens the Early Years children are taught to have respect and care for those different than themselves as well as always show respect to everyone. International day is a perfect day to begin to learn these good citizenship qualities and have fun doing it.



## IBTIKAR AL-KUWAIT TO VISIT ELDERLY HOME

### PART OF ITS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAMS

The Ibtikar Al-Kuwait Initiative for Female Students' Projects and Researches - the Sheikha Fadiya Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah Award - is set to organize a visit to the elderly home in Sulaibikhat. The visit comes as part of the initiative's social responsibility programs, Director General Dr Fatima Al-Hashem said. During the visit, members of the initiative will organize a 'Guraish' party for senior citizens on the advent of the holy month of Ramadan. It comes as part of the initiative's

commitment to taking care of members of all social categories, especially senior citizens, and serving its humanitarian goals, Hashem said. Several activities are planned during the visit, including gift distribution to share the joy of Ramadan with senior citizens. The visit takes place on May 31, 2016 at 9:00 am. It is one of many that the initiative started with an 'Earth Day' festival organized last April at an orphanage.



Sheikha Latifa Al-Fahad Al-Sabah inaugurated a charity bazar at the Mariyam Hall in Qadsiya recently. — Photos by Fouad Al-Shaikh



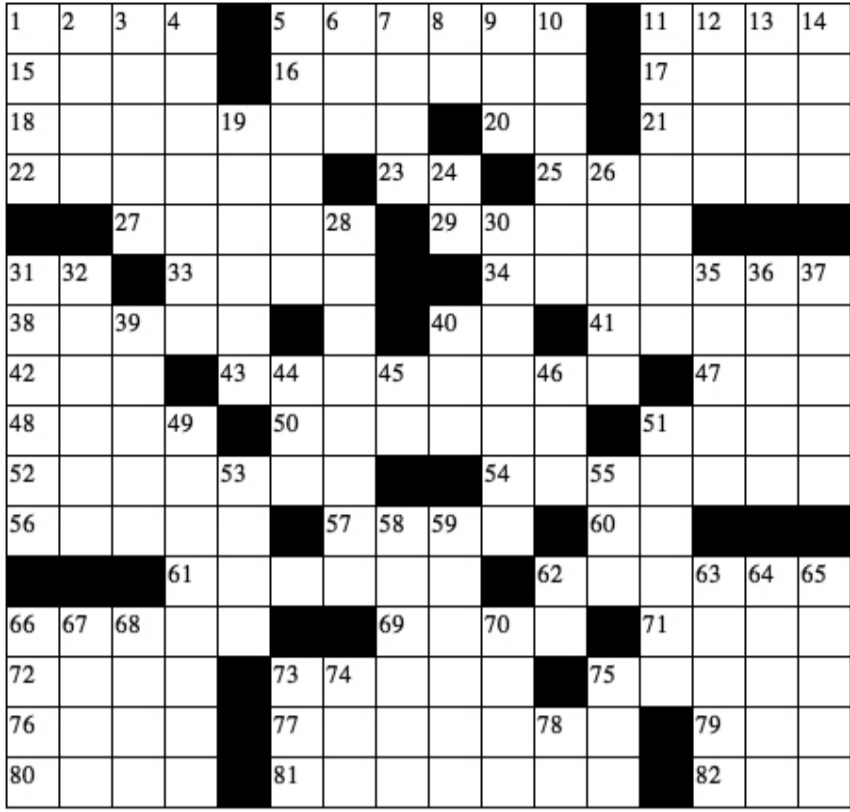
Enjoy our Indian Nights at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa and Sample the authentic flavors of Indian cuisine every Tuesday. Relish the dishes from North and the South, prepared by our culinary team. Do not forget to enjoy our 50 percent discount in celebration of the Hotel's 3rd anniversary.







CROSSWORD 1264



ACROSS

- 1. Decapod having eyes on short stalks and a broad flattened carapace with a small abdomen folded under the thorax and pincers.
5. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
11. Uttering in an irritated tone.
15. Not widely known.
16. A river that rises in northern Colombia and flows generally eastward to the Orinoco in central Venezuela.
17. Scottish philosopher whose sceptical philosophy restricted human knowledge to that which can be perceived by the senses (1711-1776).
18. A member of western Finnish people formerly living in the Baltic province where Saint Petersburg was built.
20. Half the width of an em.
21. Large recently extinct long-horned European wild ox.
22. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
23. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
25. Island in West Indies.
27. Wasting of the body during a chronic disease.
29. Australian operatic soprano (1861-1931).
31. Date used in reckoning dates before the supposed year Christ was born.
33. The basic unit of money on Malta.
34. South African mongoose-like viverrine having a face like a lemur and only four toes.
38. An edible seaweed with a mild flavor.
41. Lower in esteem.
42. A humming noise.
43. Cherokee who created a notation for writing the Cherokee language (1770-1843).
47. Acute delirium caused by alcohol poisoning.
48. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
50. Lower oneself with a double rope coiled around the body from a mountaintop.
52. A bar of sand.
54. A Brazilian river.
56. An oily colorless liquid obtained by the condensation of two molecules of acetaldehyde.
57. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
60. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
61. Evergreen trees or shrubs of mountains of Australia and Tasmania.
66. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
69. A material effigy that is worshipped as a god.
71. A branch of the Tai languages.
72. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
76. A plant consisting of buildings with facilities for manufacturing.
77. A dispenser that produces a chemical vapor to be inhaled in order to relieve nasal congestion.
79. A light touch or stroke.
80. A Chinese breed of small short-legged dogs with a long silky coat and broad flat muzzle.
81. Wild llama.
82. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

- 3. A characteristic language of a particular group (as among thieves).
4. Perennial herb of North America.
5. A slight convexity (as of the surface of a road).
6. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
7. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on land.
8. A radioactive transuranic element that is similar to uranium.
9. (informal) Of the highest quality.
10. The back of a saddle seat.
11. Long pinkish sour leafstalks usually eaten cooked and sweetened.
12. A sensation (as of a cold breeze or bright light) that precedes the onset of certain disorders such as a migraine attack or epileptic seizure.
13. Marked by excessive complacency or self-satisfaction.
14. The basic unit of money in Uruguay.
19. An acute viral disease of the nervous system of warm-blooded animals (usually transmitted by the bite of a rabid animal).
24. Before noon.
26. A religious belief of African origin involving witchcraft and sorcery.
28. A town in northern Egypt.
30. A collection of pus in a body cavity (especially in the lung cavity).
32. Of or relating to the leg from the knee to the foot.
35. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
36. Out of bed.
37. A unit of magnetic flux density equal to one weber per square meter.
39. Make amendments to.
40. The younger of two major political parties in the United States.
44. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
45. Being or moving higher in position or greater in some value.
46. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
49. Lovable especially in a childlike or naive way.
51. Corrupt morally or by intemperance or sensuality.
53. A sudden minor shock or meaningless interruption.
55. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
58. A Japanese woman trained to entertain men with conversation and singing and dancing.
59. Of or relating to or characteristic of Hades or Tartarus.
62. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
63. The main city of ancient Phoenicia.
64. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
65. Jordan's port.
67. A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York.
68. A metal cleat on the bottom front of a horseshoe to prevent slipping.
70. Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
73. Above average in size or number or quantity or magnitude or extent.
74. (Babylonian) The sky god.
75. Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
78. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.

DOWN

- 1. Baby bed with high sides.
2. Type genus of the Ranidae.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Professional matters are important to you. You want to achieve more in the way of status and prestige. Like most of us, you want recognition and are likely to achieve this soon. Today there are universal vibrations of encouragement; go for the gold! Engage in new projects or invest in what is best described as fair to good investments. Care, however, should be taken not to force things. Volunteering your services to a friend can be most rewarding. It could be that someone is ready to move but has a need for something you have-perhaps muscles or a vehicle. Your disposition is open and welcome to all you meet. Your social life will certainly blossom during this time-perhaps including a new love life. Avoid extravagance.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Channel and focus your energies into your work today-find delightful ways to discourage interruptions. There is inspiration available today for a great deal of accomplishments. This is not perhaps the best time to make important decisions that affect your living situation or life circumstances. Others may challenge the direction you are taking. Take a step back to see what could be the cause of some disturbance; then take it upon yourself to learn or accept some of the changes that are taking place now. You have unusual vigor and self-control, making you a tough opponent for any competitive endeavor-a fun day. New outlets for growth and success should appear through something you may be reading this evening.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Make the best use of the slow times this Tuesday-complete any unfinished business. It is a good idea to check your list and apply your knowledge and patience. You are the type of person that will go where most people fear to tread. This means workplace difficulties as much as it means a haunted house or calming a recalcitrant child. Your noon meal or noon break is usually full of opportunities to meet new people or chat with old friends. Whatever the case, even if you have nothing to talk about, you have ways of pulling others into an enchanting conversation that is of interest to many. This evening you will enjoy the company of friends and family in a celebration of your interesting life.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The mental world appeals to you and you are very discriminating and appreciative when it comes to concepts, ideas and thoughts, etc. You value good research and real inquiry. In-depth discussions and probing conversations find you at your mental best, particularly when it comes time for group meetings. Your analytical abilities are at a high point. It would not be too surprising to hear people responding in positive ways because of your suggestions. You have favorable energies that will bring pleasant surprises. You can do more than you thought you could and you may find your limitations are no longer what you thought they were-mental or physical.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Progress is happening with your career as well as advancement toward your goals. You are able to intuitively know the right moves to make in order to complete difficult projects. This is a time to get ahead by taking action. Your work or career is in real harmony with the rest of your life. As usual, you demonstrate great understanding and sensitivity regarding the needs of others, which puts you in a good position to communicate concerning groups and social events. Your home environment, friends and surroundings become simplified and receive encouragement. Lovers, children and other people or things dear to your heart are enjoyed at this time.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

There is confidence to succeed at any project you attempt. There could be a sudden loss in business, which is not your fault. Oddly enough, this is a time when you may increase finances through some unexpected avenue. Either way, you should not let finances completely dominate your concerns. You should take care to examine all aspects of your business dealings to find the best avenues of success. This consideration could include the psychological aspects as well as the monetary aspects. You have a better understanding of your goals and the path that will get you to your goals. You will influence and inspire others through your actions.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Business looks promising, but you will need to stay on your toes and do what you can to resist outside pressure. It is important that you complete whatever project you start today. You do not usually show the firm side of your character; however, someone out of control today may demand your composure and firm command. You rule on the side of goodness and have high moral ethics. This afternoon you have an opportunity to gather information on some political issue that means a great deal to you, especially if a rule or law takes away from the free choice of people. This is a great day for intellectual matters. Changes you want to make now will have an excellent rate of success. There is positive thinking, mental stability, good feelings and opportunity.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You should enjoy great success and attention through your profession. There is an instinctive urge to get a great amount of work completed at this time. You may even find yourself agreeable to working overtime-but not often. You love the time you can get in transit from one place to another because it gives you an opportunity to read or to write or to listen to books. Working overtime may cut back on this special time so you will do everything you can to catch up, get ahead or take home any extra work that is pending. A pleasant environment at home is important to you and your family. Family members will help with chores if you ask nicely.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You are mentally in high gear most of the time. This is a lucky day for you. It is also a time that is favored for unexpected business increases and new commercial ventures. Be careful that you do not go on a spending spree, however, as you may appreciate the beauty and value of everything you encounter. You are likely to get a good deal for yourself at this time. Also, this is a promising time for any legal undertaking. It is also a good time to begin any personal health routine such as building good muscle tone through physical activities. You could feel loving and warm to those around you, and you are appreciative of your own life and self, in general. You may decide to start a savings program to save up for new bicycles in your family.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find that a promotion will be granted to you if you were to demonstrate your intentions for future work. You could represent or speak for your company or communicate about your skills. You may need a little self-talk or a place to think. Perhaps a short trip or walk at the noon break will enhance your focus. Outside activity at noon will bring your energies into a comfortable balance. You will be able to return to your work with renewed enthusiasm. You can be extremely creative once you learn how to channel your thinking properly. You are willing to take risks and can rise to whatever challenges occur. You will meet an interesting person this afternoon-perhaps a new employee.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

You could be teaching or be taught today regarding a new project or style of working. The day is charged with lots of drive and new beginnings. You may lack the staying power to see projects through to the end, however, and a new project will require a group effort. In a group effort, you might suggest rotating jobs to bring about a balance and to lessen the chance of boredom or resentments. You are emotionally sensitive and able to influence others in subtle ways. If you are scheduled for court for the next few days, expect delays. If you are looking for a job, a past interview will come to your attention with positive results. If you are looking for an increase in income, this is possible through a written request. Fill your home with good smells tonight.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You have a quick thinking mind and this is beneficial for investigative work. You are also able to sway others to your way of thinking. Being hurried may cause you to forget something important today, so you might consider guiding yourself by a list, particularly in the workplace. Establishing a balance between your personal needs, the responsibilities you have incurred and the opportunities you experience through your career, can be stressful. With your organization skills, you could lay out a plan that will help you create a better balance in your life. You will enjoy time with your friends this evening. You have been very busy answering the demands of work and other responsibilities. Good relationships will improve if you look for the positive.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

Autumn - Word Search

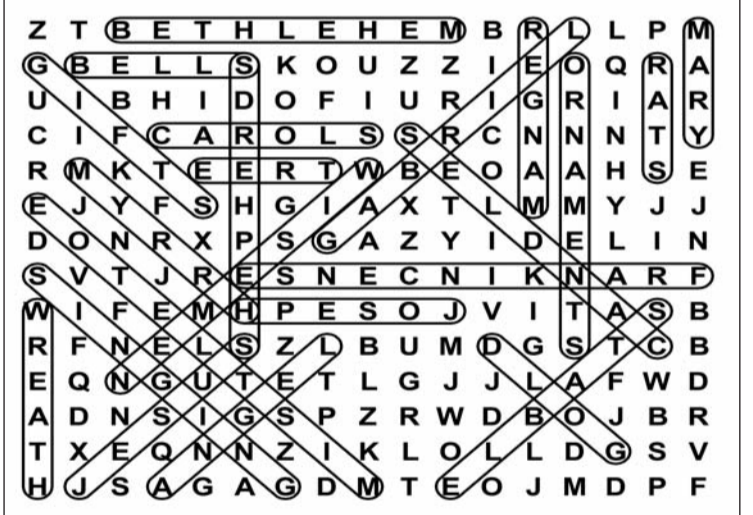
Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.



- CANNING
CHILLY
NOVEMBER
COLD
OCTOBER
CROPS
PUMPKIN
EQUINOX
RAKE
FALL
SCHOOL
FARMING
SEASON
FEAST
SEPTEMBER
FROST
SQUASH
HALLOWEEN
THANKSGIVING
HARVEST
TURKEY
WINDY

Yesterday's Solution

Large Print Word Search Puzzles Christmas - Solution

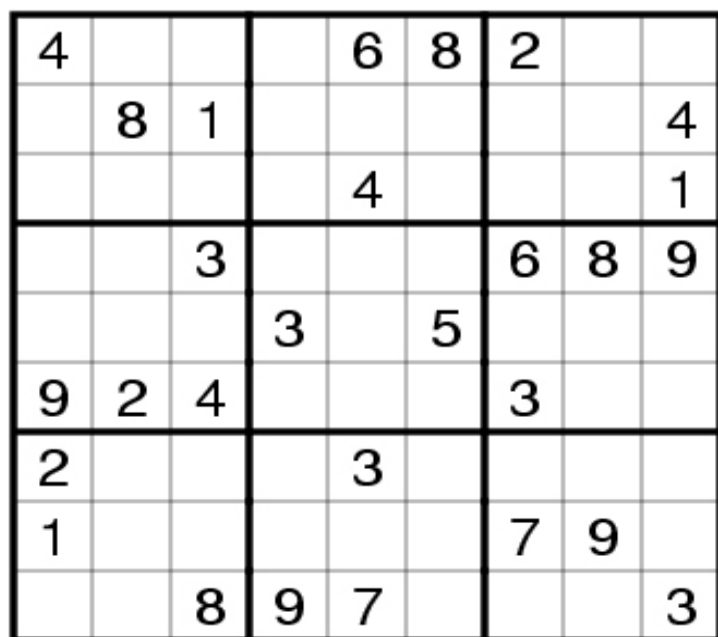


- ANGEL
BELLS
BETHLEHEM
CANDLES
CAROLS
FRANKINCENSE
GABRIEL
GIFTS
GOLD
JESUS
JOSEPH
MANGER
MARY
MISTLETOE
MYRRH
ORNAMENTS
SHEPHERDS
SINGING
STABLE
STAR
WISE MEN
TREE
WREATH

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



hard

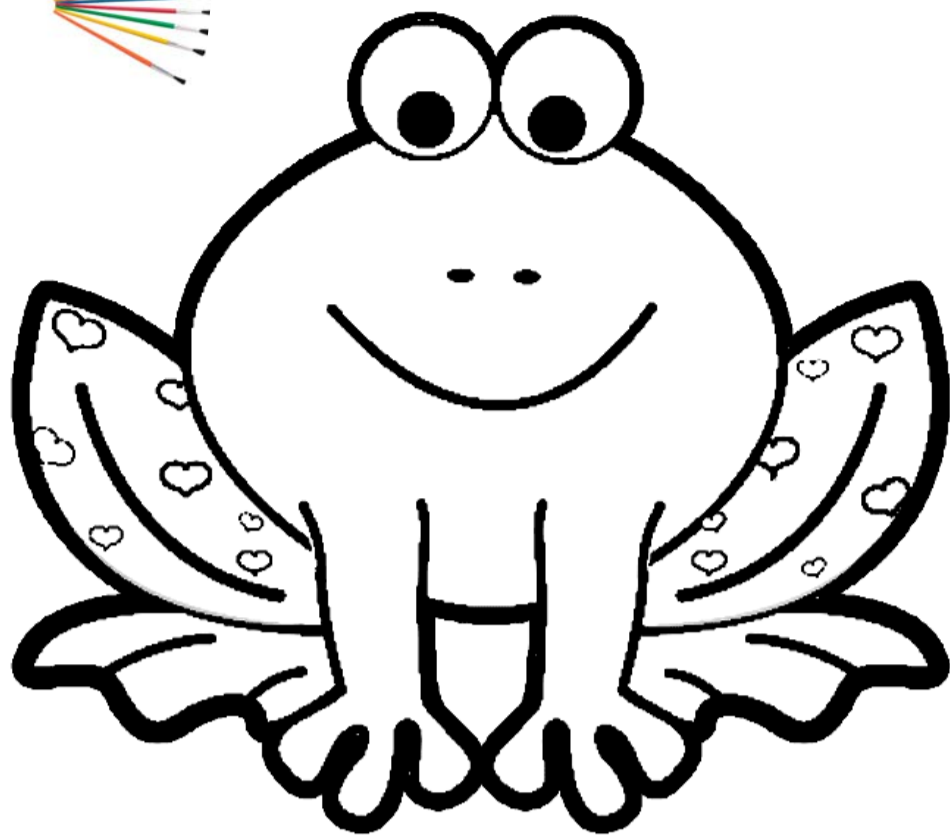
Yesterday's Solution



medium



Color me!



WORD SEARCH

Boxes

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The words may be hidden in any direction.

Y A C D S I B I G E T R P  
M V T O T E E L O L A R I  
E E A B N L M F L L L B S  
A U S E L T T P U U O E A  
F S Q G H T E G T T F G A  
D I U A T D N N T Y T R D  
T D A L L A F O T E L A C  
H E R G T L M Y E S N L M  
N S E C A R D B O A R D T  
T M E P S D N E M R L H E  
D R S L H A E B D O G P P  
D E S O L C P E G I O B O  
E S M A L L O S L T A E S

BIG BOTTOM CARDBOARD CLOSED CONTENTS EMPTY ENDS FLAPS FULL HEAVY LARGE LIGHT OPEN RECTANGULAR SIDES SMALL SQUARE TOP

Craft



**What You Need:**  
• Tissue paper  
• Pipe cleaner  
• Construction paper  
• Scissors  
• Glue

Tissue Paper Flowers

**Instructions:**

1. Take a piece of tissue paper, and cut eight squares that are 5 inches across by 5 inches tall.
2. Stack the squares on top of each other and "fan fold" the stack.
3. Wrap the end of a green pipe cleaner tightly around the center of the folded tissue paper.
4. Open up the fan of tissue paper on each side of the pipe cleaner, and separate each sheet of tissue from the stack.
5. Cut out leaves from construction paper and glue them to the pipe cleaner. Now you have a beautiful flower to give to a friend!

# The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus or Tomb of Mausolus was a tomb built between 353 and 350 BC at Halicarnassus (present Bodrum, Turkey) for Mausolus, a satrap in the Persian Empire, and his sister-wife Artemisia II of Caria. The structure was designed by the Greek architects Satyros and Pythius of Priene. The Mausoleum was approximately 45 m (148 ft) in height, and the four sides were adorned with sculptural reliefs, each created by one of four Greek sculptors: Leochares, Bryaxis, Scopas of Paros and Timotheus. The finished

men. The tomb was erected on a hill overlooking the city. The whole structure sat in an enclosed courtyard. At the center of the courtyard was a stone platform on which the tomb sat. A stairway flanked by stone lions led to the top of the platform, which bore along its outer walls many statues of gods and goddesses. At each corner, stone warriors mounted on horseback guarded the tomb. At the center of the platform, the marble tomb rose as a square tapering block to one-third of the Mausoleum's 45 m (148 ft) height. This section was covered with bas-reliefs showing action scenes,

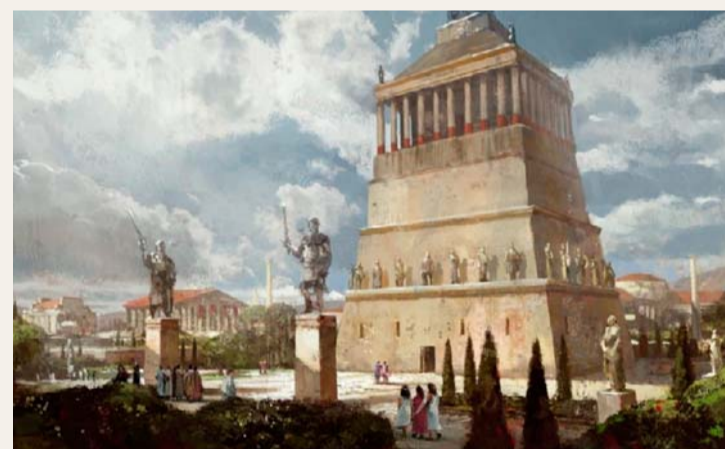
build such an extravagant building. Therefore, it is believed that construction was begun by Mausolus before his death or continued by the next leaders. The Mausoleum of Halicarnassus resembled a temple and the only way to tell the difference was its slightly higher outer walls. The Mausoleum was in the Greek-dominated area of Halicarnassus, which in 353 was controlled by the Achaemenid Empire. The Romans considered the Mausoleum one of the great wonders of the world and it was for that reason that they called all their magnificent tombs mausolea, after it. It is unknown exactly when and how the Mausoleum came to ruins.

Many of the stones from the ruins were used by the knights to fortify their castle at Bodrum; they also recovered bas-reliefs with which they decorated the new building. Much of the marble was burned into lime. In 1846 Lord Stratford de Redcliffe obtained permission to remove these reliefs from the Bodrum. At the original site, all that remained by the 19th century were the foundations and some broken sculptures.

This site was originally indicated by Professor Donaldson and was discovered definitively by Charles Newton, after which an expedition was sent by the British government.

The expedition lasted three years and ended in the sending of the remaining marbles. At some point before or after this, grave robbers broke into and destroyed the underground burial chamber, but in 1972 there was still enough of it remaining to determine a layout of the chambers when they were excavated.

This monument was ranked the seventh wonder of the world by the ancients, not because of its size or strength but because of the beauty of its design and how it was decorated with sculpture or ornaments. The mausoleum was Halicarnassus' principal architectural monument, standing in a dominant position on rising ground above the harbor.



structure of the mausoleum was considered to be such an aesthetic triumph that Antipater of Sidon identified it as one of his Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It was destroyed by successive earthquakes from the 12th to the 15th century. The word mausoleum has now come to be used generically for an above-ground tomb.

**Construction**

Artemisia spared no expense in building the tomb. She sent messengers to Greece to find the most talented artists of the time. These included Scopas, the man who had supervised the rebuilding of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus. The famous sculptors were (in the Vitruvius order): Leochares, Bryaxis, Scopas and Timotheus, as well as hundreds of other crafts-

men. The tomb was erected on a hill overlooking the city. The whole structure sat in an enclosed courtyard. At the center of the courtyard was a stone platform on which the tomb sat. A stairway flanked by stone lions led to the top of the platform, which bore along its outer walls many statues of gods and goddesses. At each corner, stone warriors mounted on horseback guarded the tomb. At the center of the platform, the marble tomb rose as a square tapering block to one-third of the Mausoleum's 45 m (148 ft) height. This section was covered with bas-reliefs showing action scenes,

including the battle of the centaurs with the lapiths and Greeks in combat with the Amazons, a race of warrior women. On the top of this section of the tomb thirty-six slim columns, ten per side, with each corner sharing one column between two sides; rose for another third of the height. Standing between each [pair of] column[s] was a statue. Behind the columns was a solid cella-like block that carried the weight of the tomb's massive roof. The roof, which comprised most of the final third of the height, was pyramidal. Perched on the top was a quadriga: four massive horses pulling a chariot in which rode images of Mausolus and Artemisia.

Modern historians have pointed out that two years would not be enough time to decorate and

DID YOU KNOW?

- You may have heard someone say, "It's raining cats and dogs." There have been actual documented cases from all over the world of fish, frogs, dead birds, snakes, snails, beetles, worms and jellyfish raining down from the sky in great numbers, but no reports of showers of cats or dogs.
- Almost two-thirds of the earth's surface is covered by water. If the earth were flat, water would cover everything in a layer two miles deep!
- During a solar eclipse, the shadows of leaves make the same crescent shape of the -eclipsing sun. The image is made by light passing through tiny holes in the leaves.
- Tired of the cold weather? Take a vacation on the hottest planet in the solar system - Venus. At over 800 degrees, it is hotter than Mercury because the clouds and abundant carbon dioxide hold in most of the heat received from the sun.
- Geologists have discovered there seems to be more water miles deep between the rocks of Earth's mantle than in all the oceans of the world. The intense pressure of the tons of rocks above keeps the hot water from turning to steam and escaping.

KIDS RECIPES



Apricot-Mango smoothie

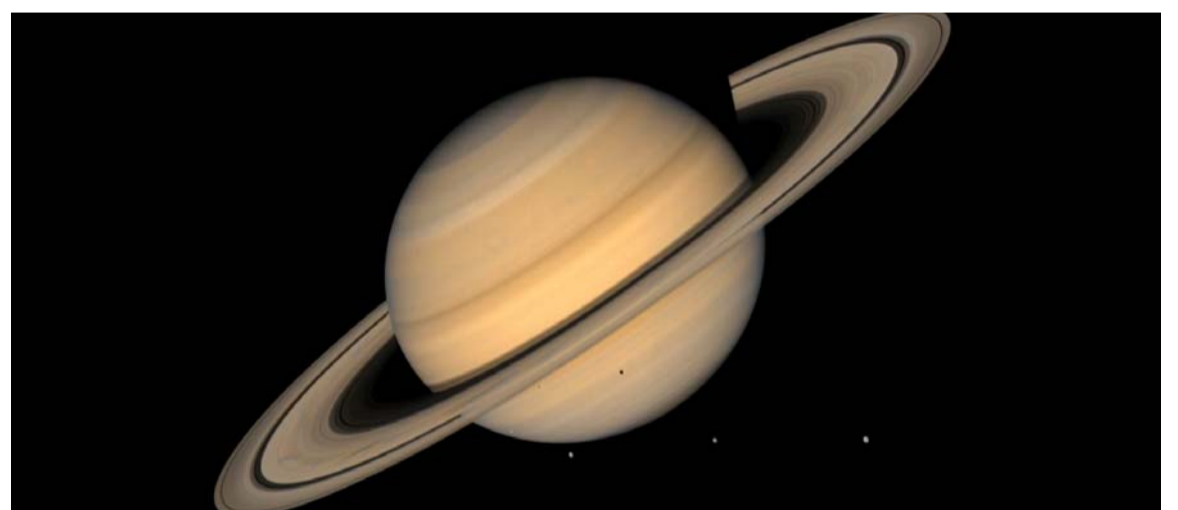
**Ingredients:**

- 6 apricots, peeled, pitted, and chopped (about 2 c)
- 2 ripe mangoes, peeled and chopped (about 2 c)
- 1 c milk or plain yogurt
- 4 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp vanilla extract
- 5 ice cubes

**Instructions:**

1. PLACE the apricots, mangoes, milk or yogurt, lemon juice, and vanilla extract in a blender. Process for 8 seconds. Add the ice cubes, and process 6 to 8 seconds longer, or until smooth.
2. POUR into tall glasses, garnish with lemon twists, if desired, and serve immediately.

## Saturn



Saturn is the sixth planet from the Sun and the second-largest in the Solar System, after Jupiter. It is a gas giant with an average radius about nine times that of Earth. Although only one-eighth the average density of Earth, with its larger volume Saturn is just over 95 times more massive. Saturn is named after the Roman god of agriculture; its astronomical symbol represents the god's sickle.

Saturn's interior is probably composed of a core of iron-nickel and rock (silicon and oxygen compounds). This core is surrounded by a deep layer of metallic hydrogen, an intermediate layer of liquid hydrogen and liquid helium, and finally outside the Frenkel line a gaseous outer layer. Saturn has a pale yellow hue due to ammonia crystals in its upper atmosphere. Electrical current within the metallic hydrogen layer is thought to give rise to Saturn's planetary magnetic field, which is weaker than Earth's, but has a magnetic moment 580 times that of Earth due to Saturn's larger size. Saturn's magnetic field strength is around one-twentieth of Jupiter's. The outer atmosphere is generally bland and lacking in contrast, although long-lived features can appear. Wind speeds on Saturn can reach 1,800 km/h higher than on Jupiter, but not as high as those on Neptune.

Saturn has a prominent ring system that consists of nine continuous main rings and three discontinuous arcs and that is composed mostly of ice particles with a smaller amount of rocky debris and dust. Sixty-two moons are known to orbit Saturn, of which fifty-three are officially named. This does not include the hundreds of moonlets comprising the rings. Titan, Saturn's largest moon, and the second-largest in the Solar System, is larger than the planet Mercury, although less massive, and is the only moon in the Solar System to have a substantial atmosphere.

**Physical Structure**

Saturn is a gas giant because it is predominantly

composed of hydrogen and helium ('gas'). It lacks a definite surface, though it may have a solid core rotation causes it to have the shape of an oblate spheroid; that is, it is flattened at the poles and bulges at its equator. Jupiter, Uranus, and Neptune, the other giant planets in the Solar System, are also oblate but to a lesser extent. Saturn is the only planet of the Solar System that is less dense than water-about 30% less. Although Saturn's core is considerably denser than water due to the atmosphere. Jupiter has 318 times the Earth's mass, while Saturn is 95 times the mass of the Earth, Together, Jupiter and Saturn hold 92% of the total planetary mass in the Solar System. On 8 January 2015, NASA reported determining the center of the planet Saturn and its family of moon to within 4 km.

**Atmosphere**

The outer atmosphere of Saturn contains 96.3% molecular hydrogen and 3.25% helium by volume. The proportion of helium is significantly deficient compared to the abundance of this element in the Sun. The quantity of elements heavier than helium is not known precisely, but the proportions are assumed to match the primordial abundances from the formation of the Solar System. The total mass of these heavier elements is estimated to be 19-31 times the mass of the Earth, with a significant fraction located in Saturn's core region.

Trace amounts of ammonia, acetylene, ethane, propane, phosphine and methane have been detected in Saturn's atmosphere. The upper clouds are composed of ammonia crystals, while the lower level clouds appear to consist of either ammonium hydrosulfide (NH4SH) or water. Ultraviolet radiation from the Sun causes methane photolysis in the upper atmosphere, leading to a series of hydrocarbon chemical reactions with the resulting products being carried downward by eddies and diffusion. This photochemical cycle is modulated by Saturn's annual seasonal cycle.

SUDOKU

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## Zee shines on 'Dancing with the Stars' despite injury

**G**inger Zee's ailing back didn't seem to affect her much during the first half of the two-night season finale of ABC's "Dancing with the Stars." The "Good Morning America" meteorologist showed off plenty of flexibility during two performances Monday. The only evidence of pain came after the first dance when Zee was shown holding her back. The 35-year-old tells People mag-

azine that she felt a bit of tightness in her back that "went away." She says the pain was so bad last week that she couldn't hold her five-month-old son. A new mirror ball trophy winner will be crowned tonight, when Zee takes the ballroom floor against UFC fighter Paige VanZant and model Nyle DiMarco.



## Hunt mistaken for Foster by barista

**H**elen Hunt says a confused barista mixed her up with fellow Oscar-winning actress Jodie Foster. Hunt writes in a tweet that she asked a Starbucks barista if she wanted her name after giving her drink order. She writes the barista "winked and said, 'We Gotcha,'" ending the tweet with a hashtag of Jodie Foster's name and a picture of a drink with the name, "Jody," penned on it. This is far from the first time Hunt has been confused with Foster. In a 1994 appearance on the "Late Show with David Letterman," she discussed being mistaken for Foster by a cashier in a supermarket checkout line. She said crime boss John Gotti remarked on their similar looks, as well.

## Depp's daughter, Lily-Rose, face of new Chanel scent

**C**hanel has tapped Johnny Depp's 16-year-old daughter, Lily-Rose, to represent a new perfume. Lily-Rose Depp announced the news on Instagram alongside a picture of her kissing a bottle of Chanel No. 5 L'Eau. Chanel also made an announcement with a picture of Depp on its official Instagram. The campaign comes on the heels of Depp's stint modeling eyewear for the French luxury line last year. Depp's mother is model Vanessa Paradis. The teen plays pioneering American dancer Isadora Duncan in "The Dancer," which screened last week at the Cannes Film Festival in France.



## Kim pays tribute to West on 2nd anniversary

**K**im Kardashian is paying tribute to Kanye West on the couple's second wedding anniversary. Kardashian has posted a picture of her and West gazing into each other's eyes on Instagram. In the caption she wishes the rapper a happy anniversary and calls him "the love of my life." She says to West, "You make me so happy!" The couple celebrated their anniversary a bit early over the weekend in Italy, the country where they were married.

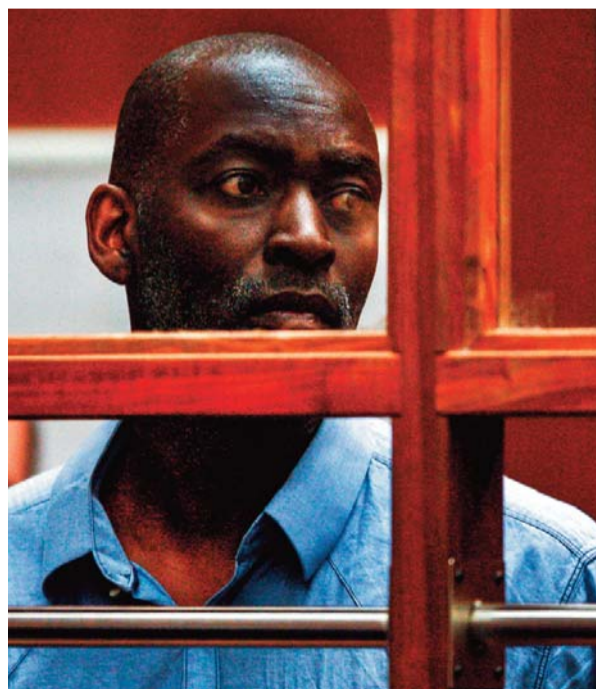
West and Kardashian were seen attending the premiere of the Sofia Coppola-directed opera "La Traviata" in Rome on Sunday. This is Kardashian's third marriage and West's first. She was previously wed to music producer Damon Thomas and NBA player Kris Humphries. Kardashian and West have two children together: daughter North and son Saint.

## Gord Downie diagnosed with terminal cancer

**T**he Tragically Hip says lead singer Gord Downie has been diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. The Canadian band made the announcement on its website and Facebook page yesterday. A message posted on the sites says Downie was diagnosed with the condition in December. It says "he's endured a lot of difficult times, and has been fighting hard." The band says in the note that it plans to tour this summer, because it "feels like the right thing to do now, for Gord, and for all of us." The message says dates and details for the tour will be coming this week. The Tragically Hip formed in 1984 and has garnered more than a dozen Juno awards in Canada.

## California jury selection begins in murder trial of 'Shield' actor

**J**ury selection began on Monday in the California murder case against actor Michael Jace, who played a police officer conflicted about his sexuality in the cable television drama "The Shield" and was accused of killing his wife in 2014. The jury seating process continued yesterday, Los Angeles County District Attorney spokeswoman Jane Robison said. She said the trial is expected to last about a week once the jury is seated and opening statements begin. Jace has pleaded not guilty to shooting and killing his 40-year-old wife April on May 19, 2014 in their South Los Angeles home before calling authorities to report an emergency. The couple's two children, who were both younger than 10, were home at the time of the shooting and were placed in the care of relatives, authorities said. A cellphone expert overrode the lock function of April Jace's Apple iPhone to help Los Angeles police in the homicide investigation, court records released earlier this month showed. Jace's attorney in January argued in court the actor suspected his wife was having an affair and may have become enraged moments before the shooting, after seeing something on her iPhone, according to a report at the time from the New York Daily News. Jace, who has appeared mostly in supporting roles on television in the past 20 years, is best known for portraying police officer Julien Lowe, a religious Christian who is conflicted about his sexuality, on the FX cable drama "The Shield" from 2002 to 2008. He also had small parts in the films "Forrest Gump," "Boogie Nights" and "Planet of the Apes," among others. April Jace had worked in the financial aid office at Biola University, an evangelical Christian university southeast of

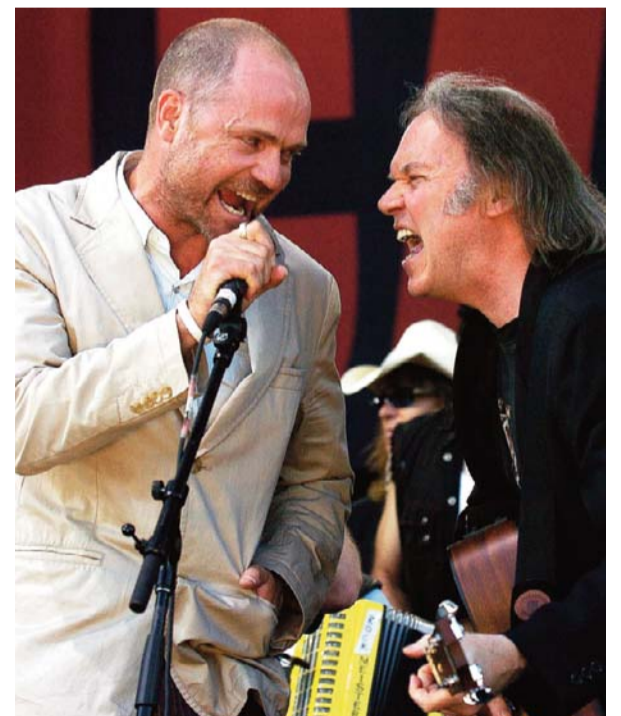


Los Angeles, for a year before she died. Jace filed for Chapter 13 bankruptcy protection in 2011. If convicted, Jace faces a minimum sentence of 50 years and a maximum life sentence in state prison.



## Burt Kwouk, famed for 'Pink Panther' films, dies aged 85

**B**ritish actor Burt Kwouk, best known for his role as Inspector Clouseau's manservant Cato Fong in the "Pink Panther" comedy films, died on Tuesday aged 85, his agent said. Born in northern England but raised in Shanghai in China, Kwouk's career began on British television in the 1950s and over the next six decades he had parts in some of its best-known shows most notably "Last of the Summer Wine" and 1980s war drama "Tenko." He also starred in numerous films, among them three James Bond movies including "Goldfinger." But he will be most remembered for starring alongside Peter Sellers in the Pink Panther films in which Cato would leap out at unexpected moments to attack his boss to test his readiness, leading to furious, comedy fight scenes.



## Cosby to return to court in criminal sexual assault case

**B**ill Cosby was set to return to criminal court yesterday for the first time since his lawyers' failed effort to have the sexual assault charges against him thrown out. Prosecutors in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, are expected to outline some of the evidence against Cosby, 78, who had been one of America's best-loved comedians before being hit by a wave of sex assault allegations. Yesterday's preliminary hearing in Norristown, Pennsylvania, focuses on the only allegation that has led to criminal charges, that Cosby in 2004 drugged and assaulted Andrea Constand, a former basketball coach at his Temple University alma mater. The vast majority of the sexual assault accusations by about 50 women dating back to the 1960s are too old to be the subject of criminal prosecution. Pennsylvania prosecutors leveled their charges in December, days before the statute of limitations was to expire. Several cases are the subject of civil lawsuits, in which victims say Cosby libeled them when he accused

them of lying about the incidents. Cosby has denied ever assaulting anyone and has portrayed his encounter with Constand as consensual. The accusations have destroyed Cosby's reputation, which he built during years of family-friendly comedy. Last month, an appeals court rejected a bid from Cosby's lawyers to have the criminal case dismissed because of what they described as a non-prosecution agreement he struck with a former Montgomery County district attorney a decade ago. The former prosecutor, Bruce Castor, has said he agreed not to press charges in exchange for Cosby's testimony in a civil lawsuit filed by Constand. But current prosecutors questioned Castor's testimony, saying there was no written evidence of such a deal. They also said Castor did not have the legal authority to prohibit his successors from bringing charges in the future.



Plaza dancers pose for photographs with Guinness World Records officials outside of the National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest, in Beijing. — AP photos



People dance in unison outside of the National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest, in Beijing.

## Over 31,000 in China set world dance record



Women wearing raincoats dance in unison.

China's dancing grannies have taken their moves to the record books. Guinness World Records says more than 31,000 Chinese participants have set a record for mass plaza dancing in multiple locations. Some 31,697 people in Beijing, Shanghai and four other cities set the new mark on Saturday by performing choreographed dance moves together for more than five minutes, Guinness said on its website.

Participants in Beijing posed with Guinness representatives in front of the city's iconic Bird's Nest stadium.

Generally middle-aged and elderly women, such dancers are a common site in parks, plazas and other public spaces in Chinese cities. While considered a healthy way to exercise and socialize, the performances have sometimes drawn criticism from those living nearby over the loud music accompanying the moves. — AP



Women wearing raincoats dance in unison on the Bund in Shanghai.

## Skip the flight, board the train to Glacier National Park

Chicago skyscrapers faded into green Wisconsin, and as the sun set over the Mississippi River, we made our first vacation decision. We weren't driving, so yes, we'd have some wine. We then sat back and watched as 1,500 miles went by aboard the Empire Builder train bound for Glacier National Park.

The historic train, which debuted with the Great Northern Railway in 1929, carries travelers between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest, with stops along the edge of the national park in western Montana. The park is home to seemingly endless snow-capped mountain peaks, cascading waterfalls, wildflowers and valleys of turquoise lakes. Between the train and shuttle buses around the park, we left the driving to someone else.

### The train trip

Part adventure, part budget prompted the decision to take the train, which was about half the cost of flying when my hiking companion and I stumbled across the option for our 10-day trip last summer. Another plus: Our mammoth backpacks with protruding hiking poles fit, with creative maneuvering, into the train's overhead compartments.

We boarded the double-decker Amtrak train in Chicago's bustling Union Station. Our coach seats had larger-than-expected seats with ample legroom, leg rests and power outlets for our iPad during a movie or two on the nearly 30-hour trip. The seats reclined, but not fully, which made sleeping manageable but not especially comfortable overnight through Minnesota and North Dakota.

Sunrise over the plains was the cue to head to the viewing and dining cars, where floor-to-ceiling windows offered panoramic views of ranchland, towns and distant oil rigs. Locals advised where to sit for best views of the Rocky Mountains emerging from the prairie. A National Park Service ranger offered brief histories of early Montana settlers and the Blackfeet Nation as the train passed through

the Native American tribe's reservation, which borders Glacier National Park. At the East Glacier Park station, we stepped off into crisp air and quiet.

### The challenges

The park operates free, easy-to-use shuttle buses to explore the many trailheads, campsites and stunning views along Going-to-the-Sun Road, the only roadway bisecting the park. But getting to other areas of the park without a car was tricky. Private, fee-based shuttles operated by Glacier Park Inc. and Xanterra Parks & Resorts access areas including Many Glacier, East Glacier and Two Medicine. Unfortunately, we'd tracked down incomplete information, including an inaccurate departure time that, had we waited for the next shuttle, would have cost us half a day.

We ended up hitchhiking with two friendly Malaysian visitors who crunched us into their small car in East Glacier after spotting our cardboard plea: "Many Glacier."

Campgrounds can quickly fill up. The one in Many Glacier was full before 7 am the day we nabbed a site in mid-August. Backcountry camping permits weren't easy to get either. Half the sites can be reserved in advance starting mid-March. The rest are distributed up to 24 hours in advance at ranger stations, first come, first served. We failed on two mornings - in line before sunrise - to reserve backcountry sites for popular multiday routes.

We did however snag the last hiker-only site at a small campground along Lake McDonald - one of the park's postcard gems, especially from a kayak - and called that home base for the last three nights.

### Scenery, wildlife and the vanishing glaciers

The 11-mile, out-and-back trail Grinnell Glacier pulls hikers above lakes surrounded by pink, yellow, purple and white wildflowers. A nearby trailhead accesses the roughly 11-mile route to and from Ptarmigan Tunnel, where rocky switchbacks

climb to a dark tunnel, cut through the peak, that opens to maroon-tinted cliffs dropping into a deep valley. Another highlight was the cliff-side views across vast layers of peaks while hiking roughly 12 miles along the Highline Trail to Granite Park Chalet and descending to a shuttle stop along Going-to-the-Sun Road.

Hiking down from Grinnell Glacier was delayed thanks to a bighorn sheep blocking the trail. We also saw cliff-perched mountain goats and through binoculars, bears. Several backpackers we met reported close bear sightings, including grizzlies. Only 25 active glaciers remain in the park, out of an estimated 150 that existed in the area in 1850. The National Park Service says those could be gone by 2030. So whether you go by car, train or tour, don't wait too long to see them.

### If you go...

Glacier National Park: Only a handful of vehicle-accessible campgrounds take advance reservations. Backcountry campsites require permits, so plan multiday hiking routes early after reviewing the reservation process.

Train: Amtrak's Empire Builder, travels from Chicago to Spokane, Washington, before continuing to Seattle or Portland, Oregon. Stops in between include Milwaukee and St Paul, Minnesota.

Shuttles: The National Park Service's free shuttles along Going-to-the-Sun Road usually operate July 1-Labor Day, depending on weather.

Tips: Read up if you're new to camping in bear country and take wildlife warnings seriously. Plan for weather extremes; temperatures swung from the 90s to the 40s with pelting rain in August. Don't rely on mobile devices in the park. Even at some lodges, Wi-Fi is spotty at best.



In this file photo, Amtrak's Empire Builder makes its way along the southern boundary of Glacier National Park near West Glacier, Mont. — AP photos



A valley vista is seen along the Highline Trail in Glacier National Park.



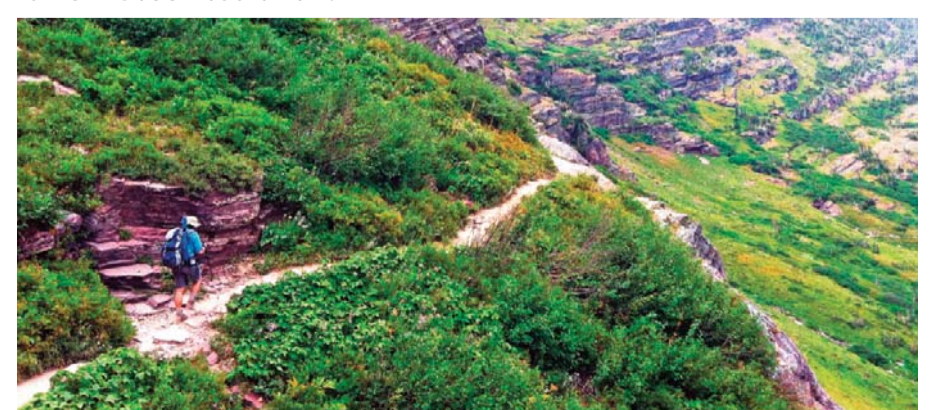
A view of Ptarmigan Lake is seen from the switchbacks along the trail to Ptarmigan Tunnel in Glacier National Park.



A doe grazes near Granite Park Chalet in Glacier National Park.



Associated Press writer Erin Gartner takes in the view along the Highline Trail in Glacier National Park.



Hiker Jan Bryan traverses the trail from Grinnell Glacier to Josephine Lake in Glacier National Park.

# Relax: It's just depression

By Hassan Al Mosawi

Before we go any further, let's look at the facts:

### No one is a stranger to depression

You are never the only one, even though it may feel like your world is dark while others are prancing around in their happy lives. The truth is we all have our downs.

The key is to truly appreciate how crucial our downtime is for our life experience. That's when it all turns around and makes sense, when every scar has a purpose.

Only those who have faced loneliness can appreciate love - you must experience upsets in order to truly recognize happiness and only when your limits are tested can you surpass them to become extraordinary.

The definition of depression according to my perspective: "A constant rejection of reality, coupled with a firm belief that it should be different."

So in order to step out of it, you don't necessarily need to become positive or hopeful, but rather accept reality.

The first reality you must accept and honor is depression itself. Before trying to bounce into happiness (which never works) you must honor your upsets.

### How?

1. Realizing that it's not a big deal - we all go through it. You are not alone. You are not the only person to ever suffer from depression and you have legitimate reasons for being depressed.
2. Knowing that every success story has at one point been a story of misery.
3. Taking your upset as a sign of what you do not want in your life. This can also help you to recognize what you do want and truly appreciate it.
4. Understand the Law of Fluctuation. You may feel bad now, but it only gets better! Anticipate that the best days of your life are still to come.

Most importantly, understand that depression when constant becomes a hormonal issue.

Ever tried having a positive thought when upset? Don't you just want to punch the person who tries to come up with positive advice?

While feeling down, you can only access negative

thoughts. Don't feel bad, that's just how the brain works. So don't be angry at yourself for not getting over it easily. It takes time, but the journey is worth it.

Finally, your key to any episode is to forgive yourself. We tend to develop self-loathing at this stage and resent how we think. When you are depressed, you feel people's happiness is constantly rubbed in your face. So you hate them and ourselves even more!

Take the time to forgive yourself, truly understand that nothing is your fault and all these feelings are simply an indication of your high standards and true longing for happiness. That this is in our nature as humans and we all go through it. We must, otherwise there is no growth, no learning and no development.

Just promise yourself you won't give in to your depression or take it too seriously. It can be a blessing in disguise and as Steve Jobs once said, "You can never connect the dots forwards, only backwards."

The only promise I leave you with is that it will one day all make sense.



## 'Bourgeois' cult of beautiful bod grows in Cuba

Inside Armando Yera's gym, toned Cubans in tight spandex are pumping iron in front of mirrored walls and pedaling furiously on stationary bikes, a scene that looks more Miami than Havana. Yera is one of Cuba's first competitive bodybuilders and part of its budding class of entrepreneurs. Both activities were long frowned on by the communist regime but are slowly gaining space on a changing island. Visitors to Yera's two-story establishment, Mandy's Gym, in central Havana, are greeted by a brightly colored sign that says: "This will increase your opportunity to be a success." In the entryway, there are before-and-after photos of clients whose sagging bodies Yera has helped turn into chiseled statues.

Those changes are just about as gradual, painstaking and yet transformative as the ones taking place in Cuba itself, as the island opens up to the world. The bodybuilding craze started to grow after President Raul Castro launched tentative free-market reforms when he took over in 2008. Last year he reestablished Cuba's diplomatic relations with its old Cold War enemy, the United States—a bodybuilding haven.

Sian Chiong, a 21-year-old pop singer, is a regular at Mandy's Gym, and gives it credit for his success with the teenage girls who swoon for him and his boy band, Angeles. Musicians in today's Cuba have to please a public that "has become a consumer of image as well as music," said the muscular, immaculately coiffed young star. It's a thought that could make Che Guevara turn over in his grave. The late revolutionary dreamed of a Cuba of "new men" who would toss aside individualism and materialistic cares to be selfless communist citizens.

The regime disdained the image-conscious culture of places like Yera's gym, which it derided as "bourgeois." But like many things in Cuba, that is slowly starting to change. "The trend of wanting to look good arrived here a little late, because they never let you see the reality of what working out in a gym is all about," said Yera. He started bodybuilding when he was 18 and retired from competitions in 2008, but still has bulging muscles at age 56.

**Suspicious muscles**  
For years, the regime was suspicious of bodybuilders like Yera. His sport was seen as narcissistic and steroid-fueled, he said. A former customs official, he got into bodybuilding back when the only way to do it was with rudimentary equipment and a protein-rich diet—not an easy formula to follow in cash-strapped Cuba. He is a four-time national champion, but his titles are not recognized by the state, which oversees all formal sport in Cuba and only grudgingly allowed privately organized body-

building contests. "A lot of times they would try to pressure theater management not to hold tournaments," he said.

But working out at the gym is increasingly becoming not just acceptable, but trendy. Yera had 20 clients when he started his business 16 years ago. Now he has quadrupled that number. Most of his clients pay \$30 a month to be members—more than the average monthly salary on the island. Ironically, he owes much of his success to state TV, which invited him to speak about health on one of its programs. He brought along a woman he helped to "transform" her body, plus his before-and-after pictures.

### 'Infected by the world'

After that, famous Cubans started showing up. "I train most of the TV show hosts. They feel pressure to be in shape," Yera said. And state TV has continued to invite him back to speak about health. Despite its much-vaunted state health care system, Cuba is not immune to the international obesity epidemic: nearly 45 percent of its 11 million people are overweight or obese. But gyms tend to draw mostly healthy young people looking to meet a set "standard" of beauty, said Dayron Delgado, a 30-year-old bodybuilder who works with Yera.

Delgado compensates for the lack of state funding for his sport by working as a personal trainer. "People are more worried about going to the gym for aesthetic reasons than for their health," he said. Pop idol Chiong agreed. "Cuba has been infected by the way the whole world thinks," he said, on the way back from working out his abs. Even if "that's hard for the higher-ups" to accept, he added. — AFP



A woman exercises at the gym.



Women exercise at a gym in Havana. — AFP photos



People exercise at the gym.



A woman exercises at a gym in Havana.



A woman is supervised as she exercises at the gym.



Women exercise at the gym.

## In quiet Crimean village, Jamala's family basks in Eurovision glory

In her home in a small village on Crimea's rocky coastline, the mother of Eurovision song contest winner Jamala is surrounded by magazine cuttings about her daughter and bouquets of flowers from well-wishers. Galina Tumasova is still basking in the glory of Jamala's surprise victory for Ukraine 10 days ago, but she recalls her initial concerns about her daughter choosing to sing "1944" - a song she composed about the Soviet deportation of her Crimean Tatar ancestors. "The neighbors didn't approve. They were all discussing the name of the song," Tumasova told Reuters at her modest two-storey home, which is scattered with CDs by her daughter, whose real name is Susana Jamaladinova.

"I said to her: 'Susana, are you sure people will understand what you're trying to say with that song?' "1944" recalled the decision by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin to deport hundreds of thousands of Crimean Tatars from their homeland in that year. It had added meaning because of the 2014 annexation of Crimea by Russia, a move that many of the region's ethnic Tatar minority opposed, partly because of a historical mistrust of Moscow borne out of the wartime deportations.

Tumasova's faith in her daughter is apparent: "When she was a baby, even the sound of her crying was musical." She said all her doubts about the song evaporated once she saw Jamala perform it in the initial rounds of the contest. "The audience cried," she said in an interview at the house in the village of Malorechenskoye where she lives with her husband Alim, built in the local style centered around an open courtyard. "You cannot stay silent about history, that's why Jamala sang about her own people." The 2014 annexation of Crimea split Jamala's family: she moved to the Ukrainian capital Kiev while her parents, in their 60s, stayed in Crimea under de facto Russian rule.

But a large framed photo of the 32-year-old Jamala still commands pride of place in her parents' home, propped up on a piano in the courtyard. On the same plot as the house is a building which the family used to run as a small guesthouse. They said since Russia took over control of Crimea, they have stopped taking paying guests because fewer tourists come and the taxes are too high to justify keeping it open.

Ukrainian singer Jamala, winner of the 2016 Eurovision Song Contest, speaks during a press conference in Kiev. — AFP

**'Rode on political horse'**  
Jamala was pitted against the strongly fancied entry from Russia in the Eurovision contest in Stockholm. Her victory sparked celebrations in Kiev, but Russian politicians in Moscow said the contest had been hijacked by politics. The Russian entry finished in third place. Some in Jamala's homeland are ambivalent about her win. "Her talents should be used in the service of her people, and not poli-



tics," said Ruslan Balbek, deputy prime minister in the Moscow-backed Crimean government and an ethnic Crimean Tatar. "She rode into first place on a political horse," he told journalists.

At the singer's family home, a 25 km (15-mile) drive north of the town of Alushta, Tumasova said her daughter had composed the song based on the recollections of Jamala's great-grandmother, who was among those deported during World War Two. The great-grandmother, according to Tumasova, described how she was packed into a railway goods wagon with dozens of others for the weeks-long journey into exile in Kyrgyzstan, near the border with China.

During the journey, the great-grandmother's daughter died. Fearing the guards might discard the corpse along the route, she concealed the body until the train stopped for long enough for her to carry out a proper burial. Tumasova, who is also a musician, said she preferred to focus on her daughter's musical achievements, not on the political undertones. — Reuters



In this file photo US actress Angelina Jolie smiles during her meeting with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, in Athens. — AP

## Angelina Jolie has a new job title: Professor

Angelina Jolie-Oscar-winning actress, humanitarian activist...and now a visiting professor at one of Britain's most prestigious universities. The London School of Economics has named Jolie one of four new professors in its novel master's-degree program focusing on women in conflict zones and on issues of sexual violence. The program, slated to begin accepting applications in the fall, is administered by the university's Center for Women, Peace and Security, which Jolie helped launch last year together with former British Foreign Secretary William Hague.

In her new role, the actress is expected to deliver lectures, participate in workshops and appear at public events. Already a United Nations goodwill ambassador and

a special envoy for the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees, the actress said in a statement released Monday that she was "very encouraged by the creation of this master's program. I hope other academic institutions will follow this example, as it is vital that we broaden the discussion on how to advance women's rights and end impunity for crimes that disproportionately affect women, such as sexual violence in conflict."

Besides Jolie and Hague, the other visiting professors are Jane Connors, a senior figure with Amnesty International, and Madeleine Rees, the secretary-general of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The four new LSE faculty members are "professors in practice," selected for their experience

in the field rather than strictly on the basis of academic credentials.

"Bringing practitioners, policy-makers and activists together with scholars is essential in advancing knowledge and influencing global and local policy-making," Christine Chinkin, the director of the new women's center, said in a statement. Jolie said she was "looking forward to teaching and to learning from the students as well as to sharing my own experiences of working alongside governments and the United Nations." Jolie and her husband, actor Brad Pitt, have been living in London since earlier this year while Pitt works on a film set during World War II. — McCartney nearly quit music after Beatles breakup

— Reuters

Review

## 'X-Men: Apocalypse' satisfies in superhero summer

It's a bit of bad timing for "X-Men: Apocalypse" coming third in this summer's superhero lineup. Director Bryan Singer invigorates his latest X-Men film with vintage 1980s charm in an origin story about how the mutant supergroup unites and divides in response to the villain Apocalypse. And while battles between heroes are an X-Men tradition, warring among the ranks has become a superhero trope this season, at play in both Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice and "Captain America: Civil War."

### Multiple characters

Like similarly dressed beauties in celebrity magazines, it becomes a case of who wore it better, and that's an unfair burden on what is ultimately a satisfying conclusion to the rebooted trilogy. Even with an ensemble that includes Jennifer Lawrence and Michael Fassbender and Poe from "Star Wars" (Oscar Isaac, unrecognizable as Apocalypse), it can't match the magic of the latest Avengers movie, with multiple characters carefully inter-developed over a dozen films. "X-Men: Apocalypse" is also a prequel, so the fate of its characters isn't a mystery.



In this image released by Twentieth Century Fox, Magneto, portrayed by Michael Fassbender, appears in a scene from, 'X-Men: Apocalypse.' — AP

That's not to say "Apocalypse" isn't a fun flick on its own. It has a grand scope, great special effects and doesn't require knowledge of its predecessors to enjoy. Those who know the characters get even more payoff. As hinted at during the credits for 2014's "X-Men: Days of Future Past," this film brings on Apocalypse, a super-powered mutant who can transfer his essence from one being to another and was revered as a god when he existed millennia ago. Resurrected in 1983 after centuries of lying dormant, Apocalypse is disgusted at the state of the world. He wants to wipe out greedy, intolerant humans and restore the mutants to their deified status. He magnifies the power of any mutant who sides with him.

### Destructive streak

Meanwhile, Professor X (James McAvoy) has renewed his focus on his School for Gifted Children, where Scott Summers/Cyclops (Tye Sheridan) and Jean Grey (Sophie Turner) are among the students learning to control their powers. The professor's friend and rival, Erik Lehnsherr/Magneto (Fassbender), put his mutant powers aside to live as a family man in Poland. But when personal tragedy strikes, he goes on a destructive streak. Magneto and other disillusioned mutants - Storm (Alexandra Shipp), Angel (Ben Hardy) and Psylocke (Olivia Munn in a very tiny outfit) - join forces with Apocalypse. Professor X and his protégés, including Raven/Mystique (Lawrence) and fellow blue person Kurt Wagner/Nightcrawler (Kodi Smit-McPhee), unite to try to stop them.

A muscular, mutton-chopped X-Man - here referred to as Weapon X - isn't part of the fight, but thrills in a brief, shirtless cameo. McAvoy is all charm as Professor X. Fassbender brings gravitas to Magneto. Lawrence, though, seems like she might be over this kind of big franchise fare. The standouts, in both character and performance, are Jean Grey and Peter Maximoff/Quicksilver (Evan Peters). Jean seems even more confident and powerful here than when Famke Janssen plays her in the previous/later "X-Men" films, plus she utters the movie's best self-referential barb. In talking about trilogies, she says, "At least we can all agree the third one's always the worst."

### New faces

Peters shines as Quicksilver, a dorky-cool, ultra-'80s Marty McFly who provides both playful comedy and zippy action sequences. Magneto also inspires awesome special-effects action, imploding and pulverizing historic sites. Simon Kinberg's screenplay is guilty of a few lame lines at key moments ("He thought that you were going to make a difference in this world, maybe even change it"), but otherwise keeps the story's movement brisk and backstories clear, though the cast is big and includes several new faces.

The X-Men had a lot to accomplish in this film before Captain America and his crew swooped in with their own movie a couple weeks earlier. And even if the Avengers may have worn it better, the X-Men are doing just fine. "X-Men: Apocalypse," a 20th Century Fox release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for "sequences of violence, action and destruction, brief strong language and some suggestive images." Running time: 147 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four. MPAA rating definition for PG-13: Parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. — AP



In this image released by Disney, Johnny Depp, left, and Mia Wasikowska appear in a scene from "Alice Through the Looking Glass." — AP photos



In this image released by Disney, Helena Bonham Carter, left, and Mia Wasikowska appear in a scene from "Alice Through the Looking Glass." — AP photos

## 'Alice Through the Looking Glass,' a curious sequel

"Alice Through the Looking Glass," like its predecessor, owes very little to Lewis Carroll. Textual adherence is somewhat beside the point when serving as a sequel to something that also cherry-picked. But, lest you think that a six-year gap and the absence of Tim Burton in the director's chair might have allowed for a return to the gleeful absurdity of Carroll, it doesn't. Screenwriter Linda Woolverton ("Beauty and the Beast") has again disposed of the source material in favor of something more linear - a story about Alice (Mia Wasikowska) looking for Hatter's (Johnny Depp) family. Director James Bobin's ("The Muppets") film trudges on through the lushly designed world answering questions we never asked, like, "What was the Mad Hatter's childhood like?" And, "why does the Red Queen have such a large head?" In other words, it's an Underland origin story.

### The nightmarish Hatter

We meet Alice some years after the first film faced again with the prospect of losing her independence. Last time she was fleeing a proposal. This time her livelihood is in jeopardy (she's a sea captain now, and a good one). So when life gets frustrating in the real world, Alice climbs through a mirror and is transported back to Underland. Her old friends have been waiting for her to fix another problem: The Mad Hatter. The nightmarish Hatter, who has developed a more pronounced (and annoying) lisp, is wallowing in life-threatening depression (manifested in combed hair, a sicklier pallor and a grown up wardrobe) because he's found an object that makes him believe his family is alive. This was not something that seemed to afflict Hatter in the first film, but maybe he's just really good at compartmentalizing.

Alice decides he's a noble friend and take on Time to get to the bottom of what really happened on the day when the Red



Actor Johnny Depp attends the premiere of Disney's "Alice Through the Looking Glass." — AP photos

Queen (Helena Bonham Carter) unleashed her Jabberwocky on their village. Time, you should know, is part clock, part man (Sacha Baron Cohen) and sounds a lot like Werner Herzog. His sequences, and his little steampunk companions are actually a high point. It's the one time Bobin can really get out from under Burton's suffocating precedent. Time talks a big game and can also decide when someone's time is up, but his own command is dependent on a larger than life clock that's powered by another device which also functions as a time travel machine. That's what Alice steals to careen back through time to try to correct the original sins of Underland - a quest she continues even after she learns of the possibly catastrophic consequences of her actions.

While it might sound intriguing on paper, on the screen it's

less than enchanting and the plot gets less and less compelling as it goes on. Aside from Depp's descent into grating ghoulishness, the acting of the returning characters remains mostly the same. Bonham Carter and Anne Hathaway (The White Queen) continue to do their affected, scenery-chewing shticks, while the host of Underland creatures and their famous voices (including the late Alan Rickman) look more dated than ever - beholden to Burton's CGI renderings from six years ago.

### Scientific explanations

There are some inspired visuals, like a landscape of glimmering pocket watches suspended in air, but many of the set pieces are executed with too much remove. Alice, for instance, must walk across the enormous hands of a ticking clock to gain entry to Time's headquarters. It's a great idea and looks wonderful, but it's just airless and void of suspense in execution. Excitement and wonder are fairly hard to conjure up when your Mad Hatter is consumed with daddy issues, your protagonist is nonchalant about everything, and the oddities of this world are suddenly getting scientific explanations and backstories that really only show how awfully ordinary everything once was.

It's a shame, too, because the Alice stories could be so wonderful on the big screen. It might be time to scrap it all and try again. "Alice Through the Looking Glass," a Walt Disney Pictures release, is rated PG by the Motion Picture Association of America for "fantasy action/peril and some language." Running time: 113 minutes. One and a half stars out of four. MPAA Definition of PG: Parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children. — AP



## 'Angry Birds' tops North American box office

"The Angry Birds Movie" hopped to the top of the North American box office over the weekend, booting "Captain America" into second place, according to industry data released on Monday. The 3D animated take on the popular video game features a trio of flightless birds-Red, Chuck and Bomb-who take out their anger on an invasion of purple pigs. The Sony production pulled in \$38.2 million its first weekend in North American theaters, topping last week's box office leader, "Captain America: Civil War," according to industry tracker Exhibitor Relations.

That action-packed blockbuster and its cast of Marvel superheroes raked in another \$32.9 million over the weekend for a cumulative total of \$347.2 million after just three weeks in theaters. Third place went to new-on-the-block "Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising," a comedy starring Seth Rogen, Rose Byrne and Zac Efron that scored \$21.8 million its first weekend out.

A sequel to the 2014 hit "Neighbors," it flips that movie's premise by having unruly sorority sisters instead of frat brothers turn the lives of their happily married neighbors upside down.

"The Nice Guys," a detective mystery starring Ryan Gosling and Russell Crowe, came in fourth on its debut weekend with a box office take of \$11.2 million. Gosling and Crowe play a private eye and a hired enforcer on the hunt for a missing woman. "The Jungle Book," a remake of the Disney animated classic, slipped to fifth place its fifth week in theaters, taking in \$10.9 million for a cumulative total of \$327.4 million. Rounding out the top 10 were: "Money Monster" (\$7 million) "The Darkness" (\$2.3 million) "Zootopia" (\$1.7 million) "The Huntsman: Winter's War" (\$1.2 million) "Mother's Day" (\$1.1 million) — AP



## McCartney nearly quit music after Beatles breakup

Paul McCartney said he began drinking heavily and almost quit music altogether after The Beatles broke up, in an interview due to air this week. The music icon, now 73, admitted turning to alcohol to cope with the strain of leaving the Fab Four in April 1970, according to extracts of a BBC radio interview released yesterday. "I was breaking from my lifelong friends, not knowing whether I was going to continue in music," McCartney said. "I took to the bevvies (drinks). I took to a wee dram. It was great at first, then

suddenly I wasn't having a good time. It wasn't working. I wanted to get back to square one, so I ended up forming Wings."

Wings, which included McCartney's wife Linda, formed in late 1971 and began by playing small unannounced gigs to students. The band eventually enjoyed success, but McCartney acknowledged that some of the criticism leveled in the early years was valid, when his first wife, a novice musician, was still learning how to play the keyboard. "To be fair we weren't that good. We were terrible. We

knew Linda couldn't play but she learned and, looking back on it, I'm really glad we did it," he said. "I could have just formed a supergroup and rung up Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page and John Bonham, but we graduated from playing universities to town halls, which was quite funny as I'd been at Shea Stadium quite recently." — AFP



Stevie Wonder, left, and Madonna perform a tribute to Prince at the Billboard Music Awards at the T-Mobile Arena on Sunday in Las Vegas. — AP

## Madonna responds to critics of her Prince tribute

Madonna is dismissing critics of her tribute to Prince at the Billboard Music Awards with style. A day after her performance of "Nothing Compares 2 U" and duet with Stevie Wonder on "Purple Rain," the pop singer took to social media Monday and posted a picture of herself in a purple boa with a flower in her teeth. She wrote that anyone who wants to do a tribute to Prince is welcome to, "whatever your age gender or skin color. If you loved him and he inspired you then show it!!! I love Prince 4 ever." She later posted a video of her dancing with a caption that indicated the criticism didn't bother her.

The decision to have Madonna honor Prince sparked criticism online and sparked a Change.org petition in the days before the awards show, with some asking that other musicians more closely aligned to Prince be involved as well. Madonna and Prince collaborated on "Love Song" from Madonna's 1989 album, "Like a Prayer." Madonna's performance on Sunday was met by a flurry of tweets complaining about her version of "Nothing Compares 2 U." Some were underwhelmed, others found it inappropriate. — AP



Kuwait's Rajih Al-Hamidani (center) receives the 'flag of poetry' after winning the final of the televised program Million's Poet at Abu Dhabi's Al-Raha Theatre. — AFP photos

## Oil riches help keep alive Bedouin poetry

The Middle East's poetry equivalent of "Pop Idol" is helping to keep alive an age-old tradition using Bedouin dialect, which is barely understood outside the Arabian Gulf. Apart from the glory, a Kuwaiti student took home five million dirhams (\$1.36 million), the top prize in a television show followed by millions of poetry lovers across the region. With his Nabati poem, Rajih Al-Hamidani was crowned 2016 champion of "Million's Poet", staged in oil-rich Abu Dhabi for a seventh year.

"This is the biggest achievement of my life," said Hamidani after winning the May 17 final. Fans who had travelled from Kuwait chanted and danced around him as he carried the winner's red banner. Hamidani, who studies law in Cairo, keeps the flag for a year, after which he can defend the title or pass it on. He spoke to AFP of his passion for poetry. "Poetry is a gift I

received from God. I did not inherit it from my family. I work on it with passion and I give it all that I can," he said. The winning poem describing his passion for writing put him ahead of five other finalists. Audiences cheered after every quartet of his Nabati poetry, which uses Bedouin dialect and is favored in the Gulf but often incomprehensible for other Arabs.

### Passion for 'Nabati' poetry

Some Arab royals are known for their passion for Nabati poetry, including Dubai's ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, who has a dedicated page on his website. The competition takes its cue from the pre-Islamic Okaz poetry festival near Makkah, where poets from across the peninsula recited their finest works of classical verse. The winning poems used to be penned in gold and pinned to the walls of

the Kaaba shrine in the Saudi city that later became Islam's holiest site. Many of those poems are still taught in schools across the Arab world. "I hope that we will surpass Okaz" in importance, said Issa Al-Mazrouei, a member of the organizing committee. "We have created a new generation of poets."

The idea is said to have originated from Abu Dhabi's crown prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, and the prizes are funded by the emirate's cultural authority. Abu Dhabi has been spending lavishly on cultural projects, most notably the Louvre Abu Dhabi. Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is also being built. The "Million's Poet" is aired live on Abu Dhabi and Baynouna satellite channels. Scores of hopefuls apply. Over 15 weeks, 48 finalists from nine countries competed in front of a jury of three while millions watched at home.

Eliminations were based on the votes of the jury and the

television audience. The six finalists included an Emirati woman. Poems with political messages drew reactions from studio audiences, with cheers for poets who criticized Yemeni rebels or the Arab Spring revolts. Hamidani won 72 percent of the votes, followed by compatriot Saad Battal and Mohammed Al-Tamimi from Saudi Arabia. All six finalists won handsome prizes.

The runner-up took home four million dirhams (\$1.09 million), the third placed won three million dirhams, and sixth got 600,000. "Contrary to other peoples, poetry for the Arabs is not just an art. It records their lives and documents events," said jury member Ghassan Al-Khatib. — AFP



Kuwait's Rajih Al-Hamidani (right) celebrates after winning the final of the televised program Million's Poet.



Kuwait's Rajih Al-Hamidani recites a poem.



Kuwait's Rajih Al-Hamidani recites a poem.



Kuwait's Rajih Al-Hamidani (center) celebrates after winning the final of the televised program Million's Poet.



Kuwait's Rajih Al-Hamidani (center) celebrates with friends after winning the final of the televised program Million's Poet.