



Kuwait one of world's highest donors: Ex-FM



Coalition jets pummel IS in Syria bastion



Supercoach Mourinho anointed at Man United



150 Fils

OBAMA MAKES HISTORY WITH HIROSHIMA VISIT

US PRESIDENT MEETS SURVIVORS, OFFERS NO APOLOGY



Min 28°
Max 44°



HIROSHIMA: US President Barack Obama (right) shakes hands with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe after laying a wreath in front of the cenotaph to offer a prayer for victims of the atomic bombing in 1945 at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park yesterday. (Inset) Obama hugs Shigeaki Mori, an atomic bomb survivor. — AFP/AP

HIROSHIMA: US President Barack Obama paid moving tribute to victims of the first atomic bomb yesterday, offering a comforting embrace to a tearful man who survived the devastating attack on Hiroshima. In a ceremony loaded with symbolism, the first sitting US president to visit the city clasped hands with one survivor and hugged another after speaking about the day that marked one of the most terrifying chapters of World War II.

"71 years ago, death fell from the sky and the world was changed," Obama said of a bomb that "demonstrated that mankind possessed the means to destroy itself". "Why did we come to this place, to Hiroshima? We come to ponder a terrible force unleashed in the not-so-distant past. We come to mourn the dead," he said. As crows called through the hush of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Obama offered a floral wreath at the cenotaph, pausing in momentary contemplation with his eyes closed and his head lowered.

The site lies in the shadow of a domed building, whose skeleton stands in silent testament to those who perished. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe followed by offering his own wreath and a brief, silent bow. After both men had spoken, Obama, whose predecessor Harry Truman gave the go-ahead for the world's first nuclear strike, greeted ageing survivors, embracing 79-year-old Shigeaki Mori, who appeared overcome with emotion. "The president gestured as if he was going to give me a hug, so we hugged," Mori told reporters afterwards. Obama also chatted with a smiling Sunao Tsuboi, 91, who had earlier said he wanted to tell the US president how grateful he was for his visit.

As expected, Obama offered no apology for the bombings, having insisted that he would not revisit decisions made by Truman at the close of a brutal war. As an eternal flame flickered behind him, however, he said leaders had an obligation to "pursue a world without" nuclear weapons. "This is why we come to this place, we stand here, in the middle of this city and force ourselves to imagine the moment the bomb fell. We force ourselves to feel the dread of children confused by what they see. We listen to a silent cry. The world was forever changed here but, today, the children of this city will go through their day in peace," the US president said. — Agencies

US SPELLING BEE ENDS IN TIE

NATIONAL HARBOR, Maryland: Nihar Janga, a fifth-grader from Austin, Texas, and Jairam Hathwar, a seventh-grader from Painted Post, New York, were named co-champions of the US Scripps National Spelling Bee on Thursday after battling 25 rounds head to head. The late-night duel twice saw Nihar, 11, fail to capitalize on mistakes by Jairam, 13, and claim the title outright. They ended co-winners when Jairam nailed "feldenkrais", a method of education, and Nihar aced "gesellschaft", a type of social relationship. "I'm just speechless," Jairam told reporters after the contest that was televised on cable network ESPN and repeatedly saw the audience in a hotel ballroom burst into cheers. Nihar, the youngest champion since 2002, thanked his mother and added: "I can't say anything. I'm just in fifth grade." Jairam and Nihar will each receive a \$40,000 cash prize. — Reuters (See Page 25)



NATIONAL HARBOR, Maryland: Nihar Janga, 11, of Austin, Texas, and Jairam Hathwar, 13, of Painted Post, New York, hold up the trophy after being named co-champions at the 2016 National Spelling Bee on Thursday. — AP

IRAN ENDS HAJJ TALKS WITHOUT FINAL DEAL

RIYADH: An Iranian delegation wrapped up a visit to Saudi Arabia yesterday without reaching a final agreement on arrangements for hajj pilgrims from the Islamic republic, Saudi officials said. The Saudi hajj ministry said that the delegation had "asked to go back home without signing the agreement on arrangements for the pilgrims" despite two days of extensive talks. A statement said the ministry had offered "many solutions" to meet a string of demands made by the Iranians, who had arrived on Tuesday.

The Saudi hajj ministry yesterday said Riyadh had agreed to allow Iranians to obtain visas through the Swiss embassy in Tehran. Riyadh also agreed to allow some Iranian carriers to fly pilgrims to the kingdom despite a ban imposed on Iranian airlines following the diplomatic row between the two countries, the ministry said. — AFP

KUWAIT ONE OF WORLD'S HIGHEST DONORS: FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER

KUWAIT: Kuwait is by far "the most generous contributor to humanitarian efforts in the world," former Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Sheikh Mohammad Al-Salem Al-Sabah was quoted as saying in an issue of Newsweek magazine.

In the May 27, 2016 issue of Newsweek, an article on Kuwait's generosity is emblazoned on the pages of the weekly periodical. "We have contributed over \$4.1 billion to humanitarian efforts recently and it has been acknowledged by United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and US Secretary of State John Kerry," Dr Sheikh Mohammad noted.

The bulk of that humanitarian aid is largely focused on alleviating the suffering of the Syrian people, whose country's civil war shows no signs of abating. With the memory of the Iraqi invasion of 1990 etched on Kuwaitis' minds, it is perhaps that memory, on top of a tradition of kindness that has led Kuwait to provide billions in aid of Syrian refugees.

Humanitarian leader

Moreover, Chairman of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said that "giving and generosity are in Kuwaitis' genes." Reflecting on the willingness of Kuwaitis to help strangers, Sayer remarked, "from New Orleans to Syria, we are committed to being there and helping in times of need."



Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Sheikh Mohammad Al-Salem Al-Sabah

In September 2014, the UN Secretary General acknowledged the generosity of the Kuwaiti spirit when he convened a special ceremony of the UN headquarters in New York to recognize the role of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, calling him "a great humanitarian leader of the world."

Meanwhile, Director General of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) Abdulwahab Al-Bader highlighted KFAED's prominent position in the country's humanitarian and development program. "We are blessed here in Kuwait, we found a place where were good traders and very

open minded," he said. Global recognition for Kuwait's role in humanitarian aid is a point of pride for the nation, and personally, for the KFAED Director General. "We signed an agreement with our 105th country last year, which was South Sudan," Bader noted, adding that "helping others and giving is something that has become a part of us, of our DNA."

Despite its ancient and rich history, Kuwait is in fact a young country, as according to a recent census, approximately, 74 percent of its citizens are under the age of 34. Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah affirmed that fact, saying "youth empowerment is a long-term solution to some of the most important global issues."

In addition, Sheikh Salman explained that the country strives to better serve its youth in efforts to secure a more prosperous tomorrow. "We are looking toward a bigger role for youth, especially, those active on the social media websites, to immunize their peers and to partake in state building," he added.

The importance of the youth to the country's future is well-understood by its leadership for very good reasons, as Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Al-Zain Al-Sabah points out, "They are not just the new generation, they are the new Kuwait." — KUNA



BEBNINE: KRCS's Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer attends a celebration at Al-Faris Intermediate School. — KUNA

KRCS PAYS FOR EDUCATING 83 SYRIAN STUDENTS IN LEBANON

BEBNINE: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) announced yesterday that it paid for educating about 83 Syrian refugee students in Bebnine in Akkar governorate, north of Lebanon. The KRCS' initiative aims to support Syrian refugee students in Lebanon to help them continue their study, the society's Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said in a statement on the sidelines of a celebration held at Al-Faris Intermediate School.

He stressed the importance of the education dossier of refugee students as it contributes to building human being, calling for concerted efforts to mitigate suffering of Syrian refugees "that is getting worse day after day." He underlined the significance of backing Syrian refugee students to avoid dropout due to tough conditions most Syrian refugee families are suffering from in Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Fares, head of Al-Fares school, lauded Kuwaiti institutions' interest in educating Syrian refugee children and the role of KRCS and charities in supporting refugees in all fields, especially education. Kuwait's aid in Lebanon is a main factor seeking to alleviate suffering of refugees, he said.

Some parents of students, furthermore, expressed their gratitude to Kuwait, His Highness the Amir, government and people for their help and support to them since the outbreak of the crisis. They emphasized that this humanitarian project will ensure education of their students.

Earlier yesterday, KRCS and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) signed a \$150,000 agreement to help injured Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Sayer and Deputy Head of the ICRC delegation in Lebanon Marco Succi signed the agreement. In other news, KRCS announced on Thursday that it distributed 1,000 food packages to Iraqi refugee families near Mosul in northern Iraq. — KUNA

KUWAITI EXPERT SUGGESTED GLOBAL FUND FOR HELPING CANCER PATIENTS

GENEVA: Dr Khaled Ahmad Al-Saleh, a Kuwaiti consultant at the radiology and carcinogenesis unit, suggested launching a global fund for providing the cancer patients in the developing countries with access to medication.

Regrettably, many countries do not prioritize palliative treatment of cancer while patients are struggling at this critical stage for their right to life, he said in a speech to a symposium held Thursday on the fringe of the 69th World Health Assembly organized by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Dr Saleh highlighted the role of pharmaceutical companies in providing the cancer patients with the necessary medications at reasonable prices and providing the health facilities with early detection equipment, thus alleviating the suffering of patients and their families.

He noted that Kuwait was one of the first countries that adopted a partnership between the public and the private sectors in caring for cancer patients, developing early-detection programs and promoting awareness about the risks of cancer, particularly the breast cancer.

At the symposium acclaimed consultants from India, Malaysia, Spain, Honduras and Zambia, brainstormed ideas on how to introduce the cancer treatment to the primary health programs and the role the civil society can play in the education programs about the risks of this fatal disease. — KUNA



OOREDOO CONTINUES TO RECEIVE APPLICANTS FOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of the international Ooredoo Group, continues to receive applicants for its volunteer program, conducted in collaboration with 'Spread the Passion' and 'ATAHUB', for the second consecutive year. Applicants can register through a link which is available on the company's various social media channels, until the beginning of the Holy Month.

Once registered, applicants will be called up for interviews, to make sure they are well prepared to take positive part of the volunteers groups. Interviews are conducted at Ooredoo's headquarters in Al-Soor Street.

The company has confirmed that

doors are still open for those who are interested to take part of the second edition of its volunteer program, the opportunity will remain available till beginning of the Holy Month and applicants will interviewed by professionals to well prepare them before the kickoff of the actual activities.

Ooredoo Volunteer Program was launched in collaboration with Spread the Passion, a local non-profit organization which aims at encouraging youth to be more engaged in voluntarily programs.

Ooredoo will also be sponsoring ATAHUB initiative that aims to raise the community awareness, collaboration and engagement in initiatives that have

a positive return on the society and its needs. In addition to Jaribha initiative, which is an online platform based on the concept of 'reward crowd-funding,' where business creators can achieve their project goals through the support of people in return for rewards.

Also, Ooredoo took the responsibility to conduct several charitable events, such as giving out meals daily throughout the month of Ramadan at Ooredoo's Iftar tent located in Al-Soor street, Kuwait City, opposite to the company's headquarter. As well as organizing visits to nursing home, orphanages and patients at different hospitals across Kuwait.



TUNIS: Kuwait's Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih meets with Tunisian Prime Minister Habib Essid. — KUNA

KUWAITI MINISTER, TUNISIAN PM UNDERSCORE COOPERATION

TUNIS: Meeting yesterday with Tunisian Prime Minister Habib Essid, Kuwait's visiting Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih discussed with her host labor and economic development issues.

Following her talks with Essid, she noted in a press statement that the prime minister urged implementation of already concluded MoUs on issues of joint interest such as curbing growing unemployment and intensifying sustainable development, to name a few. The two officials also tackled the notion of Kuwait providing job opportunities to Tunisian job-seekers in a bid to reduce the burden of unemployment, especially among the youth, in Tunisia, said Subaih.

The Kuwaiti minister ended yesterday an official two-day visit to Tunisia, in the course of which she signed a number of MoUs and made field trips to elderly care centers and rehabilitation centers for people with special needs. — KUNA



GENEVA: Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi (right) looks on as Dr Michael Novak from Slovakia is handed the prize of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for excellence in scientific research into geriatric care. — KUNA

KUWAIT HANDS PRIZE TO SLOVAKIAN PHYSICIAN

GENEVA: Kuwait handed yesterday the prize of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for excellence in scientific research into geriatric care to Dr Michael Novak from Slovakia for his work on the disease of Alzheimer's.

The prize was handed to the winner by Kuwait's Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi during his attendance of the meeting of the WHO general assembly yesterday. In a brief tribute to Dr Novak, Dr Ali Al-Obaidi said "the choice of Dr Novak was in recognition of his indefatigable research in finding a cure for Alzheimer's over a period of thirty years."

Moreover, the Kuwaiti minister said the prize winner was instrumental in the founding of the Institute of Neuro-immunology- Slovak Academy of Science which was established in 1996 as a specialized research center of neurosciences. During the first decade of its existence the Institute has become the leading institution in neuro-research in Slovakia, especially in diagnosing Alzheimer's and memory loss diseases which are Dr Novak's specialties. The minister told the WHO general assembly that Kuwait paid great attention to geriatric medicine and elderly care and supported research in that field.

Meanwhile, and in a similar speech to the general assembly, Dr Novak said he valued the Kuwaiti prize which reflected Kuwait's interest in scientific research and in the affairs of the elderly, noting at the same time Kuwait's distinguished status as a world humanitarian center. Following the handing of the prize ceremony, Kuwait's permanent representative to UN and International Organizations in Geneva, Jamal Al-Ghunaim said that awarding this prize during a WHO general assembly meeting says much about the world's appreciation of Kuwait's contributions in the humanitarian field and in supporting scientific research leading to improving health services for the benefit of all age groups in society including the elderly. — KUNA

UK OFFICIAL HAILS KUWAIT AS GULF INVESTMENT DESTINATION

LONDON: Kuwait is one of the best investment destinations in the Gulf region, a British official said yesterday, urging companies and businessmen of Britain to carry out projects in this Gulf country. In a statement following participation in an economic seminar in London, CEO of Kuwait British Business Centre (KBBC) Martin Hall lauded Kuwait's positive changes, including legislations and legal frameworks, aiming to attract foreign investment.

He also commended the Law No. 116/2013 on direct foreign investment, and the role of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) in removing obstacles facing foreign investors and companies targeting Kuwaiti markets. He referred to huge projects already carried out or to be launched in the future, in the fields of health, education, transport, infrastructure and others.

British firms can carry out small-sized enterprises as part of the major projects implemented by multinational corporations, Hall added. In this context, he noted that the Kuwaiti government launched in the first three months of 2016 a number of projects worth \$4.8 billion, expecting that the total value of all projects will hit \$35 billion by the end of the year.

Hall said that he always confirms to British businessmen that Kuwait is the best investment destination for British firms; especially as both Kuwait and Britain are keen on upgrading and promoting their distinguished relations. He pointed to the Memorandum of Understanding signed on Thursday between KDIPA and KBBC, stressing that it would contribute to attracting further companies to Kuwait.

He said he would do his best to stimulate British companies to transfer expertise to the Kuwaiti market and contribute to achieving the goals of development. The seminar briefed some representatives of British firms on Kuwait's development plans and available investment opportunities as well as legislations and laws in favor of foreign investors.



LONDON: Director-General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah signs a memorandum of understanding with Martin Hall, CEO of Kuwait British Business Centre.— KUNA

Memorandum

Director-General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Thursday with Hall, concerned with boosting and facilitating the flow of British investments to Kuwait.

The Kuwait British Business Centre was a result of several meetings of the Kuwaiti-British joint steering committee to increase British investments in Kuwait, Sheikh Meshaal said in a statement. The MoU aims at encouraging British companies to take advantage of the new economic laws that the Kuwaiti government and parliament have adopted recently, he said.

The KDIPA chief also noted that the new Kuwaiti laws are part of a plan to diversify income sources and use less

petroleum products in order to help the country achieve its goals. According to the MoU, KDIPA is to provide assistance to British companies that wish to invest directly in Kuwait through information and aid in various areas.

Earlier on Thursday, Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah and British Minister for the Middle East and North Africa Tobias Ellwood signed an action plan of a joint steering committee for the next six months seeking to activate all agreements inked between the two sides and discuss means of removing any possible obstacles. Furthermore, Jarallah announced following the meeting that the new electronic visa system has paved the way for some 12,000 Kuwaiti nationals to visit Britain during the last three months.— KUNA

KUWAIT'S YOUTH EXPERIENCES WORLD'S FASTEST TRAIN IN JAPAN

NAGOYA: A Kuwaiti delegation of young manufacturing professionals led by Dr Souhaila Al-Mutawa, faculty member of the Mechanical Engineering Department at Kuwait University (KU), experienced the world's fastest magnetic-levitation (maglev) train in Japan.

At the SCMAGLEV and Railway Park in the central Japanese city of Nagoya, the 11-member delegation tested a simulation of travelling at 500 kilometers per hour (kph) through a superconducting maglev simulator. Maglev train does not have an engine that pulls it, but the train floats 10 centimeters above the track propelled using the basic principles of electromagnetism. Currently, the maglev train is designed to reach speeds of more than 500 kph with the future target at 1,000 kph, and may eventually replace air travel.

Japan is a global pioneer and leader of this high-speed rail system. Central Japan Railway plans to launch the maglev line between Tokyo and Nagoya around 2027, which will cover the 285-kilometer journey in 40 minutes, down from the current 95 minutes.

"The delegation learned about the history of rail transportation and the importance of infra-structure development in any growing city," Dr Mutawa said after the visit to

the exhibit. In addition to the cutting-edge maglev simulator, the museum hosts a range of learning experiences, such as carriages of historical bullet trains and those of conventional lines.

"I was impressed with Japanese technological applications. I experienced 100 percent 4G mobile coverage including in tunnels, elevators, basements, and trains," said Hesham Al-Baqer, a network specialist at Zain Mobile Telecommunication Co. For his part, Khaleefah Al-Qallaf, a workshop director at Kuwait University, said the Japanese apply high technology only when necessary. "If a simple solution can be found to solve a problem, then it will be applied so that there are no wasted resources," Qallaf noted.

The delegation is currently on a weeklong tour in Japan visiting manufacturing-related facilities and factories. According to Dr Mutawa, the goal of this technical trip is to create a lasting impression through first-hand experience. Under Kuwait's Vision 2035, the nation is pushing forward transport-infrastructure projects, along with other strategic and mega projects covering such areas as oil and gas, electricity and water, education, housing, tourism, media, health and environment. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Jordanian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Al-Kayed hosted a ceremony recently to celebrate the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's 70th National Day and 100th Anniversary of the Arab Revolt. Kuwaiti government officials led by Justice Minister Yaqoub Al-Sane, ambassadors and other dignitaries attended the event which took place at Sheraton Hotel. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



KUWAIT: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kuwait Elkhan Gahraman hosted a ceremony recently at Marina Hotel to celebrate his country's National Day. Kuwait's Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa was present at the event which was also attended by diplomats and other dignitaries. — Photos by Joseph Shagra





AFRICAN DAY SHOWCASES CULTURAL DIVERSITY, BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

By Chidi Emmanuel

KUWAIT: Thousands of people descended at the Regency Hotel on Wednesday as Africans, Kuwaitis and expatriates celebrated Africa Day in a colorful style. The event featured lots of cultural displays - with each African country showcasing its rich tradition and cultural heritage in their respective booths. There were food fair, bonanza, free gifts and traditional dances.

"This is a good avenue to showcase African diversity and success. Africa has a lot of economic potentials with lots of investment opportunities and untapped resources. We used this event to promote investments opportunities and also to highlight African achievements as we work to promote peace in the region," the Charge D'Affaires of the Nigerian Embassy Bunuyaminu Hammawa noted. He praised Kuwait's efforts in promoting peace and development in Africa.

Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan lauded the steadily developing Kuwaiti-African relations. "Kuwait's relations with African nations are deeply-rooted - and date back to pre-oil discovery era," Mashaan said. He added that the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) has been playing a pivotal role in financing development projects across the continent.

"Only six months after its inception in 1961, the KFAED offered the first loan to an African country. KFAED has financed projects in 40 African countries, including 19 West African nations and 21 Central, Southern and Eastern

African nations in recent times - granting West African nations 139 loans amounting to \$1.640 billion, while the loans provided to Central, Southern and Eastern African nations has reached \$1.217 billion, he said.

Mashaan recalled the initiative announced by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in the Kuwait-hosted Third Afro-Arab Summit to launch a one-billion-dollar fund to finance infrastructure projects in African countries. He noted that several African delegations have visited Kuwait recently to boost bilateral ties in various domains. "The unique status of Kuwait for African nations was reflected in the African Union Summit held in July 2012 in Addis Ababa to which His Highness the Amir was invited. His Highness the Amir attended the summit as the first Arab leader from the Asian continent," he added.

African Day is an annual commemoration of the 1963 founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), presently known as the African Union (AU). Celebrations were held in many countries across the globe on that day. On the 25th of May, 1963, African leaders created an umbrella union called Organization of African Unity (OAU). On this day, leaders of 30 of the 32 independent African states signed a founding charter in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In 1991, the OAU established the African Economic Community, and in 2002 it metamorphosed to the African Union (AU). The African Union, comprised of 53 member states, has brought together the continent of Africa to collectively address the challenges it has faced, such as armed conflict, climate change and poverty.



KUWAIT: Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs Ambassador Hamad Al-Mashaan seen during the Africa Day celebration.





MOSCOW: First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the 4th joint ministerial meeting for strategic dialogue between the GCC and Russia. — KUNA

RUSSIA, GCC REITERATE SUPPORT TO KUWAIT-HOSTED YEMENI PEACE TALKS

KUWAIT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT REACHING COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT

MOSCOW: Foreign ministers of Russia and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states have reiterated support to the UN-sponsored and Kuwait-hosted Yemeni peace talks and urged Yemeni negotiators to take difficult decisions to pave the way for a peaceful settlement to the current crisis.

"The Ministers welcomed the cessation of hostilities in Yemen, pledged to support it, and urged all Yemeni parties to abide by it, expressing their continued strong support for the UN envoy, Ismail Ould Sheikh Ahmed," reads the joint statement issued following the Fourth Round of the Ministerial Strategic Dialogue between the Russian Federation and the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), held in Moscow Thursday.

"They also emphasized the importance of progress in talks convening in Kuwait and urged all parties to make the difficult decisions necessary to achieve a durable and inclusive political settlement of the conflict, according to the terms of UN Security Council Resolution 2216 (2015), the GCC Initiative and its implementation mechanism and Yemen's National Dialogue outcomes."

They affirmed their full commitment to safeguard the unity and territorial integrity of Yemen, to reject interference in its internal affairs, to stand by the Yemeni people and their aspirations for freedom, democracy and social justice.

Ould Sheikh Ahmed had stated during a press conference in Kuwait Thursday that will carry on with its efforts to push the Yemeni stakeholders involved in Kuwait consultations toward a peaceful solution to the crisis at home. He urged the Yemeni warring parties to assume their responsibility toward the Yemeni people. In addition, he called them to offer concessions for the sake of the Yemeni people, hoping that with the advent of the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, fresh steps will be taken to end their sufferings and to release detainees, besides consolidating ceasefire. Meanwhile, Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah expressed his optimism that Yemeni parties would reach a comprehensive agreement to end the country's conflict, saying that the peace negotiations are 'on the right track.'

Terrorism

The GCC and Russian ministers condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, reaffirming that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, and rejected associating terrorism with any religion, culture or ethnic group.

The ministers emphasized the need for concerted regional and international efforts to combat terrorism and to address factors conducive to its spread, eliminate the sources and any kind of support for terrorism and violent extremism including its funding, as well as combating organized cross-border crime.

They welcomed the establishment of the Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism and supported cooperation between the Russian Federation and the US-led International Coalition against the so-called Islamic State group.

Iran

On Iran, they noted that full implementation of Iran's nuclear deal with the world major powers and full compliance with all provisions of the UNSC resolutions will contribute to building confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program.

They emphasized the importance that relations between GCC member states and the Islamic Republic of Iran be based on the principles of good neighborhood, non-interference in internal affairs and respect of independency, sovereignty, territorial integrity.

They expressed support for a peaceful solution between Iran and the UAE over the three islands Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including direct negotiations between the two parties.

The ministers reiterated the importance of establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. They also stressed the right of all nations to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. They underlined the need to address all environmental concerns of regional countries, including in the field of nuclear safety. The Russian Federation noted the GCC's

deep concern over the continued launching of ballistic missiles in the Gulf region.

Syria

On Syria, the minister reaffirmed the need to preserve the unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and stability of Syria, and the importance of reaching a political solution to the crisis that preserves the lives of Syrians and leads to cessation of hostilities.

On Iraq, the ministers reiterated their commitment towards maintaining the unity, stability, territorial integrity and political independence of Iraq, free of external interference. They expressed solidarity with the Iraqi people in countering the so-called Islamic State group, calling for intensifying efforts to restore stability to the areas liberated from the group to allow delivery of assistance to the refugees and internally displaced persons in Iraq.

On Libya, they reaffirmed their commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Libya in accordance with the principles of non-interference in internal affairs. They expressed their deep concern over the increasing activities of terrorist groups in the country and voiced support for the ongoing political process and the relevant efforts of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Libya Martin Kobler.

Palestine

On the Arab-Israeli conflict, the ministers stressed the need for an immediate resumption of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations aimed at establishing an independent, viable and territorially continuous Palestinian State enjoying full sovereignty on the basis of the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Furthermore, the ministers stressed the need to activate dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions to help restore and deepen concepts of peace, security and justice, promoting the values of tolerance and mutual respect. They reaffirmed their support for the role in this regard of the King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue. — KUNA

Crime

Report

Duo arrested with abortion pills

KUWAIT: Salmiya police arrested two men, Egyptian and Indian, with possession of 550 tablets used for abortions. It was found that the Egyptian man was using the help of some Asian expats to sell the drugs. Policemen who were on patrol stopped the Indian man, and when he looked nervous, they searched him and found the banned tablets, so he was taken to the police station. He told police the tablets belong to an Egyptian man and he receives commission on his sales. The Egyptian suspect was arrested and 500 tablets were found in his apartment.

Fugitive arrested after fight

Jahra detectives arrested a bedoon (stateless) man who stabbed another in the neck during a fight between the two in Sulaibiya. Police and paramedics found the victim with the knife lodged seven cm deep in his neck, so he was taken to hospital. The suspect was arrested following fierce resistance, and was found wanted to serve a two-year-old sentence in a felony case. The suspect claimed the victim spoke ill about him. Separately, a fight broke out between two Egyptians in Abu Halifa, as one of them suspected the other of talking to his wife. Police received a call about the fight, so they went and put an end to the fight and took the two to the police station.

Policemen insulted

A female citizen insulted policemen, who found she is wanted on a breach of trust case. The woman was arrested and taken to concerned authorities.

Cross-dresser in custody

Hawally police arrested a cross-dresser along with a female citizen in Nugra. Both were drunk and had an imported liquor bottle. Police patrols noticed a car being driven erratically, so they stopped it and noticed what seemed to be two women inside, but when their IDs were checked, the driver was found to be a male. Both were sent to the Drugs Control General Department, while the cross dresser will be sent to vice detectives later.

Jewelry stolen

A thief stole jewelry worth KD 5,600 from a Syrian family's apartment, leaving invoices of its purchase behind. The tenant lodged a complaint at Fintas police station. He said his apartment was broken into when he and his family were out and the jewelry was stolen. — Al-Rai

MINISTRY WAREHOUSE FIRE 'DELIBERATE'

KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) announced in a technical report that a fire at the education ministry warehouses on May 13 was deliberate. But the education ministry said it hasn't received the KFSD report, and denied the involvement of any employee or trader in the incident. KFSD statement said the report that was approved by the Acting Director of KFSD Major General Khalid Al-Mikrad was handed to the education ministry after the technical inspections and evidence competition were completed.

Meanwhile, an official source at KFSD said the investigations department exerted major efforts in collecting information and evidence on the causes of the fire, including all those with any connection to the incident, starting with the man who called and said the fire broke out suddenly. The source said the Subhan fire center is only three minutes away, and only a street separates them. But when firemen arrived, they found the fire already raging, which indicates that it was arson, with the use of combustible material.

The source said a cigarette can burn paper or foam, but does not burn computers and printers without a heat source. He said the fire took place on a Friday, which is a holiday, and there was no one there other than the guard who was in a remote room, and confirmed that "all evidence clearly indicates that a crime took place at the education ministry warehouse". Assistant Undersecretary for Financial Affairs Yousuf Al-Najjar said the fire in the supply warehouses was referred to the legal affairs department at the ministry as it is the body authorized to send the issue to the public prosecution. — Al-Rai

International

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US backing of Kurdish militia enrages Turkey

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Romanian village lives again as haven for battered women

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Fading splendor of Pakistan Mughal mosque

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ALEPPO: A Syrian civil defense volunteer carries the body of a child following an attack by Syrian government forces yesterday in the Tariq al-Bab neighborhood of this northern city. — AFP

COALITION WARPLANES PUMMEL IS

ISLAMIC STATE DRIVES REBELS FROM NEAR TURKISH BORDER

BEIRUT: Warplanes from the US-led coalition have pounded the Islamic State group with at least 150 strikes to bolster a major offensive on the jihadists' Syrian stronghold of Raqqa, a monitor said yesterday. The US is backing twin assaults against IS - one in Raqqa province and another which aims to retake the Iraqi city of Fallujah across the border. A Kurdish-Arab alliance is being supported by coalition air raids as well as US forces on the ground in its push for territory north of Raqqa city - IS' de facto Syrian capital.

Turkey yesterday said it was "unacceptable" that US troops had been seen near Raqqa wearing insignia of Kurdish militia who belong to the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and who Ankara regards as a terror group. The coalition has been providing air support to the SDF with 150 strikes on IS positions since the assault began Tuesday, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a British-based monitor. "There has been a serious intensification of air strikes," Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman said.

SDF forces have pushed forward from Ain Issa, less than 60 km north of Raqqa city, into the

surrounding farmland and small villages. The fighting and bombardment has left 31 IS fighters dead so far, Abdel Rahman said. The number of SDF casualties was unclear. Near the frontline, an AFP photographer on Wednesday saw US soldiers supporting SDF forces, who say they have advanced seven kilometres from Ain Issa. The twin offensives come as world powers try to salvage a shaky ceasefire between the regime and non-jihadist rebels agreed in February to boost efforts to end a conflict that has killed more than 280,000 people.

Raqqa Residents Terrified

The estimated 300,000 people still living in Raqqa city are becoming increasingly desperate to flee. According to anti-IS activist group Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS), residents were paying smugglers \$400 each to try to escape. "There is nearly no one walking in the streets," said RBSS activist Hamoud Al-Musa. "People are afraid of a brutal onslaught from the warplanes, whether coalition, Russian, or even regime," he told AFP.

IS had set up a few new checkpoints in Raqqa city and was "amassing its forces on

the front lines" further north, he said. For the second time this week, coalition warplanes on Friday morning dropped leaflets encouraging residents to flee Raqqa. IS, which has tightened restrictions on movement, has been accused of using residents as human shields. Abdel Rahman said a handful of families had fled the city to Idlib province, controlled by a rebel alliance including IS' jihadist rival, Al-Nusra Front.

IS' Shock Advance

IS swept through rebel territory in Aleppo province yesterday in a shock advance, cutting off tens of thousands of internally displaced Syrians living in informal camps near the closed Turkish border. Pablo Marco, regional operations manager for Doctors Without Borders (MSF), said the group was "terribly concerned... about the estimated 100,000 people trapped between the Turkish border and active front lines."

In Aleppo city, at least four civilians including a child were killed in barrel bomb attacks on an opposition-controlled eastern district, according to the civil defense. Air strikes also killed 11 people in a bakery in the town of Hreitan and four in

Kfar Hamra in the same province, rescue workers said. Rebel rocket fire hit Aleppo's regime-held district of Midan, killing an elderly woman and wounding nine others, state media said.

In Iraq, pro-government forces have advanced towards bridges leading to IS-held Fallujah, said Staff Lieutenant General Abdulwahab al-Saadi, head of the Fallujah Liberation Operations Command. IS fighters were using "car bomb and suicide (bombers) and sniper detachments" to resist the advance. About 50,000 civilians are estimated to be trapped inside the city, and only 800 had been able to escape, according to the UN's refugee agency.

Spokeswoman Melissa Fleming said the UN had received reports that people including women and children had been killed trying to flee. "There have been reports of a dramatic increase in the number of executions of men and older boys in Fallujah refusing to fight on behalf of extremist forces," Fleming said. She described "harrowing tales" of families trekking for hours through the night on foot, sometimes hiding in old irrigation pipes, to reach safety. — AFP



This handout picture shows a shipwreck of migrants and refugees off Libya on Thursday. — AFP

DOZENS MISSING IN NEW SHIPWRECK OFF LIBYA

ROME: Dozens of migrants were missing yesterday after an overloaded fishing boat sank off the coast of Libya, the third major tragedy in the Mediterranean in as many days, Italian rescuers said. Italian coastguards sent in rescue ships after a call for help that spoke of 350 people in the water, while the Italian navy said it had saved 130 people and was still searching for others. The coastguard, which coordinates rescue operations in the area, was not able to immediately provide further information about the latest incident. But it said about 1,900 people were saved yesterday from 16 vessels in distress, adding to an estimated 10,000 people already rescued near the Libyan coast in the past four days. A bout of good weather as summer arrives has kicked off a fresh stream of boats attempting to make the perilous crossing from Libya to Italy. About 40,000 migrants and refugees have arrived in the country's southern ports so far this year.

But in one of the worst tragedies in the Mediterranean in recent months, a fishing trawler carrying some 650 people capsized off the coast of Libya on Wednesday. The Italian navy, which captured the tragedy in a horrifying video that shows the boat roll over and dump its passengers into the water, was able to rescue about 560 people. But five people died and 100 are still feared missing, according to many survivors who reported having lost a loved one or a close passenger.

On Thursday, the EU's naval force said up to 30 migrants were believed to have died after another ship flipped over off Libya. "Three sinkings in three days, it's very worrying," said Carlotta Sami, spokeswoman for the UN refugee agency in Rome. In the single deadliest migrant boat sinking since the crisis began, some 700 people died in April last year, also off the coast of the troubled north African country. — AFP

99 LASHES FOR PARTYING YOUTHS

TEHRAN: More than 30 students who partied at a graduation ceremony in northern Iran have received 99 lashes each for violating the Islamic republic's morality code, a news agency reported. "Following a report about a large number of young boys and girls mingling together in a villa around Qazvin, all those taking part in the party were arrested immediately," Mizanonline quoted on Thursday the town's prosecutor general as saying.

Esmail Sadeghi Niyaraki said the youths were put on trial and each sentenced to 99 lashes, a punishment which morality police carried out the same day "so to be a lesson for those who attempt to breach the conventions". No date was given. "The arrest of this many young girls and boys, who were half-naked, consuming alcohol and were engaged in indecent behavior, hurt the public opinion," the official said. "Thank God, within less than 24 hours, interrogation, investigation, trial, issue of verdict and carrying out the verdict were completed," said Niyaraki.

Mixed dancing is banned in Iran, especially if females do not wear the Islamic veil, and alcohol is prohibited. Niyaraki also warned that any restaurants or catering halls which allowed such mixed events or served alcohol would be closed down. — AFP

IRAQ FORCES FIRE TEAR GAS AS THOUSANDS STAGE PROTEST

PROTESTERS HEAD TO GREEN ZONE

BAGHDAD: Security forces fired tear gas as thousands of protesters gathered in central Baghdad yesterday and attempted to head to the Green Zone, a fortified area they have breached twice. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi had called on the demonstrators, most of them supporters of cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr, to stay home and security forces deployed to block their way to the Green Zone, but the protesters were undeterred. Demonstrators pushed past security forces at Tahrir Square, breached a barbed wire barrier and attempted to pull down slabs of heavy concrete blast wall blocking Jumhuriyah Bridge, which leads toward the Green Zone, where Iraq's main government institutions are located.

Some protesters, who are calling for a new government, gave olive branches and flowers to security personnel at Tahrir, but events quickly escalated, and the forces fired tear gas in an attempt to disperse the demonstration. Many of the protesters, most of them supporters of powerful Najaf-based cleric Sadr, had come equipped with gas masks or surgical masks. "Those with masks, go this way to pick up the injured," one protester instructed his comrades after the first canisters were fired at the crowd.

Demonstrators forced open a gate to the Green Zone and stormed the premier's office last Friday before being driven away by security forces. They used tear gas, water cannons, sound bombs and a barrage of bullets largely fired into the air to disperse the protesters and harry them away from the Green Zone, killing at least two people and injuring dozens. Abadi had sought to head off a repeat this week, calling on Thursday for protesters to postpone their demonstration, as security forces are busy fighting to retake the city of Fallujah from the Islamic State group.

Saif, a 23-year-old protester who was recovering from the effects of tear gas, said he had two brothers who were killed fighting IS. "I hope our forces finish the job in Fallujah; I wish them well, of course," Saif said. "But if those corrupt people in the Green Zone weren't there in the first place, there would be no Daesh and no war against Daesh," he said, using an Arabic acronym for IS. The protest eventually wrapped up with only minor injuries reported, mostly cases of suffocation.

Demonstrators faced little resistance when they entered the Green Zone and overran parliament in late April, but the period of tolerance of such actions has ended. Protests have been held almost every Friday for weeks by people demanding the current government be replaced with technocrats. Abadi proposed that measure in February, but has faced opposition from powerful parties that rely on control of ministries for patronage and funds. Sadr, a Najaf-based cleric who led an insurgency against US-led forces, has also demanded a technocratic government, encouraging his supporters to call for the change. — AFP



BAGHDAD: Protesters run from tear gas fired by Iraqi security forces to disperse the crowd in central Baghdad yesterday. — AP

ISRAELI MINISTER QUILTS BIBI'S 'EXTREMIST GOVT'

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu suffered his second cabinet resignation in a week yesterday when a minister quit over the appointment of a hardline nationalist in the "extremist government". Environment minister Avi Gabbay announced his resignation in a strongly worded statement that accused Netanyahu of putting the country on a path to ruin. Gabbay said that he was "unable to swallow" Netanyahu's decision to take the defense portfolio from former general Moshe Yaalon and hand it to Avigdor Lieberman, who has pledged harsh measures against Palestinian "terrorists". Yaalon resigned from the government a week ago in protest, warning of a rising tide of extremism in the party and the country as a whole. "I could not accept the removal of Yaalon, a professional and thoughtful defense minister," Gabbay said. "The country of course has the right to have a government of the right or left," he added. "But I do not think it is right... to form an extremist government. We must stop the process which I fear will lead to our ruin."

Gabbay, of the centre-right Kulanu party, is not a member of parliament and his resignation does not affect the ruling rightwing coalition's majority. Yaalon himself was quick to praise Gabbay for his stand. "In our politics, sticking to principles has become an object of ridicule, while U-turns and deceit are considered 'sophisticated'," he wrote on Twitter in Hebrew. "Full appreciation to Avi Gabbay who proves that another way is possible. One must not give up."

Co-opting Lieberman and his Yisrael Beitenu party will add five lawmakers to Netanyahu's previously wafer-thin majority if the coalition deal is given parliamentary approval next week as expected. In his announcement, Gabbay referred to the frosty relations between Netanyahu and US President Barack Obama.

'Completely Messed Up'

"It wasn't easy for me being a member of this government... which completely messed up relations with the most important power

in the world, which preserves our security interests." The United States has said that the new coalition raises "legitimate questions" about the Netanyahu government's commitment to a two-state solution with the Palestinians. US State Department spokesman Mark Toner, in a rare comment on Israeli internal politics, said Wednesday that Washington had "seen reports from Israel describing it as the most rightwing coalition in Israel's history". "And we also know that many of its ministers have said they oppose a two-state solution," he said.

Netanyahu says he still plans to pursue peace with the Palestinians - though negotiations have been at a standstill since April 2014. The Palestinians said Wednesday that Lieberman's appointment jeopardises regional stability. "The existence of this government brings a real threat of instability and extremism in the region," Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat told AFP, adding that the move would "result in apartheid, racism and religious and political extremism."

In 2001, Lieberman advocated bombing the Aswan Dam in Egypt, accusing Israel's Arab neighbor of supporting a Palestinian uprising. More recently he said that the leader of the Islamist movement Hamas in the Gaza Strip, Ismail Haniya, had 48 hours to hand over two detained Israeli civilians and the bodies of soldiers killed in a 2014 war "or you're dead". As defense minister, Lieberman, who himself lives in a Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank, would oversee military operations in the Palestinian territories and have a major say in policy towards the settlements. The defense portfolio is widely seen as the second-most powerful in the government, overseeing an array of contracts, missions and activities in a country on a near-constant war footing. Former Labour prime minister and defense minister Ehud Barak said after Yaalon's resignation that Israel's government "has been infected by the shoots of fascism". "Sooner or later we shall see the cost and can only pray that we shall not have to pay too high a price," he told Israel's Channel 10 TV. — AFP

BOKO HARAM VIOLENCE CREATES EDUCATION CRISIS

BUNI YADI, Nigeria: More than two years after being attacked by Boko Haram, piles of blackened furniture, iron bed frames and computers still litter the burnt-out shell of the Federal Government College in Buni Yadi. The corrugated iron roofing has caved in and the eerily silent school compound in Yobe state, northeast Nigeria, is overgrown with shrubs and grass. Boko Haram fighters stormed the boarding school on February 25, 2014, killing at least 43 students as they slept, and destroying classrooms, offices, laboratories and dormitories.

Five months earlier, 40 students were shot in their beds at an agricultural college in Gujba, 23 km away. After the second attack, public officials in Yobe closed all schools. But local residents say their children have yet to resume classes, even with relative peace restored in the state. "Some parents who have the means have sent their children to schools elsewhere," Husseini Idi told AFP from under a tree outside his burnt-out house overlooking the deserted school. "Most of us are poor and can't afford to send their children to schools in other places."

Massive Attack

The situation in Buni Yadi is reflected across northeast Nigeria and a reminder of the challenges facing those charged with reconstruction of the devastated region. The insurgency exacerbated problems in a region already grappling with low levels of education. According to a report published last year by the Africa Health, Human and Social Development Information Service, some 52.4



BUNI YADI, Nigeria: A picture taken on May 21, 2016 shows burnt computers littering a destroyed computer room of the Federal Government College in Buni Yadi. — AFP

percent of men and boys over aged six and 61.1 percent of girls and women had no education in the northeast. In Yobe, it said the figure was 83.3 percent of the 1.4 million males.

More than one million children have been kept out of school because of the violence since it began in 2009, the UN children's agency said in December. In Yobe, Boko Haram, which opposes so-called Western education, killed 128 students in five public schools, burning down hundreds of classrooms, the state government said last week. Next door in Borno, the authorities said at least 350 teachers have been killed and 512 schools destroyed, including in Chibok, from where more than 200 girls were abducted in April 2014.

At least 18,000 of the 130,000 people to flee

when Boko Haram attacked Buni Yadi again in July last year have now returned, according to one military officer in the town involved in documenting returns. But one of those to come back, Ibrahim Kampani, said: "For two years our children have not been going to school and this worries us as parents."

Town v Country

One school that has reopened is the Government Comprehensive Secondary School in Yobe's commercial hub, Potiskum, where a suicide bomber disguised as a student killed 58 on Nov 10, 2014. "The advantage we have over schools in the countryside is that we are located in the town where Boko Haram have no base," said vice-princi-

pal Jubril Muhammad. "Most of the students are based in the town and could come for classes from their homes while repairs were carried out on facilities destroyed in the attacks."

Schools in hard-to-reach rural areas, however, face greater difficulties, with Boko Haram remnants still said to operate in the bush. In Chibok, for example, there have been promises to rebuild the school, which was the only one in the town and surrounding villages. But despite global outrage at the mass abduction that brought worldwide attention to the conflict, so far nothing has been done and the compound is in ruins.

On Alert

In Buni Yadi, residents say the security situation is still too precarious for schools to restart, despite military claims of success. "We don't want to take any chances," said one government official, who asked not to be identified. "It is still not safe for schools to reopen in the Buni Yadi district." Muazu Usman hasn't been able to pick mangoes from his farm several kilometres outside the town since he returned last month. He said nearby countryside is "still infested with Boko Haram".

The bush outside Buni Yadi leads to Sambisa forest, a former game reserve in Borno which Boko Haram has turned into its stronghold. Soldiers and civilian vigilantes patrol Buni Yadi's dusty, potholed streets in pick-up trucks. "We are always on alert," said one vigilante at a checkpoint, holding a hunting rifle in one hand and a machete in the other. "We have pushed Boko Haram out but we are not relaxing our vigilance." — AFP

US BACKING OF KURDISH MILITIA ENRAGES TURKEY

ANKARA SLAMS 'HYPOCRISY', 'DOUBLE STANDARDS'

ANTALYA, Turkey: Turkey yesterday accused its NATO ally the United States of "unacceptable" behavior after US commandos in Syria were pictured assisting a Kurdish militia that is branded a terror group by Ankara and even wearing their insignia. The scathing accusations of "hypocrisy" and "double standards" levelled by Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu came after an AFP photographer saw US troops in Syria wearing insignia of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG).

Ankara regards the YPG as a terror group, accusing it of carrying out attacks inside Turkey and being the Syrian branch of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) which has fought an insurgency against the Turkish state for over three decades. However, Washington sees the YPG as the most effective fighting force against Islamic State jihadists in Syria.

"We advise them (US troops) to wear badges of Daesh (IS) or (Al-Qaeda affiliate) Al-Nusra when they go to other parts of Syria and badges of Boko Haram when they go to Africa," Cavusoglu said with angry sarcasm. "If they don't see these (groups) as the same as the YPG, then this is double standards, hypocrisy," he said at a news conference in the southern resort of Antalya.

'Two Different Wars'

Soner Cagaptay, director of the Turkey Research Programme at the Washington Institute, told AFP the dispute highlighted a "long-term problem facing the US-Turkish relationship". He said Turkey and the United States were "effectively fighting two different wars in Syria", with Washington focused on the fight against IS and Turkey still working to defeat President Bashar Al-Assad's regime. The AFP photographer saw US forces on the ground in northern Syria helping the Kurdish-Arab Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in a major offensive against IS in its Raqa province stronghold. Several US commandos were also photographed

wearing the military insignia of the YPG, which make up the bulk of the SDF. "It is unacceptable for the soldiers of the United States - our ally which is very assertive in the fight against terror - to use or wear the badges of a terror organization," Cavusoglu said.

Ozgur Unluhisarcikli, director of the office of the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Ankara, told AFP the dispute had been "poisoning" US-Turkey relations. "The US sees the YPG as a local

President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry the United States had said the YPG "are not reliable" and vowed Washington would "stand by Turkey in the fight against terrorism". "And then they wear the badges of the terrorist organisation responsible for the last two attacks in Ankara," he said.

Turkey blamed the YPG for attacks in the capital this year that killed dozens, even though they were claimed by a PKK splinter group the Kurdistan



FATISAH, Syria: Armed men in uniform identified by Syrian Democratic forces as US special operations forces are seen in this village in the northern Syrian province of Raqa on May 25, 2016. — AFP

actor who can be cooperated with in Syria. Whereas Turkey, rightfully, sees it as the PKK's partner in Syria," he said, adding it was unlikely the differences would be bridged in the future.

'YPG Unreliable'

The United States, like the European Union, classifies the PKK as a terror group. But it has resisted lobbying from Turkey to also outlaw the YPG and stop working with the group in Syria. Cavusoglu insisted that in private talks with

Freedom Falcons (TAK). Ankara has repeatedly said it makes no distinction between "terror" organizations, be it IS, the PKK or the YPG. A statement released Thursday after a meeting of Turkey's National Security Council complained the YPG and its political wing the Democratic Union Party (PYD) had been allowed to open offices in EU cities including Prague, Stockholm, Berlin and Paris. "Giving encouragement and capacities to terrorists who have shed blood in Turkey is incompatible with any friendship and alliance," it said. — AFP

NO NEW SIGNAL FROM EGYPTAIR JET SINCE CRASH

CAIRO/PARIS: No new radio signal has been received from an EgyptAir jet since the day it crashed in the Mediterranean last week, sources close to the investigation said yesterday. Media reports on Thursday suggested that a new signal had allowed officials to further home in on where the black box recorders might be located. But the sources told Reuters that nothing new had been detected since a radio signal picked up on the day of the crash from the plane's emergency locator transmitter (ELT) which allowed officials to determine a broadly defined search zone of 5 km in radius.

"There has been nothing since day one," one of the sources said. More than a week after the Airbus A320 crashed on May 19 with 66 people on board, including 30 Egyptians and 15 from France, investigators have no clear picture of its final moments. Search teams are working against the clock to recover the two flight recorders that will offer vital clues on the fate of flight 804, because the acoustic signals that help locate them in deep water cease transmitting after about 30 days.

France's BEA air crash investigation agency said French naval survey vessel Laplace had left Corsica on Thursday and was heading toward the search zone north of the Egyptian port of Alexandria. A French official said the vessel would arrive tomorrow or Monday. The vessel contains equipment from ALSEAMAR, a subsidiary of French industrial group Alcen, which can pick up black-box pinger signals over long distances up to 5 km, according to the company's website. These are separate from the signals transmitted by the ELT, which sends a radio signal upon impact that is not designed to continue emitting once the plane is submerged underwater, said one of the sources close to the investigation. — Reuters

'POINTLESS' FENCE FOR MIGRANTS WHO NEVER CAME

KOSTEL, Slovenia: In Slovenia's southeastern Bela Krajina region, where the crystal-clear Kolpa river marks the border with Croatia, a forlorn barbed wire fence reminds locals of the migrants that never came. Instead of keeping refugees out, the barrier cutting through lush forests and gently swaying fields all along this pristine waterway is now chasing away tourists. Its razor-sharp coil has also become a lethal trap for wildlife. Last December, soldiers had rushed to erect the fence on the European Union's external Schengen border, as hundreds of thousands of migrants trekked along the Balkans in their quest to reach wealthy bloc members.

The aim was to channel the influx towards official frontier checkpoints and stop migrants from entering Slovenia illegally via the so-called green border. But the 166-km barrier - more than half the length of the Kolpa river - has proved much ado about nothing, say disgruntled locals in the pretty village of Kostel. "The migration flow was over 100 kilometres away from here. We haven't seen a single migrant but they (the army)

occupied us with this fence anyway," Martin Lindic, the owner of a canoeing camp on the river, told AFP.

He said his business had suffered as a result. "People are calling to book and, the first thing they ask me about is the fence." Although the Balkan migrant trail is now closed after countries shut their borders earlier this year, the barrier is still in place. The government of Prime Minister Miro Cerar said recently its removal "depends on the development of the migrant crisis".

'Not Right'

Every summer, more than 100,000 tourists - mostly Slovenians but also others - flock to the tranquil Kolpa valley and explore its natural beauty by paddling down the river in canoes or kayaks. Because of the hard-to-access natural terrain on both sides of the Kolpa, the fence was mostly erected in areas where access to the river is easiest. But these are also the main spots for tourists. Some places, like the well-known fish restaurant Madronic, were completely surrounded by the fence.

Others, such as the Vinica camp, find



RAKOVEC, Slovenia: A barbed wire fence is seen at the Slovenian-Croatian border crossing on April 9, 2016. — AFP

themselves cut off from the river. "The fence surprises us... It's totally pointless," said tourist Emil, who has been coming here for years with his family. Ahead of the tourist season, Slovenian authorities

announced the barbed wire fence would be swapped with a "friendlier" mesh version in tourist areas. But by the beginning of April, merely 10 km of barrier had been replaced. — AFP

ROMANIAN VILLAGE LIVES AGAIN AS HAVEN FOR BATTERED WOMEN

RESIDENTS HAIL INITIATIVE

CONCESTI, Romania: As more and more residents left looking for work, a Romanian village desperate to ensure its future has found a new way of boosting its population that also helps the needy. It has become a safe haven for women and children fleeing domestic violence. The novel scheme was dreamt up by the village of Concesti in the far northeast, one of Romania's poorest regions, where 12 families have already arrived in the six months since it started. Six others are on a waiting list.

"It's so good here. I've found peace and calm, I can finally raise my children as I had hoped," said 36-year-old Claudia. The mother of three boys and three girls aged two to 18 said she never expected to find herself in a rural backwater near the borders with Moldova and Ukraine.

Yet the final straw came on Dec 29, when her husband broke down the door of

her home despite a restraining order to stay away after 16 years of brutalizing, raping and insulting his wife. She piled the children into a bus and left for an unknown village where the mayor, she had heard on television, was offering free housing to poor families with several children. "I had no idea if they would actually welcome us... but I'd had enough of sleeping with the children in the train station," she told AFP.

Though considered prevalent in Romania domestic violence was taboo under the old communist regime, according to Mihaela Mangu, a psychologist with a group called Anais that helps such victims. The country has been slow in addressing it since, she added, explaining that it only introduced protection laws four years ago. Mangu blames this on "a patriarchal culture that is still widespread in Romania, and by a lack of confidence in

authorities". After the 800-km journey from their home in Romania's southwest, Claudia and her family spent their first calm night in years in a home in Concesti. Down the road in another house nestled on a sunny hillside, Valentina, 42, busily cooks as she cradles her youngest child Alexandru in her arms. Five of her eight children will be home from school shortly and hungry for dinner. Her story of her husband's brutality echoed Claudia's. "The children were sick of it. One day they said to me, "Mum, we can't go on like this. You have to do something'."

She too had serious doubts about the offer from Concesti, whose population, though never large, was down to 1,800 residents - many ageing - after working-age residents increasingly left in search of jobs. "I didn't really believe it," she told AFP, but "when we arrived here, the fire was already burning, there was food in the house and it was clean". Concesti mayor Costel Nazare said the prospect that the village school would close because of the massive emigration and declining birth rate, started off the idea.

Initially, the offer was aimed at poor households but of the 13 families who arrived since December, seven are single mothers and their children, Nazare told AFP. So far, his office has bought out some 10 homes for a total 450,000 lei (\$112,000). "At first I thought there would be problems but then I saw the villagers' reaction and it was very positive," said the mayor, who also helps the new residents find jobs in local farming or construction. On Saturdays, Valentina works in the fields or in a warehouse for locally grown vegetables. She earns Å11 a day, which tops up her state welfare aid to give her a total Å370 a month, in a country where the average net salary is Å470 a month. — AFP



CONCESTI, Romania: Valentina, 42, poses with her children in front of their house in this village on March 31, 2016. — AFP

KAMPALA BLASTS MASTERMIND GETS LIFE SENTENCE

KAMPALA: A Ugandan court yesterday handed down a life sentence for the mastermind of twin bombings targeting football fans in Kampala that killed 76 people. The court also sentenced four accomplices to life behind bars for the 2010 suicide attacks, while two others received 50-year sentences. They faced the death penalty but their lawyers pleaded for lighter sentences on the grounds that they were young and had been brainwashed.

Judge Alfonse Owiny-Dollo said: "I do not think that the death penalty would assuage the victims and give closure to the indelible pain that society has suffered." He said the act targeting "innocent people... is most repugnant and cannot be justified by whatever cause. Indiscriminate killing must attract a corresponding punishment." The attacks claimed by Somalia's Al-Shabab jihadist group targeted fans watching the World Cup final between the Netherlands and Spain at a restaurant and at a rugby club in the Ugandan capital.

Of the 13 men tried, seven were convicted of terrorism, murder and attempted murder. They came from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Five others were acquitted of those charges, while another was acquitted of lesser crimes. The ringleader, Issa Ahmed Luyima, left Uganda the day before the blasts to evade arrest and threw the cellphone used to coordinate the attacks into a pit latrine but it was later found. Two men were already convicted in 2011 for their role in the attacks. Edris Nsubuga, who admitted terrorism charges, was spared the death penalty because he expressed contrition over the carnage and was jailed for 25 years. The other man, Muhamoud Mugisha, received five years for conspiracy to commit terrorism.

'Justice has Been Delivered'

"I think under the circumstances of this case the sentence looks fair," defense lawyer Caleb Alaka said, while Jane Okuo, a spokeswoman for the prosecutor's office, added: "Justice has been delivered." The Kampala trial was delayed after the lead prosecutor was murdered in March 2015. Joan Kagezi, acting assistant director of public prosecution, was shot dead by men on a motorbike as she drove home with three of her children. The Kampala blasts were the first attack outside Somalia by the Al-Qaeda-linked Shabab and were a revenge attack against Uganda for sending troops to the war-torn country. Thousands of Ugandan troops form the backbone of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the UN-backed force established to fight the Shebab Islamists and protect the internationally recognized government. The Shebab still targets countries in the region, carrying out the 2013 assault on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi that killed at least 67 people, and the attack on Kenya's Garissa university in April 2015, killing at least 148 people. Although the main Shabab force is Somali-led and operates mainly inside southern Somalia, it has since branched out with franchises operating in regional nations. — AFP

CHINA FACES HEADACHES FROM WARMING VIET-US TIES

HONG KONG: At a stroke, the US and Vietnam have complicated the strategic outlook for China over the disputed South China Sea. As US President Barack Obama marked one of his last trips to Asia by the historic lifting of Washington's arms embargo on Vietnam, he repeatedly insisted it was not directed at Beijing. And yet regional military sources and security analysts say China will face short and longer term strategic headaches from the fully normalized relationship between former enemies in Hanoi and Washington.

Operationally, China faces the short-term prospect of Vietnam obtaining US-sourced radars and sensors, surveillance planes and drones to better monitor and target Chinese forces, the analysts say. In the longer term, the move makes Hanoi a key player in Obama's strategic pivot to East Asia. US arms manufacturers will compete with Russia for big-ticket weapons sales to Vietnam. The US Navy may get a long-held wish to use Cam Ranh Bay, the best natural harbor in the South China Sea, military sources say.

Then there is the prospect of political cooperation and greater intelli-

gence sharing over China's assertiveness, according to diplomatic sources, even if Vietnam shuns any formal steps towards a military alliance. Such moves dovetail with the goals of Vietnam's military strategists who have told Reuters they want to discreetly raise the costs on China's rapidly modernizing forces from attacking Vietnam again. Vietnam understands that a future conflict with their giant neighbour would be vastly more difficult than the bloody land battles on their northern border that rumbled through the 1980s, or the sea battle over the Spratlys in 1988.

Relying on diplomacy

Chinese official reaction has so far been muted. But Beijing is paying close attention to Vietnam's acquisition of modern weaponry and deployments in the South China Sea, said Ruan Zongze, a researcher at the China Institute of International Studies, a think tank linked to the Foreign Ministry. "It's not impossible that this will then impact the territorial issue between China and Vietnam," said Ruan, a former Chinese diplomat.

Zhang Baohui, a mainland security expert at Hong Kong's Lingnan University, said he believed Vietnamese planners knew they could never prevail against the modern Chinese military, so they had to rely on diplomacy to keep stable relations with Beijing. Zhang said he expected this to continue, despite the Obama visit, saying it was the "cheapest form of defense". "Vietnam is working the US into an enhanced deterrence strategy," he said. "To enhance its relations with China, they have to play the US card," he said.

Cam Ranh Bay

US naval officials say they are keen to gradually increase ship visits, but are aware of Vietnamese concerns over pushing China too hard. When in March Vietnamese officials announced the opening of a new international port in Cam Ranh to foreign navies, China was one of the first militaries to get a formal invite, according to reports in Vietnam's military press.

US port calls are currently long-planned formal affairs. But US military officials say a servicing agreement is

one long term option to allow US warships to make routine visits to Cam Ranh Bay. Security analysts say even a small increase in ship visits, for example, would complicate China's operations in the South China Sea, now centered on dual-use facilities being built on seven artificial islands in the Spratlys archipelago. China claims 80 percent of the South China Sea as its territory, while Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei also have overlapping claims across one of the world's most important shipping lanes.

Lifting the embargo not only offers an opportunity for US arms makers in Vietnam but elsewhere in rapidly developing Southeast Asia as well, said a military advisor in Thailand. "The US sees opportunity and demand opening up in various other countries, such as Laos and Cambodia, which use weapons from Russia and China," said Panitan Wattanayagorn, an adviser to Thailand's Defense Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwon. "Their economies are expanding, but they still have old weapons so there is an opportunity." — Reuters



Mt Everest is seen from the route to Kalapatthar in Nepal. Climbers yesterday found the body of one of two Indians who went missing last week near the top of Mount Everest, while a helicopter brought back the body of an Australian woman who died on the mountain. —AP

BODY OF INDIAN CLIMBER FOUND ON EVEREST, FOURTH FATALITY IN A WEEK

KATHMANDU: The body of an Indian climber was found on the upper slopes of Mount Everest, raising the death toll on the world's tallest mountain since it was re-opened to expeditions this spring to four. Sherpas searching for two Indian climbers missing since last Saturday located the body of Paresch Nath, 58, above the South Col (7,900 meters), hiking officials said on Friday. "They are bringing the body down while the search for another Indian climber is continuing," said Wangchu Sherpa of the Trekking Team Nepal company that organized their expedition.

About 400 climbers have reached the top of Everest this month, the first time they were on the mountain after a 7.8 magnitude earthquake set off an avalanche that killed at least 18 people at Base Camp a year ago. On Friday, a rescue helicopter brought the body of Australian climber Maria Strydom from Everest to the Nepali capital of Kathmandu. Strydom, 34, was nearing the 8,850-metre (29,035 foot) summit when she fell ill with altitude sickness and had to turn back. She died last Saturday.

"Her body has now been brought to

Kathmandu from the mountain," said Phu Tenzi Sherpa of the Seven Summit Treks that organized her expedition. Strydom's husband, Robert Gropel, who was in her team and also suffered altitude sickness, was airlifted to Kathmandu early this week. Arnold Coster, who led the expedition, said Seven Summit Treks was as prepared as any. The Dutch mountaineer said he had personally selected climbers, and Strydom and Gropel had three experienced sherpas between them.

Gropel said the pair began their summit bid on Friday night in clear weather, departing from Camp 4, but at the South Summit at nearly 8,000 meters, Strydom slowed, stricken by altitude sickness. Gropel also began to suffer from a lack of oxygen, hampering his thought processes. "It took a while for me to register that I had medication, and so as soon as I realized I gave her a dexamethasone injection," Gropel told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. With the medication and more oxygen brought up by sherpas, Strydom improved and was making her way down. She then collapsed suddenly and could not be revived. — Reuters

N KOREA THREATENS RETALIATION AFTER S KOREAN WARNING SHOTS

EUROPE STEPS UP N KOREA SANCTIONS WITH OIL, FINANCE BANS

SEOUL: North Korea threatened retaliation yesterday after South Korea fired what it said were warning shots when a patrol boat and fishing boat from the North crossed the disputed sea border off the west coast of the Korean peninsula. The two vessels from the North retreated about eight minutes after the South Korean navy fired five 40 mm artillery shots at around 7:30 am local time, South Korean officials said. The North Korean boats had crossed the Northern Limit Line, a border that the North disputes, near the South Korean border island of Yeonpyeong, according to the South Korean military.

North Korea accused the South Korean navy of intruding into its waters and said the South fired at its ships in a "grave provocative act," the Supreme Command of the North's Korean People's Army was quoted as saying by the official KCNA news agency yesterday. "The provocation-makers are going to regret for ever how horrible the aftermath of their reckless firing first will be," it was quoted as saying. North Korea frequently makes threatening statements against the South. Tensions have been high since the North conducted a nuclear test in January and a space rocket launch in February, prompting a United Nations Security Council resolution in March tightening sanctions against the isolated state.

North Korean fishing boats occasionally stray into South Korean waters. Over the years, navy vessels from both sides have traded fire in sometimes deadly incidents. In 2010, 46 South Korean sailors were killed when their ship sank in what the South says was a torpedo attack by the North. North Korea has denied responsibility. The two countries remain in a technical state of war since their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce, not a peace treaty. Pyongyang recently proposed military talks with Seoul, but the South dismissed the offer as "a bogus peace offensive" because it lacks a plan to end the North's nuclear program.

The European Union stepped up its sanctions on North Korea yesterday with near-blanket trade and travel bans after Pyongyang's latest nuclear test and rocket launch, a move going beyond new UN Security Council sanctions. Pyongyang is also banned from selling any oil-related or luxury goods to the European Union, while EU nations cannot invest in the country's mining, refining and chemical industries. "Considering that the actions of (North Korea) constitute a grave threat to international peace and security in the region and beyond, the EU decided to further expand its restrictive measures," the Council said.

North Korea's latest nuclear test was on Jan 6. On Feb 7, it launched a rocket that the United States said used banned ballistic missile technology. Pyongyang said it was a peaceful satellite launch. The EU measures, which diplomats say are designed to show solidarity with major EU trade partners South Korea and Japan, come on top of asset freezes and travel bans for another 16 North Koreans agreed earlier this year. That puts 66 people and 42 companies under the EU sanctions regime.

EU foreign ministers have reinforced their sanctions several times in recent years to include asset freezes and bans on financing and the delivery of banknotes. EU countries cannot export arms or metals used in ballistic missile systems and are banned from selling gold, diamonds and luxury goods to North Korea. Joint ventures are outlawed. However, the impact of the new measures is likely to be limited as trade between the European Union and North Korea fell to just 34 million euros in 2014 from more than 300 million euros a decade ago. Germany and Sweden are also reluctant to totally isolate North Korea. They have maintained diplomatic ties in Pyongyang since the 1970s, providing humanitarian aid to North Koreans. — Agencies

FADING SPLENDOR OF PAKISTANI MUGHAL MOSQUE

THATTA: Legend says when construction on Pakistan's Shah Jahani mosque was destroyed in 1644, advisers to the Mughal governor told him to find someone "who is so pious that he has committed no sin in all his life" to lay the foundation. Bells rang out with the message, calling on such men to come in the darkness of the night and lay a stone in the grounds of the mosque, which was being constructed on the orders of Shah Jahan, the Mughal emperor best known for building the Taj Mahal.

The next day, 450 bricks were found placed in the foundations at the site in the town of Thatta. "And thus the construction work started taking off," said Syed Murad Ali Shah, the ninth generation heir to Amir Khan, then-governor of Sindh. "There were hundreds of pious men and saints in those old good times, but there are none today to salvage the mosque," he said, standing outside the centuries-old structure, its grandeur now threatened by time, exposure, neglect and negligence.

Completed in 1647 by thousands of laborers, the Shah Jahani mosque is a rare example of Pakistan's Mughal heritage outside of the country's cultural centre of Lahore, with its famous fort and Badshahi mosque. Thatta was for centuries the historic capital of Lower Sindh, and the central mosque would fill to capacity on Fridays and during Eid. Spanning

more than 6,300 square feet, it was famously constructed so that an imam's voice could travel to every corner without amplification, pinging through dozens of domes lining the corridors surrounding its vast courtyard.

But as Thatta's importance declined after the 18th century, the mosque too fell into disrepair. Poor reconstruction work carried out in the 1970s by the federal government inflicted irreparable damage to original features including its unique auditory system. "Many things were replaced during the repair work, and the replacements have ruined the original immaculate work, as well as disturbing the sound system," said Mohammad Ali Manji, principal of the Government College Thatta. "No conservationist or archaeologist was consulted (for the repair) work, so its originality was badly damaged," said Qasim Ali Qasim, director of the Sindh Archaeology Department.

The facade of the mosque's arched entrance was damaged during the repairs, with stones engraved with Quranic verses removed and taken to the National Museum in Karachi then dumped in a junkyard. They were retrieved earlier this year only to be installed in a replica of the mosque's arch built at the entrance to the museum, a move that enraged mosque prayer leaders who



THATTA: Pakistani tourists gather at the historical Mughal emperor Shah Jahan Mosque in Thatta in southern Sindh province. — AFP

wanted them returned. Qasim said efforts are being made to drain groundwater threatening the structure of the mosque, which still draws a small number of worshippers. While fascinated tourists can be seen posing for selfies before the intricate mosaic tiles on the

foot-thick walls, slowly being sundered from the red bricks beneath them by humidity. But, Qasim said, despite the mosque's unique and historic qualities, there are no plans for any further restoration of its fading splendor. — AFP

CHINA EYES TURNING SOUTH CHINA SEA ISLANDS INTO MALDIVES-STYLE RESORTS

BEIJING: China aims to turn some of the islands in the disputed South China Sea into Maldives-style resorts catering for weddings with new developments on areas that don't need a military presence, a state-run newspaper quoted a top official yesterday as saying. China began tourist cruises to the South China Sea on a trial basis in 2013, as part of efforts to cement its claims by boosting the civilian presence there. China claims most of the energy-rich waters through which about \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year. Neighbours Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also have claims. In an interview with the official China Daily, Xiao Jie, mayor of what China calls Sansha city, said he hopes the area will become a major tourist attraction comparable to the Maldives.

"We will develop some islands and reefs to accommodate a select number of tourists," Xiao said, adding they would be in places without a military presence. "It will be an orderly and gradual procedure." Sansha city is on Woody Island in the Paracel archipelago, China's administrative base for islands and reefs it controls. There will be sea plane trips, island weddings, fishing and diving trips, Xiao added. "The arrival of tourists will nourish the need for divers and windsurfers," he said. Xiao said the cruises had been very popular with tickets hard to come by. "It is not an easy trip, but many people with a patriotic spirit want to try it," he added.

A second cruise ship would start operating soon, the newspaper said. There would also be regular flights to the southern Chinese island of Hainan, and Xiao said he was hopeful of direct flights one day to Beijing. The report did not say if foreigners would be allowed to visit. To date, only Chinese nationals have been permitted to go on tours there. It is also not clear if any of the islands in the Spratlys will be opened to tourists. The United States and its allies in the region have voiced concern about China's increasingly assertive pursuit of its claims in the South China Sea, including artificial island building and the construction of airfields and other military facilities. China says most of the building work is for civilian purposes. — Reuters

CAMBODIA JAILS PM BODYGUARDS OVER ATTACK ON OPPOSITION MPs

OPPOSITION CALLS THE PUNISHMENT LENIENT

PHNOM PENH: A Cambodian court yesterday jailed for a year three bodyguards of Prime Minister Hun Sen for attacking two opposition politicians during a march by government supporters, but the opposition decried the punishment as too lenient. Since the beatings outside parliament last year, tension has risen amid acrimonious exchanges between Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), which are eyeing a general election in 2018. Heng Sokha, a judge at the municipal court in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, suspended three years of the four-year terms handed to the men, taking into account their confessions over the attack, and their cooperation with authorities.

The men, Sot Vanny, Chay Sarit and Mao Hoeun, admitted in court that they belonged to self-styled strongman Hun Sen's bodyguard. The opposition CNRP was unhappy with the outcome, however. "This verdict is not acceptable, and our legal team will discuss further whether to appeal," CNRP lawyer Sam Sokong said. "This was a brutal attack." In a report on the beatings, New York-based Human Rights Watch accused Cambodia of a cover-up and called for a UN-assisted independent investigation to identify its planners and perpetrators. More than two years ahead of the election, the opposition is on the back foot as its top politicians face a battery of legal charges they say are politically motivated.

CNRP leader Sam Rainsy has been in exile since late 2015 to avoid jail on charges for which he had previously received a royal pardon. His deputy, Kem



PHNOM PENH: Cambodian suspects Suth Vanny (bottom center), Chay Sarith (top 2nd left) and Mao Hoeun (top left) are escorted by police officials at Phnom Penh's municipal court yesterday. Three soldiers from Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen's elite bodyguard unit were sentenced to one year in prison yesterday for brutally beating two opposition lawmakers last year. — AFP

Sokha, was cited yesterday for contempt of court after failing to appear on Thursday to hear charges for procurement of prostitution over a leaked recording of purported telephone conversation he had with a woman. Sokha's lawyer, Sam Sokong, dismissed the charge as baseless, saying his client had reasonable grounds not to appear in court. The CNRP and a workers union yesterday threatened mass protests and a parliamentary boycott if Sokha is arrested.

Armed police briefly visited the CNRP headquarters on Thursday, in

what the US embassy, in a statement, called a "disproportionate and dangerous" show of force, and urged dialogue between the two parties. Separately, two US lawmakers called for an immediate end to the crackdown on Cambodia's opposition and denounced "the current climate of fear and intimidation". Hun Sen faced his biggest challenge in three decades of rule at the last election, in 2013. He claimed a narrow victory, but the CNRP accused him of cheating and boycotted parliament for a year. — Reuters

US COUPLE ACCUSED OF ENSLAVING TWO SOUTH KOREAN CHILDREN

NEW YORK: An indictment against a New York couple accused of treating two immigrant children living in their home like their personal slaves "read like a frightening childhood fairy tale", the defense attorney said. New York prosecutors have charged Sook Yeong Park, 49, and her husband Jeong Taek Lee, 53, with labor trafficking and endangering the welfare of a child, among a slew of other charges.

After taking the children into their homes from South Korea in 2010 at the request of their parents, Park and Lee forced them, over six years, to work as domestic servants for them and turn over earnings from outside jobs, according to the 61-count indictment seen by the Thomson Reuters Foundation. The names of the children in the case, a sister and brother who were 8 and 11 when they first moved in with the couple, were blacked out. The charges rang like a fairy tale, said Dennis Ring, the couple's defense attorney, "because they are just that - a fairy tale." "It did not happen ... the allegations will be exposed as pure fiction," he added in an email interview on Thursday.

The couple is further accused of pocketing more than \$100,000 which the children's parents wired from South Korea to cover their needs. They confiscated the siblings' passports shortly after their arrival, according to the indictment, and forced them to sleep on the floor without a mattress. Charges also refer to instances of the brother and sister being beaten and touched on "sexual or other intimate parts." "The allegations in this case are extremely disturbing," said Richard A. Brown, the district attorney of Queens County, in New York City. "And even more upsetting considering the young ages of the alleged victims."

Police intervened after the young siblings told school officials about physical abuse, said the district attorney's office. Defendants Park and Lee were arraigned earlier this week in a New York state court. Both remained in custody after failing to post bail, according to the New York City Department of Correction's website. — Reuters

ART OF DIPLOMACY - INSIDE US STATE DEPARTMENT COLLECTION

WASHINGTON: The elevator brings visitors up out of the dull, beige maze of the US State Department's bureaucratic warren and back in time to a hall lined with period décor recalling the era of the American Revolution. The 18th century backdrop is artificial-plaster and resin overlaying the modern office structure-but the diplomatic reception rooms house a unique collection of 5,000 historic artefacts.

When the state rooms were first opened in 1961, the institutional office furniture made them look, in the words of their late former curator Clement E Conger, "like a 1950s motel." "It was a disaster by any standards for elegant entertaining and international diplomacy," Conger wrote, describing how he undertook to transform the space into a tribute to American craftsmanship and cultural heritage. Conger's team brought together a collection of objects and furnishings dating from early American history, from 1740 under the British Empire, through the 1776 Revolution to 1830.

Some belonged to supporters of the fledgling republic, including some to the Founding Fathers of the United States, others to loyalists to the Crown. Some have diplomatic significance, others are simply a tribute to the skilled artisans of the era. Thus, in pride of place, visitors can find the desk on which was signed the 1783 Treaty of Paris that brought to an end the Revolutionary War in which the United States won independence from Britain. Nearby, sits an unfinished sketch for a painting which ought to have commemorated this moment: The five US negotiators, including Benjamin Franklin, are already finished, but the British representative refused to pose for the artist.

Marcee Craighill, current curator of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms, beams with pride as she explains how this work will soon grace the halls of a French royal palace as part of a temporary exhibition: "Versailles and American Independence." Today, the reception area comprises 42 rooms covering 28,000 square feet on the seventh and eighth floors of the State Department's Harry S Truman Building in downtown Washington's Foggy Bottom district. The refurbishment was paid for by private donations in cash and kind, Craighill says, and today the art and artefacts have

an estimated value of \$125 million. But that is without counting the architectural decor, which allows today's diplomats and statesmen to discuss world affairs against a backdrop of moldings and ceilings based on famous stately homes. Part of the area forms a reproduction of Thomas Jefferson's mansion in Monticello, Virginia, just south of the US capital, and others use marble and hardwood floorings recovered from historic buildings. The grandest chamber, the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room, has a 21 foot (6.4 meter) ceiling and a 98-foot floor rug that weighs 4,000 pounds, under a table that can sit 375 dignitaries. "We wanted guests to have the impression of entering an 18th century American house," Craighill said.

The art of statecraft

Every year in August the state rooms are closed for cleaning-part of their \$300,000 annual upkeep-but for the rest of the year they play host to the daily rituals of world diplomacy. International summits, bilateral negotiations, press photo opportunities, working dinners with foreign dignitaries-hundreds of events take place every year. "The artwork plays a role whenever possible in the art of diplomacy, in the dialogue with foreign leaders," Craighill said on a recent tour. For example, in March paintings representing the Niagara Falls were moved to pride of place during a visit by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to celebrate "visual highlights of our shared border."

The collection is also testament to the long-standing commercial ties of a rising world leader. One porcelain dinner set shows the founding fathers with Asiatic features, having been painted by Chinese craftsman who had never seen a European face. The rooms, hidden away on top of the otherwise fairly unremarkable office block, are not a huge draw on Washington's well-beaten tourist trail. Only 20,000 visitors per year join guided visits. But diplomatic events and educational programs bring another 100,000 people to the rooms each year, and the venue remains popular enough to support its upkeep through private donations-as US law forbids public funding for such luxury. — AFP



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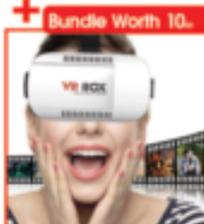
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CLASHES IN KASHMIR LEAVE 6 REBELS, 1 SOLDIER DEAD

SRINAGAR: Six suspected rebels and a soldier have died in two separate gun battles in Indian Kashmir as violence flared in the restive region this week, police and the army said yesterday. Soldiers on Thursday morning intercepted a group of militants trying to cross the heavily militarized border that divides the region between India and Pakistan known as the Line of Control (LoC). An intense two-day firefight ensued in which four suspected militants died, while a soldier also perished, army spokesman NN Joshi said. "Four terrorists were killed during the operation, three on Thursday and one today (Friday). One soldier was also martyred," Joshi said.

A separate clash yesterday saw two suspected militants killed in Kanchipora near the tourist resort of Gulmarg, police said. Government forces cordoned off the village following information that militants were hiding inside a house, triggering a fierce gun battle, police superintendent Imtiaz Hussain said. Two security personnel were injured during

the firefight another police officer told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity. Kashmir has been divided between arch-rivals India and Pakistan since the end of British colonial rule in 1947. Both claim the Himalayan territory in its entirety.

Several rebel groups have for decades fought hundreds of thousands of Indian forces deployed in the restive territory, demanding independence or merger of the Muslim-majority region with Pakistan. The fighting has left tens of thousands, mostly civilians, dead. Overall violence in the disputed region has sharply declined during the last decade, but this month has witnessed an uptick in armed encounters, leaving six members of the security forces, two civilians and 15 militants dead. India regularly accuses Pakistan of arming and pushing militants across the border to launch attacks. Islamabad denies the allegation, saying it only provides moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri struggle for the right of self-determination. — AFP



TANGMARG, India: Indian security forces search a destroyed house after a gunbattle between militants and Indian soldiers in Kotchipora village near Tangmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district yesterday. — AFP

AFTER FOCUS ON THE SOCIAL ISSUES, PENCE FACES A TOUGH RE-ELECTION

INDIANA GOV MARCHES TO THE FRONT LINES OF CULTURE WARS

INDIANAPOLIS: Indiana Gov Mike Pence smiled for the TV cameras this month as a technology company announced plans to hire hundreds of new workers and add its name to the tallest tower in the Indianapolis skyline. Then the celebratory news conference took an awkward turn. Scott McCorkle, the CEO of Salesforce Marketing Cloud, used part of his time at the microphone to advocate for expanded LGBT rights. It was a not-so-subtle rebuke of a policy Pence championed more than a year earlier that provoked national backlash and threats by some businesses to leave the state.

Indiana's financial outlook has improved since Pence took office less than four years ago, but the Republican is facing a tougher than expected battle to keep the job in the reliably red state for reasons that have little to do with economics. Under Pence, who has described himself as "a Christian, a conservative and a Republican, in that order," Indiana has marched to the front lines of the nation's culture wars. It's a significant detour from the vision of his wildly popular predecessor, Mitch Daniels, who once called on Republicans to adopt a "truce" on social issues to focus on the economy.

The most visible departure from Daniels' truce was Pence's signature in March 2015 on a religious objections law, which critics argued would allow businesses to discriminate against gays and lesbians for religious reasons. Groups threatened to boycott the state, late-night television shows mocked the policy and a coalition of gay rights supporters and business interests - including Salesforce - successfully demanded that lawmakers approve changes. Recently, Pence signed a law banning abortions in cases where a fetus could have a potentially life-threatening condition, has supported a state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage, and clashed with the local Catholic archdiocese by opposing the settlement of Syrian refugees in Indianapolis.

Even some of his allies have suggested Pence may have overreached on the social policies, alienating moderate voters. Now the governor is trying to shift debate back to the economy and is hoping voters' fondness for Daniels, whose legacy looms large, can help him beat Democratic former state House Speaker John Gregg, who lost to Pence in 2012. At a recent campaign kickoff rally, Pence praised Daniels as an "outstanding governor." A second term, he promised, would build on the work of his predecessor, who in 2004 wrested control of the governor's office away from Democrats for the first time in 16 years.

What remains to be seen is whether the independent and moderate Republican voters Pence needs are buying it. Dave Brinson, an Indianapolis Republican who is retired, says he will for the first time vote for a Democratic gover-

nor out of frustration with "the things that have made the national news" under Pence. "These people have spent more time wondering about whether somebody has to bake a cake for a gay person than they have about the practical matters of the state," Brinson said.

Republican Jeff Darling donated \$1,000 to Pence in 2012. This election, the social services administrator from southern Indiana has given \$500 to Gregg after he was "dismayed" by some of Pence's social initiatives. Several high-profile donors who previously supported Pence are sitting out the race, including former Daniels campaign manager Bill Oesterle. The co-founder of tech company Angie's List, Oesterle donated \$150,000 to Pence last election. This year he has given nothing. Philanthropist Christel Dehaan gave Pence \$20,000 for the 2012 election. This time she has contributed \$200,000 to Gregg.

"To suburban, college-educated women within the Republican Party - no question, it is off-putting," said Betsy Wiley, a former Daniels administration official who is supporting Pence because of his education and fiscal policies. "Those are the ones who are struggling with, 'Why do we have to keep talking about my reproductive organs?'" Pence performs far better in rural parts of the state than in densely populated urban areas, said Christine Matthews, a pollster who worked for Daniels. That shifts much of the focus to the suburbs, including the affluent and well-educated "doughnut" counties surrounding Indianapolis.

During a recent speech in Indianapolis to the Downtown GOP Club - an audience that skews younger and urban - Pence noted that the party has its differences but most everyone agrees on fiscal matters. Despite their qualms, many Republicans say there is no chance they will support Gregg, whom they see as a threat to many of Daniels' hard-fought victories. Scott Fadness, the GOP mayor of suburban Fishers, says Pence needs to make up lost ground with suburban voters turned off by social issues. Fadness, who is supporting Pence, says economic issues can win voters over, but added he would "like to see a lot more pragmatism and maybe less ideology."

Pence says Gregg supports "union bosses and liberal special interests," which he says will lead to "more deficits, more debt, higher taxes, fewer jobs, more government." The Republican governor previously disavowed political attacks and once wrote a manifesto titled "Confessions of a Negative Campaigner." The election, Pence says, will serve as a referendum on economic policies implemented under Republican rule, but his remarks could just as easily apply to social issues. "Those are the policies that are on the ballot this year," Pence said. "It's not just a choice between two candidates. It's a choice between two futures." — AP

PAKISTANIS HIT BACK AS CLERICS SAY MEN CAN 'LIGHTLY BEAT' THEIR WIVES

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani media and activists poured scorn yesterday on a suggestion from an Islamic religious body that men should be allowed to "lightly beat" their wives, made in their draft of a women's protection bill. The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) released a draft of the bill on Thursday, their response to progressive legislation giving women greater rights and protection in the province of Punjab. Local media quoted the draft as saying: "A husband should be allowed to lightly beat his wife if she defies his commands and refuses to dress up as per his desires; turns down demand of intercourse without any religious excuse or does not take bath after intercourse or menstrual periods."

The proposal was met with a wave of mockery in the media and online yesterday. The country's biggest and most influential newspaper, the English-language daily Dawn, published a satirical article with a list of things people could beat other than their wives-including eggs, the bottom of ketchup bottles, and the Michael Jackson hit Beat It. The article was a rare example of the media mocking those claiming to speak in the name of religion in conservative Muslim Pakistan.

Council of 'zealots'

The draft was also slammed by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), which condemned its recommendations as "ridiculous" and called for the council of "zealots" to be disbanded. "It is difficult to comprehend why anyone in his right mind would think that any further encouragement or justification is needed to invite violence upon women in Pakistan," the HRCP stated. Online in Pakistan, the bill was met with derision. "This body should be dissolved, preferably in acid," wrote one Twitter user, as others expressed bafflement and anger.

Women in conservative Pakistan have fought for their rights for decades, in a country where so-called honor killings and acid attacks remain commonplace. But the Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Bill redefines "violence" to include "any offence committed against a woman" including things like domestic or emotional abuse, stalking or cybercrimes. The bill, which was passed in February, also provides for a universal toll free help line for the women, and establishes district protection centres and residential shelters under a phased program. It also allows courts to order a GPS tracker installed to monitor a defendant's movements.

The CII, formed in 1962 to advise parliament on the compatibility of laws with Sharia, has previously spoken out against the bill. The council's recommendations are non-binding, and it has drawn widespread criticism in the past for other rulings-including in 2013, when it suggested making DNA inadmissible evidence in rape cases, instead calling for the revival of an Islamic law that makes it mandatory for a survivor to provide four witnesses to back their claims. CII chairman Maulana Muhammad Khan Sherani emphasised to AFP that the bill is still being drafted. "Islam does not allow violence against women," he said. "There may be a dispute between husband and wife but that is something separate from torturing wives." — AFP

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How Alibaba won and
lost a friend in Washington

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ISE-SHIMA, Japan: Leaders of the Group of Seven nations line up for a family photo with other invited world leaders at the G7 Summit in Mie prefecture yesterday. — AFP

ECONOMY 'URGENT PRIORITY': G7

GROUP SAYS 'BREXIT' WOULD HURT GLOBAL GROWTH

ISE-SHIMA, Japan: Pumping up the world economy is an "urgent priority" G7 leaders said yesterday, as they warned there could be dire global consequences if Britain decides to leave the EU. The Group of Seven industrial powers cautioned that the worldwide economy was patchy and faced unwelcome headwinds, but disputes erupted over how bad things actually are and the best course of action. Wrapping up their meeting in rural Japan, the leaders endorsed a pick-and-mix approach to dealing with the malaise that has lingered since the financial crisis erupted in 2008.

"Global growth is our urgent priority," the G7 said in a final statement. "Taking into account country-specific circumstances, we commit to strengthening our economic policy responses in a cooperative manner and to employing a more forceful and balanced policy mix, in order to swiftly achieve a strong, sustainable and balanced growth pattern."

The strained consensus reflects behind-the-scenes clashes within the grouping of rich nations. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe argued that the global economy faced the risk of a "crisis", and drew comparisons with the mood when Japan last hosted the exclusive club, in 2008 just months ahead of the collapse of Lehman Brothers. "To that, one leader questioned whether the degree of the current situation was negative enough to use the term 'crisis'," a senior Japanese official said.

That leader was Angela Merkel, the Asahi Shimbun newspaper said yesterday, who was backed by International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde, according to Bloomberg News. At his post-summit press conference, however, Abe put a different gloss on it. "We shared a strong sense of crisis," he told reporters of his discussions with fellow leaders. Some observers, however, said the high-profile meeting didn't deliv-

er much. "We know there are different views on fiscal policy but the statement simply concludes that fiscal policy should be implemented 'flexibly' in order to 'promote growth'," said Andrew Kenningham, Senior Global Economist at research house Capital Economics. "That really says nothing at all."

Brexit

Leaders were unequivocal though on their attitude to one of the risks facing the global economy, and came out firmly against the prospect of a so-called "Brexit". "A UK exit from the EU would reverse the trend towards greater global trade and investment, and the jobs they create, and is a further serious risk to growth," they said in a declaration after two days of talks. British Prime Minister David Cameron, who has campaigned for his nation to remain in the 28-country bloc, seized on the unified G7 position. "The communique is very clear about the economic dangers and economic risks" of Brexit, he told a press conference.

The grouping - the United States, Germany, Japan, Britain, Italy, France and Canada - found easy common ground on the hot-button issue of refugees, agreeing it was a worldwide problem. "The G7 recognizes the ongoing large scale movements of migrants and refugees as a global challenge which requires a global response," the leaders said in a statement. Last year, some 1.3 million refugees, mostly from conflict-ridden Syria and Iraq, asked for asylum in the European Union - more than a third of them in Germany.

"We commit to increase global assistance to meet immediate and long-term needs of refugees and other displaced persons as well as their host communities," they said. "The G7 encourages international financial institutions and bilateral

donors to bolster their financial and technical assistance." Merkel told reporters the G7 had decided to dedicate its attention this year "especially to Iraq" - one of the chief sources of the tide of migrants fleeing conflict and seeking refuge in Europe.

China

China - which is not a member of the G7 and was not at the two-day summit in Ise Shima, 300 km southwest of Tokyo - made its expected cameo appearance in the final statement. Although it was not mentioned by name, there was no room for doubt that Beijing was in the crosshairs when leaders expressed unanimous disquiet about tensions in the East and South China Seas, and emphasise the fundamental importance of peaceful management and settlement of disputes," they said.

Tensions have risen over competing claims in the South China Sea, a strategic body of water that encompasses key global shipping lanes and which is claimed nearly in its entirety by China. Beijing's claims and ongoing militarization of islets and reefs there has angered some of its Southeast Asian neighbours, including the Philippines and Vietnam. China is also locked in a dispute with G7 host Japan over rocky outcrops in the East China Sea, stoking broader concerns about the country's growing regional might and threats to back up its claims with force, if necessary. The leaders said claims should be made based on international law and countries should refrain from "unilateral actions which could increase tensions" while also avoiding "force or coercion in trying to drive their claims". — AFP



TOKYO: A pedestrian looks at a quotation board flashing the Nikkei key index from the Tokyo Stock Exchange yesterday. — AFP

GLOBAL STOCKS CAUTIOUS AHEAD OF YELLEN SPEECH

LONDON: World stock markets steadied yesterday as traders treaded cautiously ahead of a speech by US central bank chief Janet Yellen that could shed more light on a coming rate hike. A modest upgrade to the estimate for US economic growth at the start of the year helped send US shares marginally higher ahead of a long holiday weekend. Traders in Europe appeared largely uninspired, with scant major corporate or economic news to get their teeth into. However equities reached their highest level for the month. Shares in London's FTSE, Paris' CAC and the DAX in Frankfurt all edged marginally higher.

Saxo Banque analyst Andrea Tueni said the Paris stock exchange was taking "a break" after a good run. He said this was "quite normal after a good week which saw it come back above 4,500 points thanks to the increase in oil and the fall of the euro to the dollar," he said. Traders were awaiting clues about the prospects of an imminent US interest rate hike when the Federal Reserve chief

speaks at Harvard University later, after recent hints of an increase in June or July from Fed officials.

A two-day global stocks rally showed signs of fatigue on Thursday as oil prices briefly breached \$50 a barrel for the first time this year, before retreating. One bright spot on the otherwise relatively quiet corporate news front came from strong demand for shares in Philips's lighting division, which made its stock market debut in Amsterdam. The shares closed well above their initial flotation price of Å20, rising 10 percent to Å22. Similarly French homeware designer Maisons du Monde saw solid demand for its initial listing on the Paris stock exchange, with shares closing 5.9 percent higher at 18.00 euros.

G7 Warns on Brexit

The US Commerce Department said first-quarter growth was at an annual rate of 0.8 percent, up from the originally estimated 0.5 percent. Ahead of Yellen, markets digested comments from a Group of

Seven summit. A final communique from the G7 leaders emphasized economic growth was an "urgent priority" and highlighted growing international alarm over the possibility of a so-called Brexit as the UK prepares for a June 23 referendum on whether to leave the EU. "Global growth is our urgent priority," the G7 said, adding that growth remained "moderate and below potential".

However Global Economics' Michael Pearce said he saw reasons to be more upbeat on global prospects. "Promoting growth is a worthwhile aim but the implication that the world economy is on the brink of a recession is wide of the mark," he said in a note to investors. Leaders added that a Brexit would "reverse the trend towards greater global trade and investment and the jobs they create", and that it was a "serious risk to growth". British Prime Minister David Cameron is campaigning for Britain to stay in the EU, with recent polls suggesting a widening lead for supporters of continued membership. — AFP

OIL PRICES FALL BACK AFTER BREACHING \$50

LONDON: World oil prices slid yesterday, with traders banking profits after crude rose above the key \$50 level this week on evidence of lower supplies. At the same time, analysts warn that Thursday's move above \$50 could trigger some North American producers of crude from shale rock to resume output. Slumping prices, which saw crude plunge to under \$30 a barrel in February from above \$100 two years ago, made it unprofitable for some shale companies to compete with traditional producers like OPEC and Russia.

Around 1115 GMT, US benchmark West Texas Intermediate for delivery in July was down 61 cents to \$48.98 a barrel. Brent North Sea crude for July dropped 36 cents to \$49.12 a barrel compared with Thursday's close. Oil prices had topped \$50 a barrel for the first time this year on Thursday as production disruptions in Canada contribute to a drop in US crude inventories. Prices have won support also from unrest in Nigeria, Africa's biggest crude producer.

Oil at \$50 is viewed as a level at which it makes economic sense for certain suppliers to start pumping again, CMC Markets trader Alex Wijaya told AFP. "Crude oil prices have failed to hold above the \$50 level due to concerns that higher prices could unlock more supply," he said. Traders are now eyeing next week's meeting of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Vienna to discuss world production levels. "There is probably a sliver of hope that OPEC producers will hammer out an agreement to support oil prices, be it to freeze production or otherwise," said IG Asia analyst Bernard Aw. — AFP

GOLD HEADS FOR 4TH WEEKLY DROP

LONDON: Gold steadied off an eight-week low yesterday, but remained on track for a fourth straight weekly drop as growing speculation that the Federal Reserve will press ahead with interest rate hikes hurt investor demand. The metal fell for seven straight sessions to Thursday, its longest run of losses in more than six months, after minutes of the Fed's latest policy meeting indicated last week that a rate rise may be on the cards sooner rather than later.

That view has been consistently supported by central bank officials this week. An increase in US rates would raise the opportunity cost of holding gold, while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced. Spot gold was at \$1,220.30 an ounce at 1236 GMT, little changed from late on Thursday but off an earlier low of \$1,211.30. US gold futures for June delivery were down 50 cents an ounce at \$1,219.90. The metal remains up 15 percent this year after a sharp first-quarter rally, but has fallen 4.5 percent since the Fed minutes were released last week.

"Expectations for summer rate hikes from the Fed have changed over the past couple of weeks, and looking at that, combined with the dollar being off its lows, equities near the highs, and yields higher, it's a warranted move in gold," UBS analyst Joni Teves said. "That's especially as you're coming from quite a big build-up in positioning. Last week's CFTC data showed that net longs were around 98 percent of the record high." Fed Governor Jerome Powell, a voting member of the US central bank's rate-setting committee, said on Thursday he felt the economy was on a "solid footing" and within reach of the Fed's inflation goals. The Atlanta Fed on Thursday predicted the economy is on track to grow by a 2.9 percent annualized rate in the second quarter. —Reuters

AGILITY HOLDS AGM AND EGM FOR 2015

KUWAIT: Agility held its Ordinary and Extra Ordinary General Assembly Meeting for the year ending Dec 31, 2015 with a quorum of 78.48 percent. The assembly approved all the agenda items including the distribution of 30 percent cash dividend (30 fils per share) and elected a new board for the coming three years.

The new board members are: Public Institution for Social Security, Tarek Abdulaziz Sultan Al-Essa, Jamil Sultan Al-Essa, Ayman Sultan Al-Essa, Henadi Anwar Essa Al-Saleh, Naser Mohammad Al-Rashid, National Real Estate Company, Faisal Jamil Al-Sultan (as a reserve member).

Speaking to shareholders Tarek Sultan, Vice Chairman and CEO of Agility said "Agility made good progress in 2015 but still has a demanding

road ahead to make it the leading company we all desire. In 2015, we were able to generate KD 105 million cash from operations, a 68 percent improvement from last year. We improved our free cash flow by KD 6 million to reach KD 31 million in 2015, despite challenging economic times. Our longer-term target is to reach an EBITDA of \$800 million by 2020. Our efforts to define a clearer strategy and improve execution are paying off in stronger customer relationships, an expanding emerging market footprint, a sharper focus, and a more disciplined management approach."

For the year ending Dec 31, 2015, Agility reported a net profit of KD 53 million, or 46.41 fils per share, an increase of 5 percent over the same period in 2014. Revenue for the year stood at KD 1.3 billion. EBITDA stood at KD 100 million.



TURKEY TOURIST ARRIVALS PLUNGE



KIRSEHIR, Turkey: Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan salutes in the costume of an "ahi", a member of a traditional Turkish artisan and merchants group, during a meeting in this central Anatolian city yesterday. — AP

ANKARA/ISTANBUL: The number of foreign visitors to Turkey fell by 28 percent in April, official data showed yesterday, the biggest drop in 17 years amid tensions with Russia and security concerns after a wave of bombings. The decline signals more pain for Turkey's economy, which is smarting from slowing exports and weak private investment. Some economists have forecast that tourism revenue will drop by a quarter this year, costing around \$8 billion, or the equivalent of 1 percent of GDP.

The drop-off does not bode well as Turkey heads into the May-August high tourism season, when European holidaymakers usually flock to its southern beaches. "As we move from low to high season in tourism, the deterioration in tourism statistics gets more and more significant," said Deniz Cicek, an economist at Finansbank in a note to clients. Tourism fell 28.07 percent year-on-year in April, with 1.75 million people arriving, data showed. It was the biggest drop since May in 1999, when the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group launched a bombing campaign and warned tourists to stay away after the capture of its leader Abdullah Ocalan.

The number of Russian visitors all but evaporated, falling by nearly 80 percent, the data showed. Russians traditionally account for one of the biggest groups of foreign visitors after Germany, but they have stopped coming after Turkey shot down a Russian warplane over Syria last year, souring relations. The number of Germans fell by more than a third. "The substantial decline in tourist arrivals this year was not limited to Russia, and spread out to all major tourism partners of Turkey to some extent," Cicek said.

Economy Headache

The pronounced drop in tourism is yet another headache for a government trying to win back investor confidence. Sentiment has been battered by security fears and worries about President Tayyip Erdogan's growing power. It was given a boost this week when Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek, seen as an anchor of investor confidence, retained his position in the new cabinet. However, Simsek's authority has been curbed in his new role, and security concerns continue. — Reuters

CHINA, EU EDGE TOWARDS DEAL ON MARKET ECONOMY

BRUSSELS: The European Commission and China may be near a deal to avoid a dispute at the World Trade Organization and a wider trade war, diplomats say, but must convince EU lawmakers angry over record Chinese steel output. The Commission is set to accept a change to China's trade status at the WTO by treating it as an economy controlled by the market, not the state. That would benefit Beijing and make it easier for it to export into the bloc.

But the Commission also wants to enhance the bloc's ability to defend itself against cheap Chinese imports. "Everyone has to know that if somebody distorts the market, Europe cannot be defenseless," Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said at the G7 summit in Japan. Chinese envoys have signalled they could live with the dual approach, which is designed to assuage fears of European industry that Europe's economy will suffer if China is able to undercut its industries with heavily subsidized goods.

"Every country has a legitimate right to make full use of trade defense measures, within WTO rules," a Chinese diplomat said. "If they follow the WTO rules, there's no problem for us." Without a deal, China is willing to retaliate. "A trade war is not our choice," a second Chinese diplomat said. "But our confidence in doing business with the EU would be affected, if we find our trading partners don't respect the rules."

China is the European Union's second-largest trading partner after the United States. Europe is China's top trading partner. Europe's concerns have been worsened by record Chinese steel production in April amid a global steel glut. After world economies failed to find agreement on how to deal with overcapacity, the United States put hefty duties on China. G7 leaders discussed the issue in Japan.

Prices and Tariffs

Beijing's private stance contrasts with public remarks that changing China's status at the WTO is not for negotiation. "This is the consensus reached between China and other WTO members during the negotiation on China's accession," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei said earlier this month. "It must be observed by all WTO members as their obligation." The WTO recognized when Communist-ruled China joined in 2001 that its local prices were not set by market forces. WTO members can normally apply punitive tariffs on others only if export prices are below those in the exporter's home market. — Reuters



BEIJING: A Chinese worker looks on outside a subway station yesterday. — AFP

PUTIN IN GREECE AS EU SANCTIONS TALKS LOOM

RUSSIA SEEKS TO REINFORCE TIES

ATHENS: Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Greece yesterday aiming to reinforce a relationship with one of his few friends in the EU amid continuing diplomatic tensions with the West. The visit - Putin's first to the EU since December - comes as the bloc's leaders are to discuss next month whether to renew sanctions on Russia's banking, defense and energy sectors that expire in July. EU-Russia relations are at a low ebb over the conflict in Ukraine that broke out in 2014, with European sanctions still in force against Moscow.

Shortly after coming to power last year, Greece's new leftist government angered its EU peers by holding up a joint statement by the bloc on further sanctions. Putin is to meet with Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos and Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and sign a number of agreements before giving a brief news conference. Both countries are Orthodox, and religious symbolism is also high on the agenda of the two-day trip, the Russian leader's first to Greece in nearly a decade.

Except for tourism, Russia is little involved in Greece's economy despite a flurry of agreements over the years, many of which never came to fruition. But this time could be different, said Ioannis Mazis, a professor of geopolitics at Athens' National University. "Russia needs to compete with China which is in the process of piecing together a 'pearl necklace' of ports" from Europe to the South China Sea, Mazis told Skai television, referring to China's investment in a string of foreign ports in recent decades.

Russia vs China

In an article in Kathimerini daily on Thursday, Putin said Russia was interested in tenders involving Greek rail assets and the port of Thessaloniki, a major gateway into the Balkans. Leading Chinese shippers Cosco, who have a major presence at the main Greek port of Piraeus, are also eyeing Thessaloniki. As a major gas exporter, Mazis said, Moscow is also keen to take advantage of the EU's switch away from petrol, and is



ATHENS: Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos (right) welcomes Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Presidential Palace yesterday. — AP

desperate to find a southern pipeline route to bypass Ukraine - a country which is a major thorn in EU relations after Moscow's annexation of the Crimea in 2014 and Russia's support of separatist rebels.

The Kremlin on Thursday said trade and economy will top the agenda and a "number of bilateral agreements" would be signed. The pro-government Avgi daily on Friday said this would include a deal between Russian oil giant Rosneft and Greek refiner Hellenic Petroleum. The creation of Greek-Russian agricultural companies is also expected next month, Avgi said. Greek agricultural exports to Russia have been badly hurt by an ongoing EU embargo. Russian Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev on Friday said a counter-embargo on EU food products would be stretched to the end of 2017.

Avgi said the Russian leader is accompanied by six ministers on what is his first visit to any EU country this year, and first to the bloc since last year's climate talks in Paris. The PM's advisor on Russian issues, Dimitris Velanis, told the daily that Russia factors

heavily in the government's efforts to pull the country out of recession. "The Greek government is doing everything to launch growth and we believe growth will include Russia," Velanis said.

Repeated Calls for Russian Help

Greece has repeatedly sought the help of Russia as it descended into economic crisis over the past six years. Tsipras is believed to have requested Russian financial assistance last year as the country teetered on the verge of bankruptcy, although Russian officials have publicly denied any approach. In the Kathimerini article, Putin said the EU would not be a global player without his country's help. Putin will join celebrations today for the 1,000th anniversary of the Russian presence at the ancient monastic community of Mount Athos in northern Greece, one of Orthodox Christianity's holiest sites. Whilst in Athens, Putin and Tsipras will also unveil the famous icon by Andrei Rublev, the Ascension, which is on loan from the Tretyakov Gallery to the Byzantine and Christian Museum. — AFP

US RAISES Q1 GROWTH ESTIMATE TO 0.8%

WASHINGTON: The US economy grew slightly faster in the first quarter of 2016 than originally thought, hitting a 0.8 percent annual pace, the Commerce Department said yesterday. The revision, from the original estimate of a very slow 0.5 percent, was not as high as economists had expected, underscoring some persistent weaknesses, especially in manufacturing. Even so, economists say that growth in the current April-June quarter has been firm enough to cast behind the early-2016 slump and that the United States will continue to solidly outpace other leading economies for the rest of the year.

Halfway through the second quarter, private and public growth estimates were that the economy has rebounded to a 2.5-3.0 percent annual pace. And Federal Reserve officials have made clear they think the first-quarter data understates the strength of the economy. "More recent monthly data are signaling a much better performance in Q2 - if anything, better, than the 2.5 percent pace in our forecast," said Jim O'Sullivan of High Frequency Economics.

Consumer Sentiment Rises

For the January-March quarter, the revised data showed mostly the same weaknesses as in the original estimate, which was based on less complete gross domestic product data. The main reason for the slowdown was a significant



NORTH ANDOVER, Massachusetts: In this March 23, 2016 photo, Kayla Mitchell serves a customer at Good Day Cafe. — AP

decline in business investment in buildings and equipment. Part of that is linked to the sharp contraction in the energy industry, particularly oil and gas, after the crash in crude prices. But in

addition there was also a slowdown in consumer spending growth, despite an increase in household incomes due to strong job creation.

What improved the picture in the new esti-

mate was higher business investment in inventories, and stronger home construction than originally thought. The upward revision nevertheless did not tell a lot about how the economy is rebounding in the current second quarter. The energy industry has continued to cut back and the strong dollar and weak foreign economies are still hampering exports, though not as severely as before.

Investment by companies could remain constrained. The Commerce Department said that corporate profits grew just a bare 0.3 percent in the first quarter, after two straight declines, and were 5.8 percent below a year ago. On the positive side, home construction and consumer spending have improved in the current period. Yesterday, the University of Michigan consumer sentiment index rose to 94.7, up from 89.0 in April, indicating a rise in consumer confidence after a late-winter downturn.

The report gave little new information to markets waiting for signs of strength in the economy that would push the Federal Reserve to increase interest rates in June or July. But generally the reaction was positive. On Wall Street the S&P 500 gained 0.2 percent. The dollar rose 0.6 percent on the euro, to \$1.1129, and the yield on the one-year Treasury bill ticked up a notch to 0.66 percent from 0.65 percent. — AFP

AUTOMAKERS RECALL 12M US VEHICLES OVER TAKATA AIRBAGS

WASHINGTON: Eight automakers said yesterday they are recalling more than 12 million US vehicles for defective Takata air bag inflators, widening the largest-ever auto safety effort to more passenger-side devices. Honda Motor Co is recalling 4.5 million US vehicles while Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV is recalling 4.3 million, according to the documents. The new recall is focused on passenger-side air bag inflators, while prior recalls were for all frontal inflators. Takata declared 14 million inflators defective in the first phase of its latest recall, and the Friday notice is largely included in that total. Japan's Takata Corp this month agreed to declare as many as 40 million additional air bag inflators defective by 2019 in a move that will involve recalls by 17 automakers. Takata inflators can explode with too much force and spray metal shrapnel into vehicle passenger compartments.

The defective air bag inflators have been linked to at least 13 deaths and more than 100 injuries worldwide. The vehicles being recalled were built between 2002 and 2011 and include pickups, SUVs and cars. Separately, Takata is in bailout talks with a number of potential investors including private equity firm KKR & Co, source told Reuters on Thursday. Takata and the automakers say there are no reports of any ruptures involving the vehicles in the latest recall. They are prioritized by the car's age and the risk of exposure to high humidity. As a result, some owners may not get replacement inflators for several years.

Automakers worldwide had previously recalled about 50 million vehicles with Takata inflators. Japan's transport ministry said Friday that automakers will recall approximately 7 million vehicles there, so the total worldwide is approaching 70 million. Other automakers will issue notices in the coming days. Before yesterday, 14 automakers led by Honda had recalled 28.8 million inflators affecting 24 million US vehicles. At least 2.3 million of the 12 million vehicles in the latest recall were subject to previous driver side recalls. Toyota Motor Corp told regulators it is recalling 1.65 million vehicles while Subaru is recalling nearly 400,000 vehicles in the United States. The two automakers said they include some discontinued Saab and Pontiac vehicles assembled for General Motors Co. Fiat Chrysler said yesterday it is also recalling 933,000 vehicles sold outside the United States for Takata inflators. It told the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that the second phase of the Takata expansion would include 660,000 additional US vehicles.—Reuters

HOW A 26-YR-OLD TOOK ON ODESSA CUSTOMS SERVICE

NEW CHIEF SAYS REFORMS ARE BEING BLOCKED

ODESSA, Ukraine: The head of customs at the Black Sea port of Odessa says her job used to be such a money-spinner the going bribe for securing it was \$5 million. "Everything was completely unpredictable," Yulia Marushevska told Reuters, saying customs staff exploited a lack of clarity over tariffs on goods and the time it took to clear them to extract kickbacks from businesses. A graduate student activist aged just 26, Marushevska was parachuted in to the service seven months ago by President Petro Poroshenko after street protests in 2014 overthrew the country's Russian-backed president.

"I talked to officials who worked at the Odessa customs before ... and I heard that the bribe to be a chief of Odessa customs was about 5 million dollars," she said. She did not specify who had paid the bribe, or to whom, and Reuters could not verify her statement. Her account points to a delicate balance of power in Ukraine, the front line in a new cold war between Russia and the West.

Marushevska's early reforms, partly funded by US aid money, were stark: "We fired all the heads of the departments," she said, adding that almost all the heads of the checkpoints lost their jobs too. "People from the central office were calling me, asking 'what are you doing? You are destroying the whole system,'" she said. New customs staff are being hired via a competitive process and trained by the United States, which, along with the European Union backs an aid-for-reforms program.

Marushevska lists publishing tariffs online and cutting the number of inspections among her achievements but says she almost quit the job in frustration at delays to the introduction of a new computer system and construction of a new headquarters. "It seems like no-one is really interested that this customs reform is happening. I saw that there is no political will," she said. If she leaves, she will be following other reformers, who have either been fired, or, like the former economy minister, resigned complaining their work has been blocked.

Facebook Battle

The customs office employs 1,303 officers and brings in \$48 million a month to the budget, Marushevska's office says. Her critics, who include regional officials and her own boss, say that, with no experience in administration, she is not qualified to do the job and has politicized it by continuing to express views she held as a political activist. Marushevska rose to international prominence after a video she appeared in called "I am a Ukrainian" went viral.

Against a background of scenes of police clashing with protesters during the 2014 unrest she said her country was no longer part of the Soviet Union and wanted to shake off politicians working

only for themselves. She now uses her Facebook page to counter what she says is a campaign to discredit her by state agencies set against change. This month, she publicly accused her boss, Nasirov, of trying to fire her.

She posted a letter of complaint from regional officials on Facebook that accused her of politicizing the service and said she thought Nasirov had prompted the officials to send it. Marushevska said Nasirov had sent her three reprimands, enough to fire her, but did not go ahead with the sacking. She also accused Nasirov of trying to block the revamped computerization of the customs system.

Reuters was unable to independently verify the accusations and Nasirov's office did not respond to specific questions on them. It did, however, issue a statement saying Marushevska's reforms had made things worse. "This year the situation is extremely unsatisfactory," it said, adding that in the first quarter revenues from Odessa customs had decreased by 30 percent, while in Ukraine as a whole, revenues were up 21 percent. "We see negative results from (Marushevska's) management."

Marushevska's office said customs clearance for energy goods had been removed from its oversight and its anti-corruption moves had also had an impact on revenues, since companies using bribes to pay lower duties switched to customs points elsewhere. Marushevska was speaking in a building designated for a new customs area where her newly-hired and US trained officials will deal with businesses directly rather than through brokers.

She said the security services (SBU) had sought to sabotage construction of the new terminal, which was halted for a while but restarted after a visit by Ukraine's new Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman. The SBU's press service did not respond to an emailed request for comment. On March 23, the head of the secret service gave a news conference saying perfume disguised as polyethylene film was allowed to pass through Odessa customs.

Fighting back on her Facebook page, Marushevska said the SBU had seized the containers before they cleared customs and the fraud would have been discovered had they remained there. Supporting Marushevska is Mikheil Saakashvili, the former Georgian President who became Governor of the Odessa region last year, picked out by Poroshenko on the strength of his reforms after Georgia's Rose Revolution in 2003. "Nobody took her seriously when she was appointed. Everybody thought it was just a propaganda PR show and she would not reform, it was just for a short period of time. But she has this grit to really change things," he told Reuters.— Reuters

BRIGHT WELCOME FOR PHILIPS LIGHTING SHARE SALE

THE HAGUE: Investors happily switched into Philips's lighting division shares at their Amsterdam debut yesterday, over a century after the Dutch electronics giant sold its first light bulb. Strong demand ensured that shares in the highly-anticipated listing of a quarter of the lighting unit's equity rose well above their initial flotation price of €20 (\$22.30), the stock exchange said. From an opening level of €21, Philips Lighting's share price went on to climb to a high of €21.77 in morning trade.

"Today with the listing of Philips Lighting as a stand-alone company on Euronext Amsterdam, we begin a new chapter in the long history that started...125 years ago," Philips Lighting chief executive Eric Rondolat said in a statement. "We are truly excited to welcome Philips Lighting, a strong and innovative brand with a rich heritage in lighting industry," added Maurice van Tilburg, Euronext Amsterdam's chief executive. Philips late on Thursday announced it would list a quarter of its lighting arm's shares at €20 each, expecting to rake in €750 million in the historic IPO, after failing to find an outright buyer over the last 18 months.

Good Share Price?

"The share price seems to have satisfied those who are interested...but it's difficult to say whether it's a good price over the long term," Joost van Beek, an analyst at Theodoor Gilissen private bank, told AFP. Philips announced in Sept 2014 that it was selling off its core lighting business - a mainstay of its income for more than a century - to focus more on medical equipment. Philips Lighting is valued at a total of around three billion euros. It said it was making the move into medical technology where margins are strong and less vulnerable to competition from emerging markets.

Earlier this month Philips, a household name around the world for its home appliances, however acknowledged its lighting arm would still carry up to €4.92 billion in debt. Tom Muller, an independent analyst in Amsterdam, said the sale would boost Philips' plans to widen its healthcare products. "It's a good chance for them" to invest the money into perhaps buying another company in the health care industry, Muller told AFP.

Philips sold its first light bulb a few years after it was founded in 1891, but for the past dozen years has increasingly shifted its focus to medical equipment, which now accounts for more than 40 percent of sales. But its lighting business, which produces LED lights, halogen and fluorescent lamps and other electronic components, remains a major money-spinner, selling products in around 180 countries. Last year Philips Lighting raked in €547 million in adjusted earnings before interest, tax, and amortisation, the company said. It has manufacturing plants in more than 20 countries and holds a patent portfolio of over 14,000 patent rights.

Elsewhere, in what turned out to be a glowing day for European IPOs, French homeware designer Maisons du Monde also saw solid demand for its initial listing on the Paris stock exchange. From an opening price of €17, the shares quickly rose to €18.30 before settling at €17.98 in late morning trading. Maisons du Monde's market capitalization is €769 million on the basis of the IPO price, Euronext said in a separate statement. — AFP

HOLLANDE VOWS HE WON'T LET PROTESTERS CHOKE ECONOMY

UNIONS URGE WORKERS TO STEP UP UNREST

PARIS: French President Francois Hollande vowed yesterday to "stand firm" over a controversial labor law as unions called on workers to step up a wave of industrial action gripping the country. France is battling fuel shortages, transport disruption and violent demonstrations, just as it gears up to host the Euro 2016 football championships in two weeks' time. "I will stand firm because I think it is a good reform," Hollande told reporters at a G7 summit in Japan. He said the government's top priority was to ensure the "normal functioning of the economy" in the face of the most severe industrial action for two decades, including blockades of oil refineries and fuel depots that have left petrol pumps running dry.

While there were still long queues at filling stations in some parts of the country, the situation eased slightly in some areas as union blockades of fuel depots were lifted. Riot police moved in to sweep away a blockade of burning tyres at an oil depot near a refinery in Donge, western France. But motorists in Paris were restricted to buying €40 (\$45) of petrol per person at many stations, where queues built up ahead of the weekend. Strikes also continued at nuclear power stations - which provide three-quarters of the country's elec-

tricity - but have so far failed to affect supply, authorities said.

'Resist Blackmail'

The employers' federation, Medef, expressed growing anger over the effect the strikes are having on France's fragile economic growth. Medef chief Pierre Gattaz condemned the "thugs' methods" of the unions and urged the government to "resist their blackmail". Small business owners were feeling the pinch too. "It's not good for business. I support helping people but not people who do nothing," said Guillaume Bouvelot, 51, who owns a snack bar in an affluent district of Paris.

The legislation at the heart of the dispute aims to reform France's notoriously rigid labour laws by making it easier for companies to hire and fire workers. And the social unrest showed little sign of easing as unions urged workers to pile the pressure on Hollande's deeply unpopular Socialist government. Representatives of all the main unions urged workers to "multiply and support" the strikes. They said the government's response to the strikes and its "stubbornness" in refusing to withdraw the contested law was only "boosting the determination" of opponents to the reforms.

Hollande responded that dialogue with the unions was "always possible", but the government would not come to the negotiating table if threatened with "an ultimatum". The mounting problems for the government come a year ahead of an election in which Hollande is considering standing again despite poll ratings that are among the lowest for a French leader in modern history.

Street Violence

Tens of thousands of activists staged a demonstration in Paris on Thursday that descended into violence. Riot police used tear gas after masked youths smashed windows and damaged cars in the latest outburst of anger over the controversial legislation. Some 153,000 people took to the streets across France on Thursday, officials said, while union leaders put the number at 300,000. French authorities said 62 demonstrators were taken into custody, while 15 policemen were injured in clashes.

Many organizations, including the International Monetary Fund, have said the labor reforms are necessary to create jobs in a country where around 10 percent of the workforce are idle. But the CGT union which is leading the protest is furious that the government forced the legislation through parliament and is demanding it be scrapped altogether. Unions argue the reforms favor business at the expense of workers' rights and are unlikely to bring down high unemployment. They have urged rolling strikes on the Paris Metro to start on the day of the opening match of Euro 2016 on June 10, giving the organizers new headaches on top of security concerns sparked by last November's jihadist attacks in Paris. Prime Minister Manuel Valls, fighting for his political survival, has insisted the legislation will not be withdrawn, but says it might still be possible to make "changes" or "improvements". But there are signs of cracks within the government, with Finance Minister Michel Sapin suggesting the most contested part of the law should be rewritten. Valls however ruled out revamping the clause, which gives individual companies a freer hand in setting working conditions. — AFP



LYON: A man holds a bouquet of flowers and a torch as he faces riot police during a demonstration against the government's planned labor reform on Thursday in central eastern France. — AFP

FRENCH ECONOMIC RECOVERY ON TRACK

PARIS: Wracked by fears about rising unemployment for years, French households are at long last turning more optimistic, keeping an economic recovery on track despite waves of strikes and protests over a contested labor reform. The official consumer confidence index published yesterday surged well past even the highest estimate to reach the highest level since October 2007, before the global financial crisis broke. Less than a year from a presidential election, the timing could not be better for President Francois Hollande with his Socialist government locked in a showdown with the hardline CGT union over its plans to ease labor regulations. Perhaps most inspiring for Hollande, who has said he would not run for re-election unless unemployment falls, the confidence survey saw joblessness concerns drop to the lowest level since June 2008. Households' view on their standard of living also returned to pre-crisis levels, suggesting that they may be beginning to buy into Hollande's much-mocked recent claim that "things are going better". "You'd really have to be a killjoy to say it's not getting better," economist Denis Ferrand at COE-Rexecode told Reuters.

In Paris for an annual review of the French economy, IMF France mission chief Christian Mumssen said this week that consumers' purchasing power was improving against the background of solid wage growth and virtually no inflation. What's more, companies are also turning cautiously more optimistic. Business activity recovered in May to levels not seen since the Nov 13 attacks in around Paris in which 130 people died, according to a closely watched monthly survey of purchasing managers.

Strikes

Though strikes are hitting production in the energy sector, an output spike in April amid unseasonably frigid weather may help smooth out the average over the course of the quarter, impacting overall growth less than could be feared. "In the short-term, the impact of the strikes is probably very limited," COE-Rexecode's Ferrand said, noting that the much-more paralyzing strikes of 1995 had only shaved 0.2 percentage points off GDP. "At most we'll lose the extra 0.1 point we were supposed to gain from the higher number of business days this year."

One of the most encouraging signs for the economy came on Wednesday when monthly jobless data showed the number of registered job-seekers had fallen in April for the second month in a row. "Monthly job-seeker figures are usually volatile but there is nonetheless a clear inflexion in the trend," the OFCE economics think tanks wrote in a note, pointing out that the decline in April was the first over 12 months since Lehman Brothers went bankrupt in September 2008.

The improving labor market should help consumer spending which already grew a hearty 1.2 percent in the first quarter, the strongest quarter since late 2004. Also playing in the economy's favour are the European football championships that France will be hosting from June 10 for a month with all of the extra spending by football fans from across Europe. And, as the IMF's Mumssen noted, "If France wins the cup then we would expect very strong consumption." — Reuters

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ALIBABA

SHANGHAI: Alibaba is the world's biggest e-commerce platform. Over 420 million people scooped up \$485 billion worth of stuff last fiscal year on Alibaba's sites. The company went public in 2014, raising \$25 billion - more than Facebook - in the largest offering in the history of the New York Stock Exchange. Here are key things to know:

What is Alibaba?

Alibaba's e-commerce platforms cater to both Chinese and global consumers, though the majority of its transactions are generated domestically. At its heart is Taobao, a Chinese consumer-to-consumer website much like eBay. Tmall offers merchants official storefronts to consumers in China. Alibaba and AliExpress connect businesses in China with buyers around the world.

What Else Does Alibaba Do?

Alibaba has a financial affiliate that also runs a leading online payment platform called Alipay. Alibaba has stakes in Sina Weibo, China's version of Twitter, as well as Youku Tudou, a video platform akin to YouTube. It's also a major backer of Didi Chuxing, China's dominant ride-hailing app and an investor in Uber rival Lyft in the US. It has made investments worth hundreds of millions of dollars each into various sectors including Singapore's postal service, the photo- and video-sharing app Snapchat, newspaper publisher South China Morning Post group and upstart Chinese smartphone maker Meizu. It's building up a cloud computing and Internet infrastructure business, setting up data centers in the US and elsewhere in the world.

Who's Behind the Company?

Alibaba was founded in the living room of Jack Ma, a former English teacher. A self-made billionaire, Ma is a folk hero to some Chinese.

Why Do Some People Hate Alibaba?

There is widespread suspicion that Alibaba knowingly profits from the sale of fakes on its platforms - a point Gucci America, among others, has made in an ongoing US lawsuit. Some brands complain about how slow and difficult it is to get fakes removed from Alibaba's sites. Alibaba says it has spent tens of millions of dollars on anti-counterfeiting and that it is constantly trying to improve its systems.

Where's the Name From?

Ma wanted a name people around the world would recognize. He asked a waitress in a San Francisco restaurant if she recognized the name Alibaba and she said, "Yes, open sesame!" Drawn from "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves", the name stuck. — AP



HANGZHOU, China: A man talks on his phone as a woman rides on an electric bike past a company logo at the Alibaba Group headquarters in eastern China's Zhejiang province yesterday. — AP



MANILA: In this file photo taken Nov 18, 2015, US President Barack Obama and Alibaba founder Jack Ma stand together during a discussion at the CEO Summit, attended by 800 business leaders from around the region representing US and Asia-Pacific companies. — AP

HOW ALIBABA WON, LOST A FRIEND IN WASHINGTON

CHINESE GIANT USES MONEY AND INFLUENCE

SHANGHAI: In 2011, a respected anti-counterfeiting coalition in Washington escalated its fight against the Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba, saying that its websites served as a 24-hour market "for counterfeiters and pirates" and should be blacklisted. Fast forward to 2016. That lobbying group, the International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition, called Alibaba "one of our strongest partners," welcomed it as a member and invited its founder, Jack Ma, to speak at its spring conference. Alibaba won - and ultimately lost - a friend in Washington using legal methods long deployed by corporate America: money and influence. A month after it became the first e-commerce company to join the IACC, Alibaba got kicked out. An AP analysis of public filings shows that as personal and financial ties between Alibaba and the coalition deepened, the group's public comments shifted from criticism to praise, even as others - including the US and Chinese governments - took a harder line.

Those who believe Alibaba intentionally profits from the sale of fakes fear the company could lobby its way out of having to make meaningful changes. That, critics say, would benefit the multibillion-dollar counterfeiting industry, which costs US companies money, can imperil consumers' safety and feeds an underground money-laundering industry. Alibaba is at the forefront of China's rise on the global stage, and the anxiety and suspicion that have greeted the company abroad are, to some extent, anxiety and suspicion about China itself.

Alibaba was among the first Chinese companies to play politics seriously inside the beltway, and may not have realized how even the smallest misstep can backfire, said Sean Miner, China program manager for the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "Their reputation has preceded them," he said. "Some Americans might think, 'Why don't you go home and fix the problems first?'"

When Robert Barchiesi, a gruff-talking former New York cop, took over the IACC, the coalition singled out Alibaba and its Taobao platform for facilitating the large-scale sale of fakes. The US Trade Representative placed Taobao on a blacklist in 2008. Alibaba responded by ramping up its game in Washington. In 2012, Alibaba's lobbying expenditures shot up from \$100,000 a year to \$461,000, and has remained fairly steady since, according to Opensecrets.org. It has hired several well-connected people, including a former general counsel for the US Trade Representative and a former White House senior director for intellectual property enforcement coordination.

By the end of 2012, Alibaba was off the notorious markets list. The US Trade Representative commended Taobao for its "notable efforts" to work with rights-holders. The next year, the coalition signed an agreement with Alibaba to expedite removal of counterfeit goods through a program called MarketSafe. The coalition charged its members \$12,500 last year to participate.

Frustration

The coalition had found a way to monetize brands' frustration

with Alibaba's take-down procedures. Barchiesi's daughter-in-law, Kathryn Barchiesi, provided "investigative support" for MarketSafe. The coalition says the program is not profitable, but those fees helped the IACC more than double revenues, to \$2.6 million, during Robert Barchiesi's tenure.

Five weeks before Alibaba's 2014 public offering on the New York Stock Exchange, Barchiesi went on CNBC and deflected attention from Alibaba, saying counterfeiting on Alibaba's sites was a "microcosm of a bigger problem." He praised the company for working "in good faith" with the coalition.

What Barchiesi didn't say is that he too would buy shares in Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. He bought shares on that first wild day of trading, at \$91 each, according to the coalition, which says his holdings represent a "small percentage" of his portfolio. Alibaba's shares shot up 38 percent in one day. It was the largest IPO in history, catapulting Ma to near-mythic status. By 2015, the coalition had stopped complaining about Alibaba to US officials, focusing instead on the "true cooperation and partnership" they enjoyed through MarketSafe. But neither the US nor China was convinced the company had turned a corner.

In Jan 2015, Chinese regulators published a report stating that just 37 percent of the goods purchased on Taobao were genuine. Alibaba disputed the accuracy of the report, which disappeared from the Chinese Internet. Meanwhile, the American Apparel & Footwear Association, which represents over 1,000 brands, urged US authorities to put Taobao back on the counterfeiting blacklist. "The slow pace has convinced us that Alibaba is either not capable of or interested in addressing the problem," the group told US authorities.

In December, the US Trade Representative reported that Alibaba's platforms had been "widely criticized" for selling large quantities of counterfeit goods. It urged Alibaba to "enhance cooperation". The next month, Matthew Bassiur, a longtime friend of Barchiesi's with deep ties to the coalition, started work as Alibaba's chief of global intellectual property enforcement. The coalition continued to praise Alibaba to US officials and in April welcomed the company as its first e-commerce member.

Members revolted. Michael Kors and Gucci America quit in noisy protest. Tiffany left soon after, citing governance issues. The coalition suspended Alibaba's membership category the same day the AP published an investigation revealing Barchiesi's Alibaba stock ownership. The coalition's board vowed to commission an independent review. Ma's keynote speech at the coalition's conference was called off; Alibaba's president spoke instead.

But Ma came to America anyway, and left no doubt that despite its public relations debacle, Alibaba has succeeded in making inroads with Washington. Reporters spotted him leaving the White House in a crush of black umbrellas last week after a quiet lunch with President Barack Obama. He pronounced the meeting "very good", ducked in a waiting car and was gone. — AP

SATURDAY, MAY 28, 2016

Weekender

Kuwait Times

www.kuwaittimes.net

A model wears creation by Indonesian designer Rosmawaty Ismail during the Muslim Fashion Festival in Jakarta on May 25, 2016. — AFP

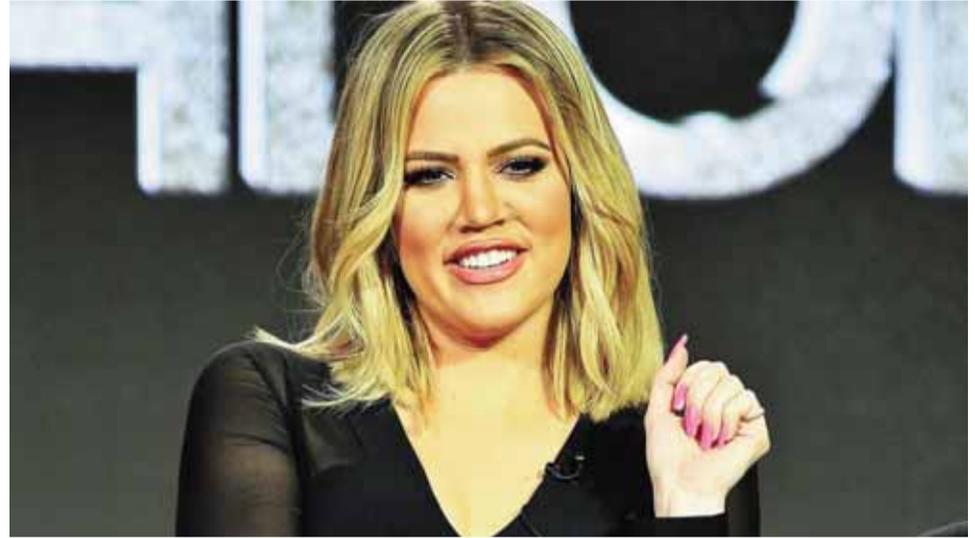
Japan's master of realism gets overseas exhibition

SEE PAGE 27

Khloe refiled for divorce from Lamar because she wants children

The 'Keeping Up with The Kardashians' star reportedly chose to finalize her divorce from the basketball star at this moment because she knows the clock is ticking in respect of having a family. The 31-year-old television personality is said to have told Lamar that she intended to find someone she could settle down and have children with but didn't want it to happen whilst she was still legally married, TMZ reports. Meanwhile, it was previously claimed that Khloe was "waiting" for the right time to divorce Lamar. A source shared: "This was always the plan. The divorce has never been officially off. Khloe was waiting for the timing to be right ... She was loyal for a long time and taking care of him, but she's not a babysitter and needs to move on with her life. "She's honestly fine

and it's more of a formality at this point. She's there for him and they're in regular contact and she wishes him well. She'll always be there for him. But as far as their marriage is concerned, that's over and has been for quite some time. It was time to make it official. "Khloe told Lamar. He wasn't blindsided. He knew it was coming. It was amicable. Khloe cares about Lamar and he'll always be in her life. But there is only so much you can do for a person. You can't help or fix someone who won't fix themselves." And Khloe also recently admitted she doesn't really believe in divorce but felt it was important for her to end her marriage because she had to put her own happiness first.



Turner says fame has forced her to 'grow up faster'

The 'Game of Thrones' star rose to international fame for her role as Sansa Stark in the HBO series and admits she "clings onto her childhood". She said: "I definitely felt I had to grow up faster than I would have done. I'm very driven in terms of work, but I'm almost more playful and silly than my friends. I cling onto childhood. "Having a cynical perspective is best; in this industry, there's just a lot of rejection. We all have that mentality, where we know we're expendable. We all just thought, this is a job. Try not to get fired." And the 20-year-old actress also admitted she feels "almost embarrassed" about being famous as she feels people "look down" on her because she's known all over the world. She added: "I feel almost embarrassed by being in the public eye sometimes. I almost get the feeling that people look down on me because of it. If you're on a night out, they will definitely tease you for it." But thankfully for Sophie, she had her co-star Lena Headey, 42, to rely on when she needed support. She told InStyle magazine: "Lena felt like a bit of a mum to me. She's kind of the coolest person I've ever met. Tatted up, pixie hair - the epitome of cool." Meanwhile, Sophie previously admitted she couldn't imagine herself dating someone that wasn't in the showbiz industry. She shared: "The only relationship I have had was with someone who was in the industry, and I think if I dated someone who wasn't, the difference would inhibit the relationship, just because you're constantly travelling.



Nick Jonas was 'concerned' he'd lose Lovato

The 'Jealous' hitmaker is glad his close pal - who has been open about her battle with alcohol and drug abuse and her eating disorder - is doing well but admits he feared he would lose her at one stage. He told Entertainment Weekly magazine: "It's been years of working on herself and getting better, but she's amazing - and a better singer, too, because she's healthy. But I was genuinely concerned that I might lose my friend." And the 23-year-old previously opened up about the "real and genuine" chemistry he has with the 'Cool for the Summer' singer. He shared: "We've always had very open communication and we're very honest with one another. There's also a real and genuine comfort level between us. And I think a lot of our chemistry comes from that. "She has been very close friend and business partner for nearly ten years. I'm in constant awe of how powerful her voice is and in my opinion she's truly one of the most talented artists out there." The pair - who have their own record label - are heading out on tour together and Nick has revealed Demi has been very "hands on" about organising the show.

Harris feeling very 'lucky' following car accident

The 'This Is What You Came For' hitmaker has thanked his fans for their support after he was forced to cancel a number of shows when he "sustained a number of injuries" during a car crash earlier this month. He wrote on Twitter: "Thank you so much for your messages and sorry to any disappointment I caused with the show cancellations ... I'm feeling lucky and very grateful [right now] (sic)" And it was previously revealed that Calvin rang his girlfriend Taylor Swift after the accident, which saw a VW Beetle collide with his Cadillac SUV near Los Angeles International Airport, to let her know he was alright. A source said: "He didn't want to alarm her. She was very caring when they connected on the phone when it initially happened ... He is keeping an eye on his body to make sure he is 100 per cent this week." Meanwhile, a representative for Calvin - whose real name is Adam Wiles - previously revealed he had been checked out by hospital staff and is now recovering. They said at the time: "Adam was a passenger in a vehicle that was struck in a serious collision in Los Angeles. He was examined by doctors and sustained a number of injuries. He has since been checked out of hospital and is now recovering. We wish all the other passengers involved in the incident a fast recovery."



Bieber reportedly dating 'Transformers' actress Nicola Peltz



The 22-year-old singer and the blonde beauty were spotted enjoying a dinner date at Maestro's Steakhouse in Beverly Hills on Wednesday evening. According to TMZ, Justin appeared to be reveling in the company of the stunning actress, who is best known for her appearances in 'Transformers: Age of Extinction' and 'The Last Airbender'. The American also appeared in the A&E mystery drama 'Bates Motel', in which she played the love interest for the young Norman Bates. Meanwhile, Justin's ex-girlfriend Selena Gomez recently confessed she is enjoying trying to find a new boyfriend, even though she finds it hard to trust people after her five-year on/off relationship with the 'Sorry' hitmaker. She

said: "I've been dating. I've been having the best time. But I don't trust anybody, so dating can only be fun if I know I'm going to have fun." Selena said, too, that she has been left feeling "defeated and embarrassed" on many occasions because her professional life and achievements have repeatedly been overshadowed by speculation about her love life. She shared: "I would try to promote something that I loved, and the entire interview would be about my personal life. I would leave a room feeling defeated, feeling embarrassed, but I would always make sure to put that smile on my face because I wasn't going to let them get to me."

Leslie Jones used to work for the Church of Scientology

The 'Ghostbusters' actress admitted that, before finding fame, she had a telemarketing job with the sci-fi cult - which counts Tom Cruise and John Travolta among its members - and they still don't know she doesn't share their controversial beliefs. Talk show host Ellen DeGeneres asked her: "You were a telemarketer for Scientology?" She replied: "Uh, yeah, they still kinda don't know I'm not a Scientologist. Thanks for blowing my cover, Ellen!" The 48-year-old star admitted she "acted crazy" in order to land the job, much to the amusement of her 'Ghostbusters' co-stars, Kate McKinnon, Kristen Wiig and Melissa McCarthy. She said: "I lived in Glendale I needed to pay the rent, and it was a very easy interview. I just acted crazy. "Oh my god, I'm sorry Scientologist for revealing things." While Kate jokingly moved away from Leslie, Kristen admitted she was having a great time on the show. She said: "This is the best interview I've ever been on." But Leslie wasn't the only one of the actresses to have had an unusual job - Kate used to be an umpire for Little League baseball, despite not having much knowledge of the rules of the sport, much to the annoyance of the young players. She said: "In retrospect, I should have brushed up on the rules for softball before litigating them. "Oh, I got yelled at. They did not like my calls and they were bad, bad calls."

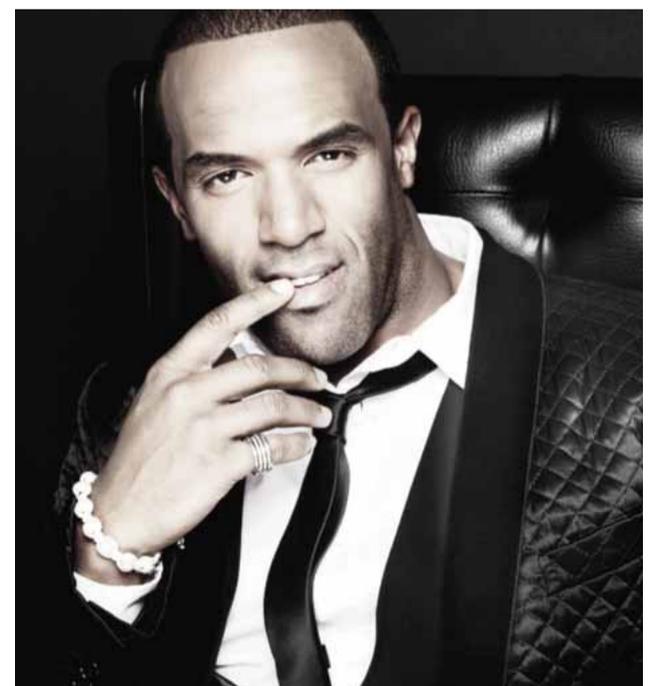


Adele forgot lyrics during a recent concert in Lisbon

The Grammy Award-winning star was in the midst of performing her track 'Million Years Ago' in the Portuguese capital when she mistakenly started singing the chorus lyrics rather than the first verse, which prompted her to stop and apologize to the crowd. The London-born singer said: "S***, wrong words. S***, s***, s***. I started singing the verse instead of the chorus! Sorry!" Despite being one of the world's biggest pop stars, Adele has a history of forgetting the lyrics to her own chart-topping tunes. In 2011, for instance, she stopped during a performance of 'Chasing Pavements' and acknowledged to her fans in Boston that she couldn't remember the next line of the song. She said: "I forgot the words! Oh my god, I've never forgotten the words to that song!" Meanwhile, it was recently reported that the 'Hello' hitmaker is set to sign a £90 million record deal. Adele is believed to have been offered the jaw-dropping sum of money by Sony, who will release her music worldwide. Assuming the figures are accurate and Adele accepts the offer, she will overtake the previous record held by fellow Brit Robbie Williams, who was reportedly given as much as £80 million by EMI Records in 2002.

Craig David regrets his fitness obsession

The 35-year-old musician developed an impressive physique during his time away from the spotlight, but Craig now admits to overdoing the workouts, saying it caused him to look older than he actually was. He shared: "I was ripped, but no one gave me the memo that having a body like that can also make you look 40 years older. You look so gaunt and drained." The chart-topping star also revealed his social life was damaged by his love of the gym. He told Marie Claire magazine: "I was cancelling going out with friends because I was like, 'Nah, I've got to do my cardio tonight.'" "What life was that? Who was I doing it for? I'm not a body builder." These days, by contrast, Craig has a much more relaxed attitude towards health and fitness, and is once again focused on his music career. He explained: "I'm back exactly where I was and this was the part that I loved - getting on stage and performing." At the height of his fitness obsession, Craig would regularly post pictures online of his muscular physique with an accompanying inspirational message for fellow gym-goers. For example, one of the captions read: "Some people like to talk with no action, some people like to dream, but don't believe they have what it takes to achieve what others may think is impossible, some people like the ideology of change, but aren't willing to see it through nor ready to endure the sweat & tears needed to bring the idea to a reality! — Bangshowbiz





In this undated frame from video provided by the Los Angeles Police Department, LAPD officers and others dance beneath the iconic Hollywood Sign in Los Angeles. —AP photos



LAPD officers dance on the field at Dodger Stadium.

Online dance craze sweeps police departments across US

In an online sensation, police officers across the US are dancing an updated version of the running man to a catchy 1990s hip hop song in videos that have included professional sports mascots, cheerleading squads and at least one explosion.

The videos, set to "My Boo" by Ghost Town DJ's, began in early May after police in New Zealand issued the Running Man Challenge to the New York Police Department. The meme started with two teenagers in New Jersey and became viral after college basketball teams picked it up. The police videos posted on the Internet have been steadily getting more elaborate and more popular, with even some police chiefs joining in. Los Angeles officers filmed themselves dancing inside the Dodgers baseball stadium and at a popular hiking spot in the shadow of the Hollywood sign. Detroit officers did their dance after spilling out of a heavy-duty SWAT truck in front of a General Motors building, and Miami's men and women in blue threw in some salsa moves to Gloria Estefan's "Conga."

The videos are about more than officers cutting loose. They come as police departments across the US are facing increased scrutiny and public criticism in the wake of a series of officer-involved deaths of young, unarmed black people. Many departments have been working to become more community-friendly and improve their image. That includes turning to the power of social media.

The right direction

"Across this nation, there's a lot of anti-police rhetoric," Detroit police Chief James Craig told reporters this week. "Do you believe



In this undated frame from video provided by the Miami Police Department, officers, including a member of the Bomb Squad in protective gear, and staff dance at Miami police headquarters.

this might have a profound impact on reducing that? I mean, you talk about how many shares so far? People like it, they appreciate it, and this is a move in the right direction."

In his department's video, one of the most popular with seven million views since Tuesday, Craig busted moves underneath the city's iconic Joe Louis fist. In a move parodying a mic drop, Craig then dropped a police belt and challenged Chicago, Philadelphia and Cincinnati, Ohio. He has also challenged New York and Los

Angeles, indicating their videos aren't good enough. Police departments are smart to take on the challenge, said Robert Thompson, a Syracuse University professor and a leading authority on American pop culture.

"This is a rhetorical act of public relations. No question about it," he said. "Having the police force, uniformed police especially, smiling and dancing with people within the context of these communities, is certainly a positive message. "It's what a Coca Cola ad does, what a propaganda film does, what a public relations campaign does - try to make us think differently about something," he said.

The videos have drawn criticism from some who question the use of police resources. Mostly, the response has been positive. "Just when I thought my faith in the police was over," Los Angeles resident Trayvon Walker commented on the LAPD's video. "They do a video like this that puts a smile on my face and makes me look at them and say, 'They're not so bad of people after all.'"

As a young, black man, Walker said he has experienced police discrimination and his view of officers has eroded in recent years. But he said the video reminded him that there are plenty of good cops. "It doesn't change my perception of the police, but I do think more of them in the community doing positive things will lead to more positive outcomes," the 29-year-old court clerk said in a phone interview. "To be able to see LAPD, or just police in general, doing something that is good for our community - it's pleasant to see." — AP

Rapper facing charges in T.I. concert shooting

Fists were flying and then bullets inside a crowded New York City concert venue where four people were shot, one fatally, and now a rapper who police say was seen on surveillance footage firing a gun is facing attempted murder and weapons charges.

Roland Collins, who goes by the stage name Troy Ave, was arrested Thursday, a day after the deadly shooting at Irving Plaza, where hip-hop artist T.I. was set to perform. Police said a fistfight had broken out in a performers' lounge at the venue.

The man who died, 33-year-old Ronald McPhatter, was a member of Collins' entourage and had been there to provide security, according to his family. Collins, 30, suffered a gunshot wound to the leg, police said. An 8-second video clip released by police shows the gunman bursting through the door of a VIP room in apparent pursuit of another man, who flees off-screen.

As concertgoers huddle under a counter and clutch each other, the gunman, who appears to be limping, stops and scans the room for a moment with his eyes. Then, he spots something, raises his gun and fires. Witnesses described a chaotic scene. "Everyone was hysterical, I was having a panic attack during the shooting, and the woman next to me was covering my mouth with her hand to try to get me to stop screaming," said Liv Hoffman, 19.

There were nearly 1,000 people in the venue when the shooting began. One of the victims, Christopher Vinson, 34, was shot in the chest on the venue's ground level after a bullet traveled through the floor, Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce said. Another

bystander, Maggie Heckstall, 26, was shot in the leg, authorities said. The exact circumstances of what prompted the fight were still under investigation.

In an interview with WCBS radio, Police Commissioner William Bratton blamed the shootings on "the crazy world of the so-called rap artists who are basically thugs that basically celebrate the violence that they live all their lives." That prompted an angry response from McPhatter's relatives and a city lawmaker, who derided the comments as insensitive and divisive.

"When white people are doing this violence, I don't hear the same language being used," said City Councilman Jumaane Williams, a Brooklyn Democrat who said he had worked on anti-violence initiatives with McPhatter and his older brother, Shanduke McPhatter, a former gang member. Mayor Bill de Blasio said afterward he believed Bratton was "talking out of frustration."

Collins was in custody and couldn't be reached for comment Thursday. It was unclear if he had an attorney. A message left at a phone number listed for him wasn't immediately returned. Shanduke McPhatter said his brother "got too much into" the glamour of the hip-hop scene, and it landed him Wednesday night in an environment where alcohol flowed freely and trouble broke out. — AP



Rapper T.I. performs at HOT 97's "The Tip Off" at Madison Square Garden in New York. — AP



Jairam Hathwar and Nihar Janga are congratulated by their families as they celebrate after being named co-champions.



Nihar Janga, 11, of Austin, Texas (right) talks with Jairam Hathwar, 13, of Painted Post, New York, after another round where the two went head to head in a drawn out battle that ended in them being named co-champions in the 2016 National Spelling Bee, in National Harbor, Maryland on Thursday. — AP photos

National Spelling Bee ends in unlikeliest tie to date

If not for his high-pitched voice, there would be no way to peg Nihar Janga as the youngest-ever winner of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. The 11-year-old breezed up to the microphone with confidence, and most of his words, he knew right away. He looked like the strongest speller onstage, stronger even than his eventual co-champion, 13-year-old Jairam Hathwar, a blue-chip speller whose older brother hoisted the trophy two years ago.

At his best, Nihar turned the tables on bee pronouncer Jacques Bailly by shouting out the definitions of his words as soon as they were announced. "Biniou," Bailly said. "Is this the Breton bagpipe?" Nihar said. After the crowd quieted, Bailly asked Nihar if he wanted the word used in a sentence. Nihar just shook his head.

But Nihar wasn't perfect, and he stumbled at just the wrong time — or perhaps the right time. Twice, Jairam missed a word, giving Nihar a chance to seal the title. Both times, Nihar followed up with his own flub. After each nailed his final two words, Nihar, from Austin, Texas, and Jairam, from Painted Post, New York, were declared co-champions. It was the third year in a row that the bee ended in a tie.

Bee organizers insisted they'd be OK with another tie, but they changed the rules to make it less likely. Instead of a pre-determined list of 25 "championship words" for the final three spellers, the bee instead forced the top three to go through up to 25 rounds. And the difficulty of the words could be adjusted as necessary.

Third-place finisher Snehaa Kumar of Folsom, California, bowed out in the first championship round. Nihar and Jairam had to spell 24 words apiece before it was over. Nihar and Jairam have grown close over the past year, communicating mostly online. They chatted while others were spelling, high-fived after their words and embraced after they won. The timing of Nihar's misses was almost too perfect to

believe, and Nihar denied afterward that he misspelled on purpose. He said he just didn't know the words. "I wanted to win, but at the same time, I felt really bad for Jairam," he said.

'Deja vu'

Both were inspired by their favorite athletes. As the confetti fell, Nihar crossed his arms in homage to Dez Bryant's touchdown celebrations. The Dallas Cowboys receiver responded with a congratulatory tweet. Jairam, whose dad takes him to play golf when he's had enough spelling practice, channeled his favorite player, Jordan Spieth. "When he hits a bad shot, he always bounces back, on the next shot or the next hole," Jairam said. "When I missed those two words, I didn't let them get to my head, and I just focused on the next word." It was the second straight year that a sibling of a past champion won the bee. Jairam's brother, Sriram, was a 2014 co-champion. Sriram, too, got a reprieve when his co-champion Ansun Sujoe missed a chance at the solo title. "Deja vu," Sriram said. "I thought it was over, because Nihar is so strong, such a great speller."

The words were as tricked-up as ever. Because the best spellers become fluent in Latin and Greek roots, the bee went to words from languages with less infiltration into English, including Afrikaans, Danish, Irish Gaelic, Maori and Mayan. Jairam's winning word was Feldenkrais, which is derived from a trademark and means a system of body movements intended to ease tension. Nihar won with gesellschaft, which means a mechanistic type of social relationship.

Youngest winner

Among the words they got right: Kjeldahl, Hohenzollern, juamave, groenedael, zindiq and euchologion. Each receives \$45,000 in cash

and prizes. Snehaa takes home \$20,000 for finishing third, and Sylvie Lamontagne of Lakewood, Colorado, got \$10,000 for fourth place. Snehaa and Sylvie are 13-year-old eighth-graders who have exhausted their bee eligibility.

Nihar was in his first bee and would have had three more years of eligibility, but he can't compete again since he won. This was the 89th bee, and while Scripps' records from early years are incomplete, the youngest known champion was Wendy Guey, who won 20 years ago at age 12. The last to win in his first attempt was Pratyush Buddiga in 2002. Nihar said he didn't feel pressure to become the youngest winner for two reasons. First, he never expected to win. Second, most of the crowd's attention was on an even younger speller: 6-year-old Akash Vukoti. "He did pretty good for a first-grader," Nihar said. "He's going to go places."

Nihar and Jairam's parents are immigrants from south India, continuing a remarkable run of success for Indian-American spellers that began in 1999 with Nupur Lala's victory, which was later featured in the documentary "Spellbound." The bee has produced Indian-American champions for nine straight years and 14 out of the last 19.

Both, too, want to be doctors: Jairam hopes to study medicine at Harvard, and Nihar aspires to be a neurosurgeon. In the meantime, Sriram will have to find a new way to one-up his baby brother. "We do definitely have our verbal fights, not physical," Sriram said. "Now, I don't have that edge over him to say, 'Oh, at least I've won the spelling bee.'" — AP

What's for dinner? Seaweed, at Chile's top restaurant

Chef Rodolfo Guzman is hunting amid the rocks on a Chilean beach for the ingredients that have made his restaurant all the rage: algae, sea creatures and other marine delicacies. Beaming, he plucks one of the season's last "sea figs," a rare fruit that resembles a savory strawberry, and holds it up to be admired. "We wait all year to have this fruit for a month," he says.

This is one of hundreds of ingredients from the ocean and coastline that feature on the menu at Guzman's restaurant, Borago, which opened in 2006 in the suburbs of the Chilean capital Santiago. Last year it became the first Chilean establishment to break into Restaurant magazine's list of the world's 50 best, coming in at 42. It was also runner-up on the list of best restaurants in Latin America, second only to avant-garde Peruvian favorite Central.

Continuing his stroll, Guzman comes across a string of local delights with unusual names: beach chard, sea parsley, rock clovers, sea asparagus. The 38-year-old chef puts these halophiles-plants that grow in salty environments and need little or no soil-at the center of his culinary creations. The plants have salty flavors and, on average, 38 percent protein, the same amount as fish, he explains with pride. "These plants are very important for us. They have a truly incredible flavor," he says.

Culinary revolution

Collaborating closely with biologists, anthropologists and mycologists, or fungi specialists, Guzman has set himself a bold

goal: to research and promote Chile's endemic plant life while using it to create a new cuisine. His menu features celebrations of local ingredients ranging from "Araucania region pine nut chocolates" to "guanaco jerky," made with the meat of a llama-like wild animal.

Tasting menus at the restaurant, which is located in the swank Santiago suburb of Vitacura, range in price from \$60 to \$90. Guzman's vision of Chilean cuisine is helping bring it out of the shadows of its neighbor Peru, a darling of restaurant critics worldwide, by rediscovering traditional flavors and embracing the nation's indigenous Mapuche roots as a guiding influence.

"We're just starting to realize that because of our unique geography we have a diversity of products that can make a great contribution to developing innovative, sustainable cuisine," said Myriam Gomez, the head of a foundation that is promoting Chilean cuisine internationally. Chile has nearly 4,700 kilometers of coastline, and ecosystems ranging from the world's most arid desert to the glacial climes of Patagonia, at the southern tip of South America-giving it a wealth of biodiversity. That includes 750 species of seaweed or algae and 30 different edible mushrooms, many of which can be found in Guzman's kitchen.—AFP



Chilean chef Rodolfo Guzman works in his kitchen at Borago restaurant, considered the second best in Latin America, in Santiago. — AFP

SATURDAY, MAY 28, 2016



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Weekender

Tourists take pictures of a lava lake inside the crater.

Lava-loving tourists flock to active **Nicaragua volcano**

Centuries ago, a native Central American people terrified of a witch believed to live deep in the earth used to sacrifice children and young women to Nicaragua's Masaya volcano. Today, the crater southwest of the capital Managua is an international tourist magnet, where photo-snapping visitors scramble among sulfurous fumes to get views of its bubbling lava—a rare sight.

The only volcanoes in the world to boast lakes of incandescent magma are Masaya, Hawaii's Kilauea and Nyiragongo in the Democratic Republic of Congo, explained a Nicaraguan geographer and environmentalist, Jaime Incer. "It's something extraordinary, unique in the world," said Noheli Pravia, a French visitor filming and photographing the scene which has happened every 20 to 25 years since 1902.

The red-hot liquid performs an agitated ballet for the spectators, with a cloud of white smoke filling the active crater, whose name is Santiago. Masaya volcano is located in the most populated part of Nicaragua's Pacific coastal stretch and is inside a nature reserve of some 50 square kilometers where vast fields of petrified lava contrast with the white flowers of frangipanis.

The 400-meter high volcano formed 5,000 years ago, and its activity has intensified in the past six months. "This is the first time I've seen something like this—it's really impressive," said Mijaela Cuba, an Austrian nurse, speaking above the of the waves of lava.

Toxic gases

She was one of 4,000 tourists whom the Nicaraguan government has given permission to edge up close to the crater's edge in the past two weeks. Each visit is limited to just a few minutes because of the risk from the toxic gases. The only signs of life in the walls of the crater, that go down hundreds of meters, are green parrots and bats.

Masaya has erupted twice in recorded history: in 1670 and 1772, scaring the Spanish conquistadors. "It is a maw of fire that never ceases to burn," the first governor of the region, Pedrarias Davila, wrote to the king of Spain in 1525. One monk, Francisco de Bobadilla, even considered it to be the gate to hell and erected a big cross on the edge of the crater. The pre-Columbian people who inhabited the area believed that a subterranean which they called Chalchihuehe lived inside, and they sacrificed young innocent lives to try to appease her.

According to Incer, the risk now is that, if the lava keeps rising higher inside the volcano each time it appears, a new eruption could occur within the next 150 years on the scale of the one in 1772 — when it reached as far 30 kilometers away, where today stands Nicaragua's international airport. — AFP



Tourists take a selfie at the crater of the Masaya Volcano in Masaya. — AFP photos



Tourists watch a lava lake inside the crater.



People visit the exhibition of Japanese photographer Domon Ken (1909-1990) during a press preview at the Ara Pacis Museum (Museo dell'Ara Pacis) on May 25, 2016 in Rome. — AFP photos

Japan's master of realism gets first overseas exhibition

The works of Ken Domon, an acclaimed photographer whose images of the aftermath of the Hiroshima bomb shocked 1950s Japan, took centre stage in Rome yesterday with the opening of the first exhibition of his pictures outside his home country.

Domon, who died in 1990, is venerated in Japan as one of the country's greatest photographers and a pioneer of realism, but relatively unknown internationally. Organizers of the collection on display at the Italian capital's Ara Pacis museum hope that will begin to change with an exhibition that runs until September 18.

It features some 150 of his works dating from the 1920s to the 1970s and encompasses the full range of his enormous output, from propaganda-style shots of military cadets and nurses destined for the frontline in the 1930s through his documenting of Japan's post-war social and political struggles.

There are also examples of his meticulous capturing of the country's temples and Buddhist statues and portraits of artistic figures of the 1960s and 1970s. "He loved 'his' Japan, all of its art and its people and he wanted to show this Japan to the world through a Japanese eye," said Takeshi Fujimori, a former student of Domon's who was in Rome for the opening.

Fujimori jointly curated the Rome exhibition with Rossella Menegazza, an Italian expert on the history of East Asian art. Now the artistic director of the Ken Domon Museum of Photography in Sakata in northern Japan, Fujimori recalls Domon as having a gruff, uncompromising side to him that made him a hard taskmaster. "That is why they called him the devil of photography. He never used words to teach, you had to learn by observing him.

Hiroshima turning point

"We were always afraid of making a mistake, knowing it could lead to a wallop on the back or a clout round the head." Another former student, Ushio Kido, described his former master as "a very sensitive person." "He loved human beings, especially children," Kido said.

Children feature in many of the most striking images on display, from the small boy peeing in the street from a 1952-54 series to the laughing toddler who features alongside his equally joy-

ous but disfigured father in "the Otani family" from his Hiroshima collection.

A small selection of the 7,800 images Domon took in and around Hiroshima in the Fall of 1957 form the heart of the collection in Rome and have been symbolically placed in a low-lit room in the centre of the riverside museum.



Twelve years after the first military use of the atomic bomb, the scars were still evident on the city's infrastructure and in the disfigured and reconstructed limbs and faces that Domon was to be severely criticized for recording, often weeping as he did so, according to his own account.

"People said it was too shocking, and he was attacked for capturing the reality of the survivors' situation," said Menegazza. "But for him it was a moment of change in his life. He recorded in his notebook the exact time at which he arrived in Hiroshima for the first time and for him it was one from which there was no turning back. "He realized that up until that moment he had chosen to ignore or had been afraid of what Hiroshima meant. And that pushed him deeper into realism." — AFP

Indonesia Fashion Festival





Models wear creations of Indonesian designers during the Muslim Fashion Festival in Jakarta. Muslim Fashion Festival is held in Jakarta on May 25 - 29, ahead of the month of Ramadan.

80% OF COMPANIES AIM TO RUN IT AS CUSTOMER FOCUSED BUSINESS: REPORT

ANALYSIS SHOWS CIOs ALREADY WORKING TO REVAMP IT INFRASTRUCTURE

ABU DHABI: EMC Corporation recently announced their fourth annual CIO Connect Summit, being held at the Yas Viceroy, Abu Dhabi, on 25th - 26th May. In addition to interactive presentations and workshops during the two-day event, EMC will shed light on the State of IT Transformation report, an analysis of more than 660 EMC and VMware customers worldwide and share insights on the direction of IT transformation investments in the region.

The State of IT Transformation report is based on a qualified evaluation of companies who attended IT Transformation workshops conducted by EMC and VMware and are in the midst of IT transformation initiatives. EMC and VMware aided the companies to determine the gaps, progress and objectives in their long term and short term IT transformation journeys.

Transforming Operations

The report indicated that organizations are seeking to be cost-efficient, hence can save as much as 24 percent in operations by transforming IT. Regardless of industry, most organizations reported wanting to improve their IT service strategy to run IT like a customer-focused business.

While 90 percent of organizations indicated the importance of having a documented IT transformation strategy and roadmap with executive and line of business support, 55 percent admitted to having nothing documented.

80 percent indicated they want to standardize services in a business-focused catalog with a self-service portal and increase automation to improve IT service delivery including:

- Resource Provisioning - Delivery of continuous service to meet customer demands and prevent financial setbacks depends upon streamlining all business processes by provi-

sioning the infrastructure timely. 77 percent of participants expressed the desire to provision infrastructure resources in less than a day, or dynamically as needed.

- Financial Management - 87 percent said they rely on a yearly allocation-based recovery, or a project-by-project recovery of IT costs.

- Metering - 88 percent of organizations said they want to get to a state where they use automation to track the resources each business unit is consuming.

Applications - Accelerating App Development

Mobile services have revolutionized customer engagement, becoming a medium to broaden the reach of every company. This necessitates the need to provide customers quick access to services through mobile. According to the report, participants said they want to automate the application framework to help their organizations develop software and mobile applications faster. Yet more than 80 percent of participants reported lacking a scalable, infrastructure-independent application framework and 68 percent said their organizations take 6-12 months or more to complete a new application development lifecycle.

In addition, most organizations indicated they want to have hybrid cloud architecture for their production applications within the next 18-24 months.

Key Highlights by Industry

- Healthcare - Firms in the healthcare industry are the least mature in their IT transformation and scored themselves the lowest in more areas while prioritizing gaps in more areas than any other industry.

- Retail - They also report having a majority



Habib Mahakian

of their applications built on a scalable, infrastructure-independent application framework.

- Telecommunications - participants in this sector lead in network virtualization with the average firm reporting they've achieved 40 percent in network virtualization; the top 20 percent of companies in this sector have achieved nearly 80 percent network virtualization.

- Financial Services - participants scored above average in most areas of their IT transformation initiatives with nearly 40 percent having a fully supported, documented IT transformation strategy and roadmap.

- Government - top 20 percent reported having over 20 percent of production apps in a

hybrid cloud and nearly 100 percent of compute and applications virtualized.

Changing demands

Habib Mahakian, Vice President, Gulf and Pakistan, EMC, said: "Business needs should adapt to changing consumer demands, which are evolving at a rapid pace. This underlines the need for CIOs to strategically envisage adding more value to consumer engagements and drive competitive differentiation by attaining unprecedented organizational efficiencies. As business needs continue to change and the role of the modern day CIO evolves, it is time to undertake IT transformation in order to enable business scalability. The State of IT Transformation report indicates that organizations across industries can benefit from transforming their IT service strategy by adopting software-defined technologies. We look forward to helping our customers adopt and embrace an IT transformation strategy, thus driving business and extracting a higher enterprise value."

Methodology

This research was undertaken by EMC and VMware to assess the current state of IT infrastructure employed by their 660 global customers and identify the gaps impeding achievement of business goals. The organizations analyzed in this report attended IT Transformation workshops conducted globally by EMC and VMware from 2014 to mid-2015. EMC and VMware measured every organization's infrastructural capabilities against their industry peers and helped them to determine their business goals and prioritize the next steps to achieve those goals.

JURY SIDES WITH GOOGLE IN BATTLE OVER ANDROID SOFTWARE

SAN FRANCISCO: Google's Android software just dodged a \$9 billion bullet. A federal jury found Thursday that Google didn't need permission to use a rival's programming tools as it built Android - now the world's leading smartphone operating software and a key part of Google's multi-billion dollar Internet business.

Software competitor Oracle claimed Google had stolen its intellectual property and reaped huge profits by copying pieces of an Oracle programming language called Java. But the jury in U.S. District Court found that Google made "fair use," under copyright law, of Java elements that help different software programs work together. Oracle, which had sought \$9 billion in damages, immediately said it would appeal.

Hampering innovation

The verdict was closely watched in Silicon Valley, in part because many popular features of today's smartphones only work because apps can "talk" to one another or the phone's underlying software. Google's supporters - a group that included other tech firms, trade associations and the Electronic Frontier Foundation, an Internet rights group - warned that an Oracle victory would hamper future innovation by making that software cooperation more difficult and expensive.

Google argued that because it used only a small part of Java to create Android, a much larger system of software built

for a new purpose, it qualified for a "fair use" exemption from copyright. Similar exemptions allow artists and critics to quote or reuse small portions of someone else's work in a larger essay or creation.

Oracle and its allies simply argued that the company should be paid for the use of its code. While Google lets smartphone manufacturers use Android software without charge, it makes billions of dollars by showing advertising to people who use Google services, including its popular search engine and maps, on Android phones and tablets.

Clash of titans

The high-profile dispute was a clash of Silicon Valley titans. While much of the trial focused on arcane aspects of computer programming, jurors heard testimony from prominent tech executives and a pair of multi-billionaire moguls. Google co-founder Larry Page testified in person, while Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison appeared on video.

Jurors also got a glimpse of Silicon Valley's small world when they heard from Eric Schmidt, now chairman of Google's corporate parent, Alphabet Inc. Schmidt was an executive of Sun Microsystems when that company created Java. Oracle acquired the rights to Java when it bought Sun in 2010.

The jury's verdict marks Google's second victory in the case. U.S. Judge William Alsup sided with Google in 2012, ruling that the APIs weren't protected by copyright. An appellate



REDWOOD CITY: In this Tuesday, March 20, 2012, file photo, a plane flies over Oracle headquarters in Redwood City, California. — AP

court overturned Alsup's ruling and sent the case back for a second trial.

Oracle said it will appeal the latest verdict on "numerous grounds." In a statement, Oracle general counsel Dorian Daley added, "We strongly believe that Google developed Android by illegally copying core Java technology to rush into the mobile device market."

Google welcomed the jury's finding in its own statement. "Today's verdict that Android makes fair use of Java APIs represents a win for the Android ecosystem, for the Java programming community, and for software developers who rely on open and free programming languages to build innovative consumer products," the company said. — AP

TECH BILLIONAIRE UNLIKELY HOGAN ALLY IN GAWKER FIGHT

ST PETERSBURG: Former pro wrestler Hulk Hogan has an unlikely ally in his corner for his courtroom cage match with Gawker - a high-tech billionaire with a long-standing grudge against the news-and-gossip site. The vendetta has set the stage for even more bad blood to pour out between Gawker CEO Nick Denton and the vengeful billionaire, Silicon Valley venture capitalist Peter Thiel, as Gawker fights for its survival.

Two months after Hogan won a \$140 million invasion-of-privacy verdict against Gawker for posting a sex tape of him, Thiel confirmed he covered the lawsuit's costs after news reports identified him as the covert financier. Thiel, who co-founded PayPal and was an early investor in Facebook, was outed as gay by a Gawker-owned website. The same Gawker site, Valleywag, ran a number of stories skewering Facebook, which provided a big chunk of Thiel's estimated \$2.7 billion fortune.

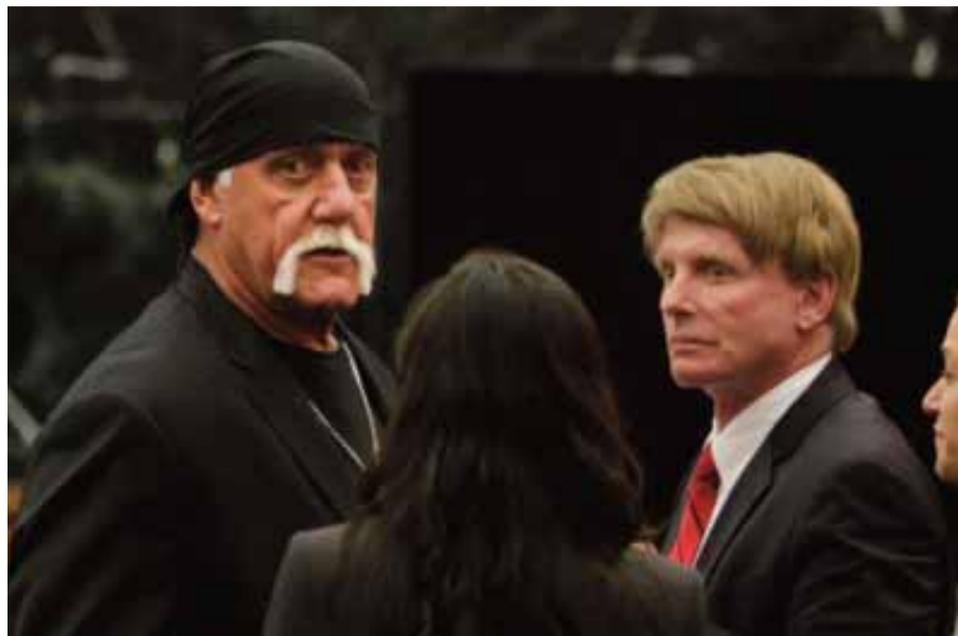
The 2007 article about him and other articles about his friends that he said "ruined people's lives for no reason" spurred Thiel to help fund "victims" of Gawker, he told The New York Times. "It is less about revenge and more about specific deterrence," he told the newspaper Wednesday. "I saw Gawker pioneer a unique and incredibly damaging way of getting attention by bullying people even when

there was no connection with the public interest." Gawker CEO Nick Denton counter-punched Thursday with an open letter that pilloried Thiel as a "comic-book villain" and an example of the "unaccountable power of the billionaire class." "You show yourself as a thin-skinned billionaire who, despite all the success and public recognition that a person could dream of, seethes over criticism and plots behind the scenes to tie up his opponents in litigation he can afford better than they," Denton wrote.

The damages facing Gawker threaten to destroy the company. As part of its contingency planning, Gawker has hired an investment banker to explore its options, including a possible sale. During the Hogan trial, Gawker's parent company, a collection of websites called Gawker Media, was estimated to be worth \$83 million. Thiel did not respond to The Associated Press' requests for an interview.

In the Times interview, Thiel also said Hogan's lawsuit is one of several against Gawker he has financially backed. Hogan's attorney, Charles Harder, is also handling two separate lawsuits against Gawker, filed on behalf of Shiva Ayydurai and Ashley Terrill.

Ayydurai said Thiel isn't involved in his lawsuit, but applauded him for backing Hogan. "More power to Peter Thiel," Ayydurai said



ST PETERSBURG: In this Monday, March 21, 2016, file photo, Hulk Hogan, whose given name is Terry Bollea, left, looks on in court moments after a jury returned its decision in St Petersburg, Florida. —AP

Thursday. "He is doing a public service. He is standing behind his principles, something few people in his position do."

In a Wednesday court proceeding, Gawker's attorneys asked the judge to allow them to seek evidence from the other side regarding Thiel's supposed involvement. But the judge said no. In his open letter, Denton vowed to

use an appeal of the Hogan verdict to subject Thiel to a "dose of transparency." "However philanthropic your intention, and careful the planning, the details of your involvement will be gruesome," Denton promised Thiel in his letter. As an alternative to a court battle, Denton proposed a public debate for "a more constructive exchange." — AP

CYBER FIRMS SAY BANGLADESH HACKERS ATTACKED OTHER ASIAN BANKS

WASHINGTON/SINGAPORE: Hackers who stole \$81 million from Bangladesh's central bank have been linked to an attack on a bank in the Philippines, in addition to the 2014 hack on Sony Pictures, cybersecurity company Symantec Corp said in a blog post.

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation has blamed North Korea for the attack on Sony's Hollywood studio. A senior executive at Mandiant, the cybersecurity company investigating the Bank Bangladesh heist, also told Reuters the hackers had recently penetrated banks in Southeast Asia.

In the blog post published on Thursday, Symantec did not name the Philippines bank or say whether any money was stolen, but said the attacks could be traced back to October last year. It did not identify the hackers.

The Philippines central bank's deputy governor, Nestor Espenilla, told Reuters that no bank in the country had lost money to hackers, although he did not rule out the possibility of cyber-attacks. "We are checking if there are similar attacks on Philippine banks," Espenilla said. "However, no reported losses so far." He added: "It is one thing to be attacked. It is another to lose money."

Marshall Heilman, vice president for Mandiant, a part of US-based FireEye, said it was not known whether any money was lost in the other attacks he described or whether the hackers had been successfully blocked. "There is a group operating in Southeast Asia that definitely understands the bank industry and is at more than one location," he said.

Heilman declined to identify the country or countries, or the institutions attacked. He said it was the same group as the one involved in the Bank Bangladesh theft and that the attacks were recent, but declined to be more specific.

Central banks elsewhere in Southeast Asia - Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and East Timor - have declined comment or denied knowledge of any other breaches. There have been at least four known cyber-attacks against a bank involving fraudulent messages on the SWIFT payments network, one dating back to 2013. SWIFT, the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, urged banks

this week to bolster their security, saying it was aware of multiple attacks. Banks around the world use secure SWIFT messages for issuing payment instructions to each other.

"Hard connection"

SWIFT said earlier this week that February's Bangladesh Bank hack was a "watershed event for the banking industry" and that it was "not an isolated incident." Spokeswoman Natasha de Teran said on Thursday that SWIFT was "actively looking into other possible instances of such fraud," but would not comment on individual entities. Symantec said it had identified three pieces of malware that were used in limited targeted attacks against financial institutions in Southeast Asia.

One of the malicious programs has been previously associated with a hacking group known as Lazarus, which has been linked to the devastating attack on Sony's Hollywood studio in 2014. "There is a pretty hard connection now to the Sony attacks and the actor behind them" and the Bangladesh heist, Eric Chien, technical director at Symantec, said in an interview.

Another cybersecurity firm, BAE Systems, said this month that the distinctive computer code used to erase the tracks of hackers in the Bangladesh Bank heist was similar to code used to attack Sony. Chien said that if North Korea was responsible for the hacks on banks via the SWIFT messaging network it would represent the first known episode of a nation-state stealing money in a cyber-attack.

Policymakers, regulators and financial institutions around the world are stepping up scrutiny of the cyber security of the SWIFT payments system after hackers used it to make fraudulent transfers totaling \$81 million out of Bank Bangladesh's account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Symantec and other researchers have also linked the hack to a failed attempt to use fraudulent SWIFT messages to steal from a commercial bank in Vietnam. In addition, Reuters reported last week that Ecuador's Banco del Austro had more than \$12 million stolen from a Wells Fargo account due to fraudulent transfers over the SWIFT network. — Reuters

KASPERSKY LAB: BUSINESSES DO NOT NEED WEBSITES TO BE VICTIM OF DDOS

DUBAI: Research by Kaspersky Lab and B2B International shows that businesses do not need to have external interfaces such as public websites, customer portals and transactional systems to be hit by a DDoS attack: internal web services, operations and connectivity are just as vulnerable.

In 2015, one in six companies worldwide suffered a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack, rising to a quarter of enterprises. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 12 percent of enterprises have reportedly suffered an attack. For most, these attacks focused on external activities. Just under half of those affected said their public websites had been hit, while around a third said that customer portals and logins (38 percent) and communications services (37 percent) had been impacted. A quarter found that a DDoS attack had affected transactional systems.

However, some companies discovered that a DDoS attack had affected their internal web services. A quarter said their file servers had been affected and 15 percent said their operational systems had been hit. Another 15 percent said a DDoS attack impacted overall Internet Service Provider network connectivity.

In terms of business sector, manufacturing was particularly susceptible to the internal impact of a DDoS attack, with a quarter saying their operational systems had been affected and over a third noticing an impact on file servers; while up to one in five telecoms, transportation, IT and government organizations noticed that their network connectivity had suffered.

"It is important to take a DDoS attack seriously. It is a relatively easy crime to perpetrate but the effect on business continuity can be far-reaching. Our study found that alongside the well-publicized impact of an attack, such as website downtime, reputational damage and unhappy customers, DDoS hits can reach deep into a company's internal systems. And it doesn't matter how small the company is, or whether or not it has a website: if you're online, you're a potential target. Unprotected operational systems are just as vulnerable to a DDoS attack as the external website, and any disruption can stop a business in its tracks," said Evgeny Vigovsky, Head of Kaspersky DDoS Protection, Kaspersky Lab.

Kaspersky DDoS Protection combines Kaspersky Lab's extensive experience in combating cyber-threats with the company's in-house software development expertise. The solution protects against all types of DDoS attacks, regardless of their complexity, power and duration. Unlike many similar products, Kaspersky Lab's solution protects any online service that could come under attack, including business applications, services, databases and more.



04:10 The Adventures Of Gerard
05:40 Dr. Goldfoot And The Bikini Machine
07:10 Of Mice And Men
09:00 The Bank Shot
10:25 Sharks' Treasure
12:00 The Adventures Of Gerard
13:30 The Great Escape
16:20 Rich Kids
17:55 Solarbabies
19:30 Dr. Goldfoot And The Bikini Machine
21:00 Fear The Walking Dead
22:00 Talking Dead: Fear Edition
23:00 Fear The Walking Dead
00:00 Breaking Bad
01:00 How To Beat The High Cost Of Living
02:45 Great Balls Of Fire!



03:25 Shamwari: A Wild Life
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
06:36 Call Of The Wildman
07:25 Treehouse Masters
11:00 Dog TV
11:55 Ten Deadliest Snakes
12:50 Gangland Killers
13:45 Natural World
15:35 Animal Cops South Africa
16:30 Shamwari: A Wild Life
17:25 Gangland Killers

18:20 Rugged Justice
19:15 Giant Pandas Go Wild
20:10 Village Vets
21:05 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
22:00 Rugged Justice
22:55 Ten Deadliest Snakes
23:50 Gator Boys
01:40 Gangland Killers
02:35 Natural World



03:30 Stella
04:15 Doctors
05:15 Father Brown
06:00 Doctors
09:00 Eastenders
11:00 Sinbad
13:15 Casualty
14:10 Doctors
15:10 Death In Paradise
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:00 Gates
19:20 Father Brown
20:05 Call The Midwife
21:00 The Musketeers
21:55 Wallander
23:30 Doctors
00:00 Eastenders
00:30 Father Brown
01:15 Call The Midwife



03:00 Broadmoor: A History Of The Criminally Insane
04:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
05:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook

06:00 The FBI Files
09:00 Homicide Hunter
10:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
11:00 The First 48
12:00 The First 48
13:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
14:00 Curious & Unusual Deaths
15:00 Gangs Of Britain...
16:00 I Killed My BFF
17:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
18:00 Diabolical Women
19:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
21:00 Gangs Of Britain...
22:00 Killer Kids
23:00 Homicide Hunter
00:00 Evil Up Close
01:00 The Ghost Inside My Child
02:00 Killer Kids



03:40 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Fast N' Loud
10:10 Gold Rush (Season 6 Specials)
11:00 Rebel Gold
11:50 Outback Truckers
12:40 Storage Wars Canada
14:45 Property Wars
16:50 Edge Of Alaska
17:40 Ice Lake Rebels
18:30 You Have Been Warned
19:20 The Pop Illusionist
20:10 What Happened Next?
21:00 Edge Of Alaska
21:50 Ice Lake Rebels
22:40 Railroad Alaska
23:30 What Happened Next?
00:45 Curse Of The Frozen Gold



03:00 Untamed & Uncut
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 How It's Made
05:30 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:50 Kids vs Film
08:40 Bad Dog
12:50 Strangest Weather On Earth
17:00 Ultimate Survival
18:40 Wildest Africa
19:30 Troy
20:20 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
21:10 NASA's Greatest Missions
22:00 Untamed & Uncut
00:30 Strangest Weather On Earth
02:10 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman



03:00 Evil Stepmothers
03:48 Surviving Evil
04:36 Blood Relatives
05:24 The Perfect Murder
06:12 Over My Dead Body
07:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner
07:50 Blood Relatives
12:00 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
16:10 Suspicion
17:00 California Investigator
17:50 Southern Fried Homicide
18:40 Murder Comes To Town
19:30 Swamp Murders
20:20 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
21:10 Suspicion
22:00 I'd Kill For You
22:50 The Haunted
00:30 Surviving Evil



03:05 How It's Made
03:29 Mythbusters
04:16 How It's Made
04:39 How It's Made
05:03 The World's Strangest UFO Stories
05:50 Prototype This
06:37 How Do They Do It?
07:23 How It's Made
11:08 How Do They Do It?
11:53 Food Factory
14:10 Food Factory USA
14:57 Mythbusters
18:05 Alien Mysteries
20:25 The World's Strangest UFO Stories
21:15 Secret Space Escapes
22:00 How Do They Do It?
22:45 How It's Made
01:08 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman



03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipper
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Lolirock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:40 Hank Zipper
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:45 H2O: Just Add Water
10:35 Radio Disney Music Awards 2016
12:05 Violetta Recipes
12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:20 Jessie
12:45 Girl Meets World
13:10 Alex And Co
13:35 Jessie
14:25 Descendants Wicked World
14:30 Jessie
17:50 Violetta Recipes
18:00 Radio Disney Music Awards 2016
19:30 Evermoor Chronicles
19:55 Evermoor Chronicles
20:20 Radio Disney Music Awards 2016
21:50 Violetta Recipes
22:00 Binny And The Ghost

22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipper
23:35 Binny And The Ghost
00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipper
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Violetta



03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 Calimero
03:35 Zou
03:45 Loopdidoo
04:00 Art Attack
04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
04:35 Calimero
04:50 Zou
05:00 Loopdidoo
05:15 Art Attack
05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
05:50 Calimero
06:00 Zou
06:20 Loopdidoo
06:35 Art Attack
07:00 The Hive
07:10 Zou
07:25 Loopdidoo
07:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
08:05 Sofia The First
08:30 Goldie & Bear
08:45 Miles From Tomorrow
09:10 PJ Masks
09:35 Doc McStuffins
10:00 Sofia The First
10:30 Goldie & Bear
11:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
11:25 The Lion Guard
11:50 Miles From Tomorrow
12:15 Henry Hugglemonster
12:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
13:00 Sofia The First
13:25 Goldie & Bear
13:50 Doc McStuffins
14:15 The Lion Guard
14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:10 Miles From Tomorrow
15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 Jungle Cubs
16:50 Aladdin
17:15 The Lion Guard
17:40 Goldie & Bear
18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
18:30 Sofia The First
19:00 PJ Masks
19:30 The Lion Guard
20:00 Goldie & Bear
20:30 Sofia The First
21:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
21:25 PJ Masks
21:50 Jungle Cubs
22:20 Aladdin
22:50 Zou
23:05 Henry Hugglemonster
23:20 Calimero
23:35 Zou
23:50 Loopdidoo
00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:15 Loopdidoo
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou
02:30 Loopdidoo
02:45 Art Attack



03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:00 Man Fire Food
05:00 Chopped
06:00 Guy's Grocery Games
07:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes
10:00 The Pioneer Woman
11:00 Siba's Table
11:30 Siba's Table
12:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
13:00 Chopped
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
17:00 Chopped
18:00 Siba's Table
19:00 Private Chef
20:00 Chopped
21:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Private Chef
00:00 Chopped
01:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



03:00 The Afends Hemp Revolution
03:20 Looking Thru The B-Sides
03:30 Feast Of The East
04:00 The 808
04:30 World Of X Games 2014
05:30 Parko's Perfect Day
06:00 Bikes & Broken Bones
07:30 16 Below - Generation 4
08:00 Moments
08:30 Feast Of The East
09:00 Standard Snowboard Show
09:30 The Gypsy Tour
10:00 Master Debaters With Jay Mohr
10:30 Camp Woodward Beijing
11:00 2007 Tampa Am
11:30 2007 Tampa Pro
12:00 Master Debaters With Jay Mohr
12:30 The Gypsy Tour
13:00 Moments
13:20 Ementa Sb
13:30 Feast Of The East
14:00 The Crew
14:30 World Of X Games 2014
15:30 Perfect Chapter
16:00 Teahupoo Uncut
17:00 Wakepark World Championship 2015
17:30 Feast Of The East
18:00 Nuclear Cowboyz 2012
18:30 16 Below - Generation 4
19:00 Street League Of Skateboarding 2015
21:00 World Of X Games 2014
22:00 Pull
22:30 Pull
23:00 Insane Cinema: Machotaildrop
00:50 Looking Thru The B-Sides



X-MEN- DAYS OF FUTURE PAST ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY

- 03:00 Fresh Off The Boat
- 03:30 Black-Ish
- 04:00 Living With Fran
- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 05:30 Better With You
- 06:00 My Name Is Earl
- 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 08:00 Living With Fran
- 08:30 Better With You
- 09:00 Fresh Off The Boat
- 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 12:00 My Name Is Earl
- 12:30 Living With Fran
- 13:00 Better With You
- 14:00 Black-Ish
- 15:30 Life In Pieces
- 16:00 The Carmichael Show
- 16:30 My Name Is Earl
- 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 18:00 Galavant
- 18:30 Dr. Ken
- 19:00 Last Man Standing
- 19:30 Crowded
- 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 21:00 Life In Pieces
- 21:30 The Carmichael Show
- 22:00 Saturday Night Live
- 23:00 Married
- 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 00:30 Life In Pieces
- 01:00 The Carmichael Show
- 02:30 Married

OSN FIRST HD MORE

- 03:00 Game Of Thrones
- 04:00 After The Thrones
- 04:30 Curb Your Enthusiasm
- 05:00 Cinema Verite
- 07:00 Miss You Can Do It
- 08:00 Lucky Louie
- 08:30 Flight Of The Conchords
- 09:00 Veep
- 09:30 RKO 281
- 11:00 Normal
- 13:00 The Education Of Mohammad Hussein
- 14:00 On Freddie Roach
- 14:30 Flight Of The Conchords
- 15:00 Veep
- 15:30 The Gathering Storm
- 17:00 Normal
- 19:00 Allegiance
- 20:00 The Sopranos
- 21:00 True Detective
- 22:00 Ballers
- 22:30 Funny Or Die Presents
- 23:00 The Wire
- 00:00 Robert Schimmel: Unprotected
- 01:00 The Sopranos
- 02:00 True Detective

OSN FIRST HD

- 03:00 Sleepy Hollow
- 04:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 The Fosters
- 07:00 C.S.I.
- 08:00 Prison Break
- 09:00 Royal Pains
- 10:00 Shark Tank
- 11:00 C.S.I.
- 12:00 Survivor: Kaoh Rong
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 C.S.I.
- 15:00 Live Good Morning America
- 16:00 Survivor: Kaoh Rong
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Prison Break
- 19:00 The Night Shift
- 20:00 Unforgettable
- 21:00 Criminal Minds
- 22:00 Graceland
- 23:00 Agent X
- 00:00 Unforgettable
- 01:00 Criminal Minds
- 02:00 Graceland

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 03:45 The Marine 4: The Moving Target
- 05:30 X-Men: Days Of Future Past
- 07:45 R.I.P.D.
- 09:30 Dracula Untold
- 11:15 Turbulence
- 13:15 X-Men: Days Of Future Past
- 15:30 Grosse Pointe Blank
- 17:30 Dracula Untold
- 19:15 Armageddon



DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 22:00 Fast & Furious 6
- 00:15 Duplicity
- 02:30 Turbulence

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 04:00 The Trip To Italy
- 06:00 Man Of The House
- 08:00 Hope Springs
- 10:00 The Trip To Italy
- 12:00 50 First Dates
- 14:00 My Father The Hero
- 16:00 Hope Springs
- 18:00 Chef
- 20:00 Laggies
- 22:00 Ted
- 00:00 Drunk Wedding
- 02:00 Chef

OSN MOVIES HD DRAMA+2

- 03:00 Foreverland
- 05:00 Ask Me Anything
- 07:00 The Signal
- 09:00 Shanghai Calling
- 11:00 Sunshine On Leith
- 13:00 The Signal
- 15:00 The Giver
- 16:45 Mood Indigo
- 19:00 Sunshine On Leith
- 21:00 Kill The Messenger

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

- 04:30 National Treasure
- 07:00 Big Hero 6

- 09:00 The Chronicles Of Namia: The Lion, The Witch...
- 11:15 Dr. Seuss' The Lorax
- 13:00 Annie
- 15:00 Coraline
- 17:00 Muppets Most Wanted
- 19:00 Dinosaur
- 20:45 The Young Black Stallion
- 21:45 National Treasure 2: Book Of Secrets
- 23:45 Muppets Most Wanted
- 01:45 Dinosaur

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

- 04:30 Wall Street
- 07:00 Mandela: Long Walk To Freedom
- 09:30 The Citizen
- 11:30 Monkey Kingdom
- 13:00 October Sky
- 15:00 Odeio O Dia Dos Namorados
- 17:00 The Citizen
- 19:00 True Colors
- 21:00 Calendar Girls
- 23:00 Summer Of Sam
- 01:30 The Citizen

OSN MOVIES HD

- 03:15 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
- 05:45 Jack And The Cuckoo Clock Heart
- 07:15 The Book Of Life
- 09:00 Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes
- 11:15 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
- 13:45 Jurassic World
- 16:00 Life Of A King
- 17:45 Pompeii
- 19:30 The Last Of Robin Hood
- 21:00 The End Of The Tour

- 23:00 Ex Machina
- 01:00 October Gale

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

- 04:15 Jungle Book: Mowgli's Adventure
- 06:00 Zarafa
- 08:00 Ploddy Police Car On The Case
- 10:00 Yellowbird
- 11:30 Pixies
- 13:00 Worms
- 14:30 Baby Geniuses And The Mystery Of The Crown Jewels
- 16:00 Tarzan
- 18:00 Yellowbird
- 20:00 The Adventurer: The Curse Of The Midas Box
- 22:00 Baby Geniuses And The Mystery Of The Crown Jewels
- 23:30 Tarzan
- 01:15 Ploddy Police Car On The Case
- 02:45 The Adventurer: The Curse Of The Midas Box

OSN MOVIES HD PREMIERE

- 04:45 I Am Ali
- 07:00 Kon-Tiki
- 09:00 Miss Julie
- 11:15 Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge Of The Sith
- 13:45 Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope
- 16:00 Kon-Tiki
- 18:00 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I
- 20:15 Star Wars: Episode V - The Empire Strikes Back
- 22:30 Star Wars: Episode VI - Return Of The Jedi
- 01:00 Poltergeist
- 02:45 Kon-Tiki

STAR MOVIES HD

- 04:30 Confessions Of A Shopaholic
- 06:15 A Way With Murder
- 08:00 The Entitled
- 09:45 Frozen
- 11:30 Fright Night
- 13:30 Captain America: The Winter Soldier
- 16:00 The Hurricane
- 18:30 A Heartbeat Away
- 20:00 Surrogates
- 21:30 Hidalgo
- 23:45 Pearl Harbor
- 02:45 Coyote Ugly

STAR WORLD HD

- 03:00 The Listener
- 04:00 Fit For Fashion
- 05:00 Melissa & Joey
- 05:30 Melissa & Joey
- 06:00 Cougar Town
- 06:30 Cougar Town
- 07:00 Making Mr.Right
- 08:00 Grey's Anatomy
- 09:00 Grey's Anatomy
- 10:00 The Listener
- 11:00 The Listener
- 12:00 Fit For Fashion
- 13:00 Melissa & Joey
- 13:30 Cougar Town
- 14:00 The Secret Life Of The American Teenager
- 15:00 Castle
- 16:00 Lost
- 17:00 Scrubs
- 17:30 Happy Endings
- 18:00 The Walking Dead
- 19:00 The Walking Dead
- 20:00 The Walking Dead
- 21:00 Scrubs
- 21:30 Happy Endings
- 22:00 Private Practice
- 23:00 Private Practice
- 00:00 Making Mr.Right
- 01:00 Lost
- 02:00 The Walking Dead

sundance CHANNEL

- 04:15 Picture Bride
- 05:50 Mr. Invisible
- 06:10 Discovering: Queen
- 07:00 Rich Hill
- 08:35 The Horse Boy
- 10:10 The Lebanese Rocket Society
- 11:45 Tangerines
- 13:10 Adela
- 14:35 Rich Hill
- 16:10 Dear Lemon Lima
- 17:35 Tangerines
- 19:00 This Is Martin Bonner
- 20:25 The Lebanese Rocket Society
- 22:00 Emma
- 00:00 Proof
- 01:40 Dollhouse

TLC HD

- 03:30 Two In A Million: Boys On Fire
- 04:20 Randy's Wedding Rescue
- 06:00 Say Yes To The Dress, Æi Bridesmaids
- 06:25 Say Yes To The Dress, Æi Bridesmaids
- 06:50 Cake Boss
- 07:13 Cake Boss
- 07:36 Love At First Swipe
- 08:00 Love At First Swipe
- 08:22 Bakery Boss
- 09:10 The Undateables
- 09:57 Two In A Million: Boys On Fire
- 10:45 Fat Chance
- 11:35 Something Borrowed, Something New
- 13:35 Our Little Family
- 14:25 Ask Oprah's All Stars
- 15:15 Cake Boss
- 17:17 Two In A Million: Boys On Fire
- 18:05 Oprah's LifeClass
- 18:55 Cake Boss
- 19:20 Fat Chance
- 20:10 Something Borrowed, Something New
- 20:35 Something Borrowed, Something New
- 21:00 Ask Oprah's All Stars
- 21:50 Belief
- 22:40 Monsters Inside Me
- 23:30 What Have I Got

- 23:55 What Have I Got
- 00:20 My Extreme Excess Skin
- 01:07 90 Days To Wed
- 01:55 Long Island Medium

HISTORY HD

- 03:40 Swamp People
- 04:30 American Restoration
- 05:00 Battle 360
- 06:00 Banger Boys
- 06:50 Alaska Off-Road Warriors
- 07:40 Duck Dynasty
- 08:05 Duck Dynasty
- 08:30 Counting Cars
- 08:55 Swamp People
- 09:45 Fifth Gear
- 10:35 Ultimate Wheels
- 11:25 Banger Boys
- 12:15 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 13:05 American Pickers
- 13:55 Duck Dynasty
- 14:20 Duck Dynasty
- 14:45 Lost Worlds
- 15:35 American Restoration
- 16:00 Banger Boys
- 16:50 Fifth Gear
- 17:40 Shipping Wars
- 18:05 Shipping Wars
- 18:30 Pawn Stars
- 18:55 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 19:20 Storage Wars Miami
- 19:45 Storage Wars
- 20:10 American Restoration
- 21:00 Hunting Hitler
- 21:50 Forged In Fire
- 22:40 Lost Worlds
- 23:30 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us
- 00:20 Forged In Fire
- 01:10 Hunting Hitler
- 02:00 Banger Boys
- 02:50 American Restoration

nickelodeon HD

- 03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:48 Henry Danger
- 04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 04:36 The Haunted Hathaways
- 05:00 Winx Club
- 05:24 Henry Danger
- 05:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:48 Sanjay And Craig
- 08:12 Harvey Beaks
- 08:36 Breadwinners
- 09:00 Get Blake
- 09:24 Rabbids Invasion
- 09:48 Henry Danger
- 10:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 10:36 The Haunted Hathaways
- 11:00 Winx Club
- 11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 12:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 13:00 Breadwinners
- 13:24 The Loud House
- 13:48 Get Blake
- 14:12 Rabbids Invasion
- 14:36 100 Things To Do Before High School
- 15:00 Game Shakers
- 15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 16:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 17:00 Sanjay And Craig
- 17:24 Harvey Beaks
- 17:48 The Loud House
- 18:12 Henry Danger
- 18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 19:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
- 19:24 Game Shakers
- 19:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 21:24 Breadwinners
- 21:48 Breadwinners
- 22:12 Sanjay And Craig
- 22:36 Sanjay And Craig
- 23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 23:48 Henry Danger
- 00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 00:36 Max & Shred
- 01:00 The Haunted Hathaways
- 01:24 Sanjay And Craig
- 01:48 Sanjay And Craig
- 02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants



Pakistan Employment Forum Kuwait organizes Oral Health Care Seminar

Pakistan Employment Forum Kuwait (PEFK), Medical Assistance Division, organized Oral Health Care Seminar recently for young students in Pakistan Oxford English School Jaleeb Al-Shuyoukh with coordination of Ghazala Bano, The Principal and Manal Jaber, and Director of Pakistan Oxford English School. PEFK Medical Assistance Division prepared and conducted the event led by Dr Huda Shams, Dr Yasir Jameel and Dr Ameena Bashir. PEFK Medical Assistance Division is dealing with career assistance, guidance and counseling in Medical field for Job seekers and Students in Kuwait.

Ghazal Bano, The Principal, Safa Abdullah, vice Principal of Pakistan English School Mangaf, Muhammad Irfan Adil, Founder President of PEFK, M Irfan Shafiq, General Secretary, Maqbool Ahmed, Head of Marketing Department along with school staff including Madiha and Salwa graced the event.

Seminar was started by Recitation of Holy Quran by a young talented student whereas the event was conducted nicely by Madiha. She introduced PEFK and Medical Assistance Division to Young Student. PEFK Founder President, Muhammad Irfan Adil briefly explained about Pakistan Employment Forum Kuwait and stated that PEFK is a premier and first ever Pakistani Forum of its kind in State of Kuwait which is purely designated to provide assistance for job seekers and career counseling for students residing in Kuwait especially among Pakistanis. PEFK is a non-Political and non-Governmental organization. It is a social welfare group established with a vision to provide career guidance to jobseekers and students, mainly

Pakistani citizens residing in Kuwait, and help those in need of assistance in their career development, with no limitations of religion, nationality, race or ethnicity. We are here to serve humanity and the career of all humans is precious to us. We aim to provide the Best Career Development Counseling and Job Hunting guidance to our community in Kuwait.

He invited and welcomed Dr Huda Shams, Dr Yasir Jameel and Dr Ameena Bashir for the presentation. Dr Huda Shams and Dr Ameena Bashir Delivered Comprehensive and informative Presentation on Oral Health Topic, which showed different ways to tackle Dental issues. Young Students Participated with full enthusiasm and showed their high interest towards presentation and asked several questions in Q/A session and Students were shown different Techniques of brushing through Presentation and demonstration.

At the end, PEFK General Secretary, Mohammad Irfan Shafiq thanked the Audience, Students and Principal of school for giving opportunity to conduct seminar.

Ghazala Bano, Principal of Pakistan Oxford English School Kuwait highly appreciated PEFK initiative for students. she marked this effort as an amazing contribution. she stated that the Oral Health seminar is very useful, informative and productive. she thanked PEFK Medical Assistance Division and all PEFK Team for their ongoing efforts in serving the community. At the end, Certificate of Appreciation was presented to the participating students and Teacher in PEFK 3rd Annual Event and Interscholar Pakistan National Song Competition.



Nissan Al-Babtain provides 6 winners trip to attend UEFA Champions League Final

Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company, the exclusive agent of Nissan vehicles in the State of Kuwait, has provided 6 lucky customers a unique experience to witness this seasons UEFA Champions League Final live which will take place in Milan, Italy today.

Six lucky Nissan Al-Babtain customers won a fully paid trip including airlines tickets to Milan, accommodation for two nights, and two tickets to attend the most anticipated football game of the season, the UEFA Champions League Final. Nissan Kuwait offered a similar promotion last year and sent customers to the UEFA Champions League Final 2015 which was held in Berlin, Germany.

In 2014 Nissan Motor Company LTD has enclosed a four years partnership with the UEFA Champions League including the UEFA Super Cup. This agreement is the biggest sponsorship deal of Nissan which made the Japanese automotive manufacturer the official partner of the prestigious European Championship.

On this occasion, Mohammed Shalaby, COO, Al-Babtain Group said that the Al-Babtain Group is always keen to make the dreams of their clients come true. "This is why we are always looking for new ways to provide them new exciting experiences. Nissan vehicles are known for its young enthusiastic spirit, which

comes in line with our gift to our 6 lucky clients to attend the UEFA Champions League Final.

This is not the first time that we give our clients the chance to attend this spectacular match. After our UEFA Champions League campaign last year, we realized the importance of this match and the high interest of the Kuwaiti community to watch it".

"This valuable trip to Milan is one of the special promotions in 2016, as the Group is keen on always offering exciting campaigns to our valuable customers," he added. Through this promotion, Nissan is dedicated to its slogan: 'Innovation that Excites'. As a partner of the UEFA Champions League, Nissan aims to provide new ways to enrich the experience of the UEFA Champions League, which is the most prestigious football tournament on the European continent, and is an important stage for Nissan.

Nissan has a great a portfolio of sport sponsorship, which additionally to the UEFA Champions League sponsorship also includes the Olympic Games 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the Olympic teams of the United Kingdom and Mexico. Furthermore, Nissan has also signed sponsorship agreements with the African Cup of Nations, American Football Championship NCAA, Hitman Cup, Canadian League, and the recently appointed ICC sponsorship.



Dear cute Dakshan Prashanth, may your birthday bring loads of joyful and sweet memories in your life. May you have a great and successful year ahead. Your family and friends wish you a happy fifth birthday.

The 41ner Club Kuwait was chartered recently, sponsored by 41ner Club of India. 41ner's Shibu Varghese took over as the charter President, Finney George as Vice President and Biji Tharakan as secretary. 41ner Club is the more commonly used and shorter name for the

Association of Ex-Round Tablers' Clubs a social networking organization for men aged over 40 who are also former members of Round Table. Thus, 41 Club forms part of the Round Table Family of clubs, together with Round Table, Ladies Circle and Tangent.



ANGOLA'S YELLOW FEVER DEATH TOLL ABOVE 300

JOHANNESBURG: Angola's yellow fever outbreak has killed more than 300 people since December, with cases of the deadly disease spreading to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and even China, the World Health Organization has said. The outbreak was first detected in the capital Luanda at the end of last year, and has now been confirmed in most coastal and central

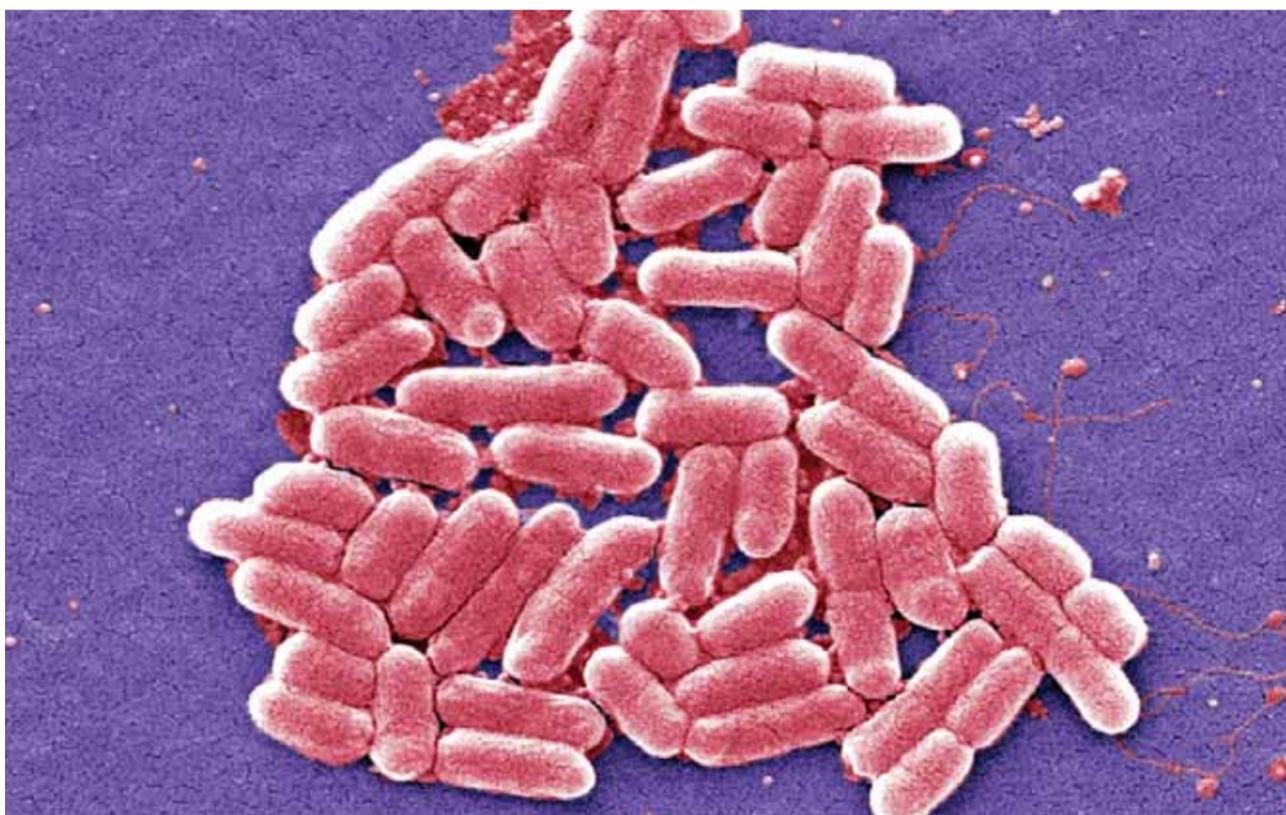
regions of the west African country.

"Angola has reported 2,536 suspected cases of yellow fever with 301 deaths," WHO said in an update released Thursday. "Despite vaccination campaigns in Luanda, Huambo and Benguela provinces, circulation of the virus persists in some districts." WHO warned of unimmunized travelers spreading the virus after neighboring

DR Congo reported 41 cases imported from Angola, with two cases in Kenya and 11 in China.

"The outbreak in Angola remains of high concern due to persistent local transmission in Luanda despite the fact that more than seven million people have been vaccinated," WHO said. There is no specific treatment for yellow fever, a viral hemorrhagic disease transmitted

by infected mosquitoes and found in tropical regions of Africa and Latin America's Amazon region. Yellow fever vaccinations are routinely recommended for travelers to Angola, though the country had not previously seen a significant outbreak since 1986. Aid groups have warned of poor health facilities and vaccine shortages limiting Angola's ability to cope with the outbreak. — AFP



This 2006 colorized scanning electron micrograph image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows the O157:H7 strain of the E coli bacteria. — AP

US SEES 1ST CASE OF BACTERIA RESISTANT TO ALL ANTIBIOTICS

WASHINGTON DC: US health officials on Thursday reported the first case in the country of a patient with an infection resistant to all known antibiotics, and expressed grave concern that the superbug could pose serious danger for routine infections if it spreads.

"We risk being in a post-antibiotic world," said Thomas Frieden, director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, referring to the urinary tract infection of a 49-year-old Pennsylvania woman who had not travelled within the prior five months. Frieden, speaking at a National Press Club luncheon in Washington, DC, said the infection was not controlled even by colistin, an antibiotic that is reserved for use against "nightmare bacteria."

The infection was reported Thursday in a study appearing in *Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy*, a publication of the American Society for Microbiology. It said the superbug itself had first been infected with a tiny piece of DNA called a plasmid, which passed along a gene called *mcr-1* that confers resistance to colistin. "(This) heralds the emergence of truly pan-drug resistant bacteria," said the study, which was conducted by the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. "To the best of our knowledge, this is the first

report of *mcr-1* in the USA." The patient visited a clinic on April 26 with symptoms of a urinary tract infection, according to the study, which did not describe her current condition. Authors of the study could not immediately be reached for comment. The study said continued surveillance to determine the true frequency of the gene in the United States is critical.

"It is dangerous and we would assume it can be spread quickly, even in a hospital environment if it is not well contained," said Dr Gail Cassell, a microbiologist and senior lecturer at Harvard Medical School. But she said the potential speed of its spread will not be known until more is learned about how the Pennsylvania patient was infected, and how present the colistin-resistant superbug is in the United States and globally.

'Medicine cabinet is empty'

In the United States, antibiotic resistance has been blamed for at least 2 million illnesses and 23,000 deaths annually. The *mcr-1* gene was found last year in people and pigs in China, raising alarm. The potential for the superbug to spread from animals to people is a major concern, Cassell said.

For now, Cassell said people can best protect themselves from it and from other

bacteria resistant to antibiotics by thoroughly washing their hands, washing fruits and vegetables thoroughly and preparing foods appropriately. Experts have warned since the 1990s that especially bad superbugs could be on the horizon, but few drugmakers have attempted to develop drugs against them.

Frieden said the need for new antibiotics is one of the more urgent health problems, as bugs become more and more resistant to current treatments. "The more we look at drug resistance, the more concerned we are," Frieden added. "The medicine cabinet is empty for some patients. It is the end of the road for antibiotics unless we act urgently." Overprescribing of antibiotics by physicians and in hospitals and their extensive use in food livestock have contributed to the crisis.

More than half of all hospitalized patients will get an antibiotic at some point during their stay. But studies have shown that 30 percent to 50 percent of antibiotics prescribed in hospitals are unnecessary or incorrect, contributing to antibiotic resistance. Many drugmakers have been reluctant to spend the money needed to develop new antibiotics, preferring to use their resources on medicines for cancer and rare diseases that command very high prices and lead to much larger profits. — Reuters

CLIMATE TALKS FLESH OUT LANDMARK PACT

BONN: Climate diplomats wrapped up technical talks Thursday saying they were on the right track but still far from delivering on the promise of the historic pact forged in December. Negotiators from 196 countries worked along three parallel tracks to put flesh on the bone of the Paris Agreement, the fruit of two decades of often contentious wrangling between wealthy and developing nations.

The accord—which could enter into force later this year, far sooner than expected—sets ambitious goals for capping global warming and funneling trillions of dollars to poor countries facing an onslaught of climate damage. The 10-day session in the German city of Bonn focused mainly on elaborating a "rule book" for implementation, and laying the groundwork for a high-level meeting in November in Marrakesh, Morocco.

"It has been a very constructive session," said Elina Bardram, top negotiator for the European Union, expressing a view echoed by other diplomats and observers. "We are moving well beyond the disagreements that characterized the negotiations for so many years." Christiana Figueres, the outgoing UN climate chief, also saw a "new willingness" to work collectively, but warned that time was running out. "My concern is whether the transformation is going to happen fast enough to avert the worst impacts," she told AFP, referring to the global shift from fossil fuels to green energy. "It is a race against the clock." The most urgent question on the agenda remains how to ramp up national plans for slashing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Paris pact calls for capping global warming at well below two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and 1.5 C (2.7 F) if possible. But voluntary national pledges to cut carbon pollution would still see Earth's surface heat up by three degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit) compared to the pre-Industrial Era benchmark, a scenario scientists describe as catastrophic.

Much discussion in Bonn centered on how to plug this "emissions gap", and what efforts can be made before 2020, when these national carbon-cutting plans go into effect. Barely 1 C of global warming so far has already fuelled a crescendo of devastating impacts. Droughts in Africa and Asia are threatening food supplies, and rising seas could force millions to seeking higher ground.

\$100 billion promise

2015 was by far the hottest year on record, and scientists predict that 2016 could be even worse. In Bonn, developing countries pushed for hard numbers and a timetable for financial aid to make the switch from dirty to clean energy, to adapt to future climate change and to repair damage done.

"Adaptation has been short-changed," said Armelle Le Comte of Oxfam France. "Developed countries must present a roadmap to show how they will deliver on their promise to deliver \$100 billion (90 billion euros) a year" starting in 2020. Morocco has billed the November high-level meeting they will host as the "action COP," or Conference of the Parties.

Mohamed Adow, senior climate advisory for Christian Aid, said the focus should be on the rapid transition to clean energy. "Marrakesh needs to be seen as the Renewables COP," he said. The unexpected speed with which the Paris deal is moving towards ratification shows strong political momentum, but creates other problems that will have to be sorted out, diplomats said.

The European Union—which fought hard to set the Paris deadline for a deal—could find itself in the awkward position of its member states not being among the ratifiers of the agreement when it goes into effect. "If there is an early entry into force, we may not be part of that," said Ivo de Zwaan of the Netherlands, speaking for the EU. Negotiators also grappled with issues including transparency in reporting of emissions reductions and financial transfers; how science should inform the negotiating process; and the best way for governments to interface with the business and financial sectors. — AFP

KILLER HIPPOS SPREAD FEAR AMONG FISHERMEN IN SENEGAL

MEN ARE STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE DUE TO ATTACKS

GOULOUMBOU: Lying in hospital with bloodied bandages over the deep gashes in his legs, Senegalese fisherman Ali Fall recalls the moment a hippopotamus tried to kill him as he hauled in nets in a local river. "I came with another fisherman to pick up the nets I had left when the hippopotamus upended our boat. My friend got away but it bit into my left leg, then my right," said the shaken 25-year-old.

The waters of Gouloumbou in eastern Senegal, a tributary of the river Gambia and the village where Fall lives, have often run red with the blood of his peers. In the last decade, 25 fishermen have been mauled to death in the giant jaws of these easy to provoke mammals and many more injured, village officials said. "It's the second time I've been attacked, after their first attempt in 2014. I've cheated death twice," said Fall from his hospital bed in the nearby city of Tambacounda.

Back in Gouloumbou, which lies 500 kilometers east of the capital Dakar, village chief Abdoulaye Barro Watt looks out of the windows of his office, next to the river where locals continue to risk death with few other options for a livelihood in this rural area. They were all fishermen hoping to make a living for their families," he said.

"These men are struggling to survive due to these attacks. I have written so many letters to the authorities, even the fisheries minister, to make them aware of the problem." Gouloumbou villagers and the massive hippopotamuses once lived together in relative safety, the chief said. "We used to play with them in the river. They were harmless." That has all changed, said fisherman Abdoulaye Sarr, sitting with a friend, Moussa Bocar Gueye. "They are evil monsters who attack us night and day. Because of them, we haven't been fishing."

Both men are from the "thiouballo" ethnic group which has long made its living from fishing but neither will be launching their "pirogue",



GOULOUMBOU: Ali Fall, 25, the latest victim of a hippopotamus attack on the Gambia river lays on a bed at the hospital. — AFP

or traditional wooden boat, onto the river today. "It's three weeks since we last went fishing," Gueye added. "There aren't any more fish at the market." Hippopotamuses, vegetarians that live in or near swamps and rivers, can weigh up to 1,500 kilograms and spend long hours in water to protect their skin from the sun. Easily irritated with terrifying strength, the mammals kill more humans each year than almost any other animal in Africa because of their volatile nature, according to wildlife experts.

Protected, but deadly

Senegal lists the hippopotamus as a protected species, so culling them is illegal. Their current number is unknown, but a survey is underway to track their presence in the coun-

try. It is not only fishermen who fear the giant beasts. A lack of running water makes villagers dependent on the river to wash themselves and their clothes.

"I'm scared they'll attack. That's why I always stay facing the river," said Aminata Sy, a woman in her forties scrubbing her laundry. "We don't have a well or any taps," she added, keeping a close eye on children swimming nearby. The fishermen have pressed the government to send them motorized boats, and a first lot has been promised.

"The fisheries ministry will provide the fishermen of Gouloumbou with 20 metal pirogues (with motors), which are more resistant to attacks," said Djibril Signate, national director of inland fishing. "We are installing a fish farm-

ing enclosure in Gouloumbou. The ministry has also distributed nets, hooks and lifejackets so they can fish in pools that are chock full (of fish)," Signate added. Different explanations are given for the attacks.

Fishing officials say hippopotamuses are especially aggressive at this time of year when the females are giving birth. But fisherman Sarr says a decline in superstition is responsible. "Practicing magic protected people from the river, but now they don't treat it properly, washing their clothes and dishes." He warned, darkly, that a Malian fisherman was to blame, after cursing the village following an argument over pricing in 2007. Whatever the cause, fisherman Fall will take no more chances. "After I get better, I'm changing profession," he said. — AFP

CLINIC
PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
د. فهد علي المخيزيم
Consultant Pediatrician استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (26/05/2016 TO 01/06/2016)

SHARQIA-1 MONEY MONSTER 11:30 AM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 1:30 PM MONEY MONSTER 3:45 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 5:45 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 8:00 PM MONEY MONSTER 10:15 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 12:15 AM	FANAR-5 X-MEN: Apocalypse 1:15 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 2:00 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 4:15 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 6:30 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 8:45 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 11:45 PM	MARINA-1 MONEY MONSTER 11:30 AM MONEY MONSTER 1:30 PM MONEY MONSTER 3:30 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 5:30 PM MONEY MONSTER 8:30 PM MONEY MONSTER 10:30 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 12:30 AM	MARINA-2 WARCRAFT 11:30 AM WARCRAFT 2:00 PM WARCRAFT 4:30 PM WARCRAFT 7:00 PM WARCRAFT 9:30 PM WARCRAFT 12:05 AM	MARINA-3 Hepta 12:45 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 3:15 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 5:30 PM Hepta 7:45 PM Hepta 10:15 PM Hepta 12:45 AM	AVENUES-1 PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 11:45 AM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 2:00 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 4:15 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 6:45 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 9:15 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 11:45 PM	AVENUES-3 MONEY MONSTER 11:30 AM MONEY MONSTER 1:45 PM MONEY MONSTER 4:00 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 6:15 PM MONEY MONSTER 8:30 PM MONEY MONSTER 10:45 PM MONEY MONSTER 1:00 AM	AVENUES-4 Hepta 12:45 PM MONEY MONSTER 3:00 PM Hepta 5:00 PM "THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE" 5:00 PM Hepta 7:30 PM Hepta 10:00 PM MONEY MONSTER 12:30 AM	AVENUES-5 WARCRAFT 3D 12:00 PM WARCRAFT 2:45 PM WARCRAFT 3D 5:30 PM Special Show "WARCRAFT" 5:30 PM FRI 27.05.2016 WARCRAFT 8:15 PM Special Show "WARCRAFT" 8:15 PM FRI 27.05.2016 "CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR" 8:15 PM WARCRAFT 11:00 PM WARCRAFT 11:15 PM WED Special Show "WARCRAFT" 11:00 PM Special Show "WARCRAFT" 11:00 PM	Special Show "WARCRAFT" 11:00 PM	AVENUES-6 Hepta 11:30 AM Hepta 2:00 PM Hepta 4:30 PM Hepta 7:00 PM Hepta 9:30 PM Hepta 12:05 AM	AVENUES-7 CABIN FEVER 1:15 PM CABIN FEVER 1:30 PM FRI CABIN FEVER 3:30 PM CABIN FEVER 5:45 PM Ely Ekhtashou Matou 8:00 PM CABIN FEVER 10:15 PM CABIN FEVER 12:30 AM	AVENUES-8 THE NICE GUYS 11:45 AM THE NICE GUYS 2:00 PM THE NICE GUYS 4:15 PM THE NICE GUYS 6:30 PM THE NICE GUYS 8:45 PM THE NICE GUYS 11:15 PM	AVENUES-9 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 12:00 PM WARCRAFT 3D 2:15 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 5:00 PM WARCRAFT 7:15 PM WARCRAFT 3D 10:00 PM WARCRAFT 12:45 AM	AVENUES-10 X-MEN: Apocalypse 12:15 PM CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR 3:15 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 6:15 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 9:15 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 12:15 AM	AVENUES-11 WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D) 12:30 PM WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D) 3:15 PM WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D) 6:00 PM WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D) 8:45 PM WARCRAFT (Atmos 2D) 11:30 PM	360° 1 Hepta 12:15 PM Hepta 2:45 PM Hepta 5:15 PM Hepta 7:45 PM Hepta 10:15 PM Hepta 12:45 AM	360° 2 PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 12:00 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 3:00 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 5:15 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 7:30 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 10:00 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 12:30 AM	360° 3 THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 12:30 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 3D 2:45 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE (Arabic) 5:00 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 7:15 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 9:30 PM Hepta 11:45 PM	AL-KOUT.1 WARCRAFT 11:30 AM WARCRAFT 2:00 PM WARCRAFT 4:30 PM WARCRAFT 7:00 PM	WARCRAFT 9:30 PM WARCRAFT 12:05 AM	AL-KOUT.2 PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 1:00 PM MONEY MONSTER 3:15 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 5:15 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 7:30 PM MONEY MONSTER 9:45 PM PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND 11:45 PM	AL-KOUT.3 Hepta 11:45 AM Hepta 2:15 PM Hepta 4:45 PM Hepta 7:15 PM Hepta 10:00 PM Hepta 12:30 AM	AL-KOUT.4 THE NICE GUYS 12:15 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 2:30 PM THE NICE GUYS 5:30 PM THE NICE GUYS 7:45 PM X-MEN: Apocalypse 10:15 PM THE NICE GUYS 1:00 AM	BAIRAQ-1 WARCRAFT 3D 11:30 AM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 2:00 PM WARCRAFT 4:00 PM WARCRAFT 3D 6:30 PM WARCRAFT 9:00 PM WARCRAFT 11:30 PM	BAIRAQ-2 Hepta 11:30 AM Hepta 1:45 PM Hepta 4:30 PM Hepta 7:00 PM Hepta 9:30 PM Hepta 12:05 AM	BAIRAQ-3 MONEY MONSTER 12:15 PM MONEY MONSTER 2:15 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 4:15 PM THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE 6:15 PM MONEY MONSTER 8:15 PM MONEY MONSTER 10:15 PM MONEY MONSTER 12:15 AM	PLAZA Hepta 3:30 PM WARCRAFT 5:45 PM Hepta 8:15 PM Hepta 10:45 PM	LAILA WARCRAFT 3:30 PM MONEY MONSTER 6:00 PM Hepta 8:00 PM Special Show "DVD" 7:00 PM WED 01.06.2016 WARCRAFT 10:30 PM	AJIAL.1 MARUDHU (Tamil) 3:45 PM MARUDHU (Tamil) 6:45 PM MARUDHU (Tamil) 9:45 PM IDHU NAMMA AALU (Tamil) 3:45 PM IDHU NAMMA AALU (Tamil) 6:45 PM IDHU NAMMA AALU (Tamil) 9:45 PM	AJIAL.2 SARBJIT (Hindi) 3:45 PM SARBJIT (Hindi) 6:15 PM SARBJIT (Hindi) 9:00 PM
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Flight Schedule

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers use seats

Arrival Flights on Saturday 28/5/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	501	Alexandria	00:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30
JZR	125	Bahrain	01:40
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
JZR	553	Alexandria	01:50
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:30
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40
KAC	514	Tehran	03:50
QTR	8301	Doha	04:10
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
JZR	529	Asyut	06:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
SYR	341	Damascus	10:30
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
JZR	359	Mashhad	10:50
IRM	1188	Mashhad	11:10
JZR	325	Al Najaf	11:20
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30
IRC	6511	ABD	11:40
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:55
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
JZR	241	Amman	12:30
SAW	701	Damascus	12:35
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
THY	766	Istanbul	13:10
FDB	8053	Dubai	13:25
IRC	526	Mashhad	13:35
TBM	6313	Mashhad	13:45
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:50
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:55
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:15
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20
JZR	779	Jeddah	14:25
KAC	512	Mashhad	14:30
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:50
KAC	788	Jeddah	15:00
KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05
OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
RJA	640	Amman	16:00
FDB	051	Dubai	16:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
JZR	257	Beirut	16:25
KAC	118	New York	16:30
KNE	531	Jeddah	16:35
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:45
NIA	251	Alexandria	16:50
KAC	562	Amman	16:55
KAC	680	Muscat	16:55
IRA	669	Mashhad	17:10
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
JZR	357	Mashhad	17:30
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
KAC	792	Madinah	17:45
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:50

QTR	1080	Doha	17:55
SVA	500	Jeddah	17:55
KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	18:20
KAC	502	Beirut	18:35
KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35
KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35
FDB	8061	Dubai	18:50
KAC	742	Dammam	18:50
CLX	856	Luxembourg	18:50
KAC	618	Doha	18:55
KAC	542	Cairo	18:55
KAC	104	London	19:00
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:15
JZR	535	Cairo	19:30
JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
FDB	059	Dubai	19:50
JZR	177	Dubai	19:50
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:05
KNE	381	Taif	20:10
ABY	121	Sharjah	20:10
MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:30
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:55
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:05
UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
ALK	229	Colombo	21:20
KLM	415	Amsterdam	21:25
KAC	676	Dubai	21:35
JZR	189	Dubai	21:45
QTR	1082	Doha	21:55
GFA	219	Bahrain	22:00
KAC	564	Amman	22:05
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
ABY	129	Sharjah	22:30
KNE	533	Jeddah	22:45
JZR	185	Dubai	22:55
THY	764	Istanbul	22:55
MSC	403	Asyut	23:10
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:20
JZR	125	Bahrain	23:25
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	23:30
MSR	614	Cairo	23:30
FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
JAD	301	Amman	23:45

KAC	501	Beirut	11:00
KAC	561	Amman	11:20
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:25
KAC	679	Muscat	11:25
SYR	342	Damascus	11:30
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
JZR	356	Mashhad	11:40
KAC	541	Cairo	12:05
UAE	874	Dubai	12:10
RBG	554	Alexandria	12:10
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:15
IRM	1189	Mashhad	12:20
IRC	6512	ABD	12:40
JZR	534	Cairo	12:40
IAW	158	Al Najaf	12:55
KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
KAC	791	Madinah	13:00
FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
NIA	152	Cairo	13:20
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:20
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
SAW	702	Damascus	13:35
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
FDB	8054	Dubai	14:05
THY	767	Istanbul	14:10
IRC	527	Mashhad	14:35
TBM	6314	Mashhad	14:40
PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:45
KNE	382	Taif	14:55
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
FDB	058	Dubai	15:05
KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
FBA	832	Al Najaf	15:10
QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	617	Doha	15:15
JZR	176	Dubai	15:15
KAC	741	Dammam	15:30
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KNE	684	Madinah	16:00
KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
BON	102	Sarajevo	16:05
OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	563	Amman	16:30
RJA	641	Amman	16:55
FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
JZR	188	Dubai	17:10
JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	17:15
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
NIA	252	Alexandria	17:50
IRA	666	Esfahan	18:10
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
SVA	505	Jeddah	19:25
FDB	8062	Dubai	19:30
KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
KAC	361	Colombo	19:55
CLX	856	Hong Kong	20:20
JZR	266	Beirut	20:20
FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
JZR	124	Bahrain	20:35
KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
DLH	634	Doha	20:50
ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
KAC	353	BLR	20:55
KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
MSR	607	Luxor	21:30
QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
JZR	238	Amman	22:30
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	22:55
GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
ABY	120	Sharjah	23:10
KAC	155	Istanbul	23:15
QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:25
KNE	534	Jeddah	23:35
JZR	554	Alexandria	23:45

Departure Flights on Saturday 28/5/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
JZR	528	Asyut	00:10
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:25
MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
KLM	413	Amsterdam	00:55
MSC	502	Alexandria	01:05
MSC	416	Sohag	01:05
JZR	502	Luxor	01:15
THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
THY	765	Istanbul	02:45
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
OMA	644	Muscat	04:00
KKK	6505	Istanbul	04:05
FDB	068	Dubai	04:05
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
PGT	861	Istanbul	04:30
QTR	1077	Doha	04:35
JZR	358	Mashhad	05:00
QTR	8302	Doha	06:10
RJA	643	Amman	06:25
QTR	1087	Doha	06:30
THY	771	Istanbul	06:45
GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
JZR	240	Amman	06:55
FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
JZR	164	Dubai	07:15
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
JZR	324	Al Najaf	07:55
BAW	156	London	08:25
FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
KAC	511	Mashhad	08:40
KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:50
JZR	778	Jeddah	08:50
JZR	256	Beirut	09:05
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:30
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00
KAC	101	London/New York	10:00
QTR	1071	Doha	10:35
FDB	056	Dubai	10:40

Word Search Puzzles

Summer - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

P V G V T G C S G N I H S I F S A
 C S S G O N N P R N H O T O R B V
 I A E W C I G S N U I S N E A D S
 C N O O I P B G E Y G N W S T W U
 E D T Z N M M W K I D O E T T S N
 C A I G C A M S H R L B Y D P Q T
 R L U R I C E I A F A F J R R N A
 E S Q K P U B O N L I H I U Q A N
 A G S O L I B Q L G L N T N N G G
 M V O B C E C U R T K S S X I P S
 R T M Y T A D E F L O G E E Y Q P
 V A C A T I O N E Z D D S E C Y Y
 W L K V C B A R B E C U E N B T O
 E S A D C Q S V E N I H S N U S S

- BARBECUE
 - BASEBALL
 - BEES
 - BICYCLE
 - BLUE SKY
 - CAMPING
 - FISHING
 - FLIES
- FLOWERS
 - GARDENING
 - GOLF
 - HOT
 - ICE CREAM
 - INSECTS
 - MOSQUITOES
 - PICNIC
 - SANDALS
- SKATEBOARD
 - SPRINKLERS
 - SUNSHINE
 - SUNTAN
 - SWIMMING
 - VACATION

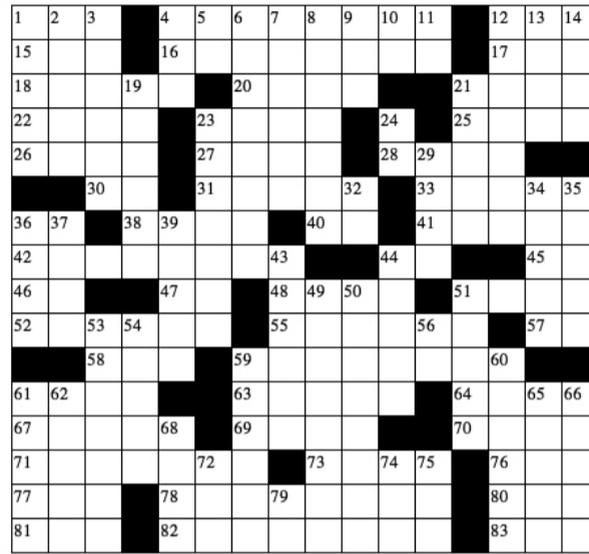
Yesterday's Solution

Large Print Word Search Puzzles
 Winter 2 - Solution

R C S M S P X Y V A S S O P C K D
 W P Y N M E A X R N R K T P Z D F
 S E A S O N Y C O E J J A O R Z E
 I L H A I L I W T U P R V A O K T
 G C E L E C S D V I K P Z Z A B E
 O L E D U H S O K A N Z I L O P C
 L Q O F O K F O Y T I K F L U L I
 Y K Q V I R E W O L B W O N S E T
 M W E I E S U E B S O H T L H G S
 P L N S Q S H R P N N X Y Y O O L
 I G I T T Y F I S P M U J X C N O
 C K E Z E E R F N H T L B X K G S
 S L A V I N R A C G P G U O E G K
 G M I P C H R I S T M A S E Y E D

- BLIZZARD
 - BOOTS
 - CARNIVAL
 - CHRISTMAS
 - EGG NOG
 - FIREWOOD
 - FREEZE
 - GLOVES
- HAIL
 - HOCKEY
 - ICE FISHING
 - KNIT CAP
 - OLYMPICS
 - PARKA
 - SEASON
 - SKIING
- SKIS
 - SLED
 - SLIPPERY
 - SNOW BLOWER
 - SNOW SHOVEL
 - SNOWFLAKE
 - SOLSTICE

CROSSWORD 1267



ACROSS

1. A unit of pressure.
4. Combatant who tries to throw opponent to the ground.
12. A health resort near a spring or at the seaside.
15. A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
16. Of or relating to the life and times of kings Charles I or Charles II of England.
17. A case for containing a set of articles.
18. Squash bugs.
20. Wearing or provided with clothing.
22. A quantity of no importance.
25. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
26. An official language of the Republic of South Africa.
27. Type genus of the Ranidae.
28. Round object that is hit or thrown or kicked in games.
30. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
31. Yellow-fever mosquitos.
33. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar.
36. A public promotion of some product or service.
38. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
40. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
41. The 1st letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
42. Iranian religious leader of the Shiites.
45. An informal term for a father.
46. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
47. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
48. An independent agency of the United States government responsible for aviation and spaceflight.
52. A region of northeastern France famous for its wines.
55. Involving the entire earth.
57. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
58. Hormones (estrogen and progesterin) are given to postmenopausal women.
61. Advanced in years.
63. An upward movement (especially a rhythmical rising and falling).
64. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
67. Spicy fruit of the cubeb vine.
69. Belonging to some prior time.
70. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a com-

- mon policy for the sale of petroleum.
- 71. United States Protestant theologian (1892-1971).
- 73. An onerous or difficult concern.
- 76. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
- 77. The compass point midway between east and southeast.
- 78. Authenticate as a notary.
- 80. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- 81. The habitation of wild animals.
- 82. Any plant of the genus Gesneria.
- 83. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. Buildings for carrying on industrial labor.
2. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
3. A large Yoruba city in southwestern Nigeria.
4. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
5. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
6. (geology) Used of the earliest known rocks.
7. A republic in central Europe.
8. A defeat of the Persian army by the Greeks in 479 BC.
9. Either of two folds of skin that can be moved to cover or open the eye.
10. Half the width of an em.
11. A rare heavy polyvalent metallic element that resembles manganese chemically and is used in some alloys.
12. Capital of modern Macedonia.
13. A member of the North American Indian people living in southern Arizona and northern Mexico.
14. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
19. A deep bow.
21. Small evergreen shrub of Pacific coast of North America having edible dark purple grape-size berries.
23. Slender and graceful.
24. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
29. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
32. A white trivalent metallic element.
34. Strike with disgust or revulsion.
35. God of wealth and love.
37. Tropical woody herb with showy yellow flowers and flat pods.
39. Show a response or a reaction to something.
43. The crease at the junction of the inner part of the thigh with the trunk together with the adjacent region and often including the external genitals.
44. A fencing sword with a v-shaped blade and a slightly curved handle.
49. Relatively small tuna with choice white flesh.
50. Something of sentimental value.
51. Ancient Athenian philosopher.
53. Unlicensed drinking establishment.
54. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt.
56. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
59. Trousers that end at or above the knee.
60. 1 species.
62. An artful or simulated semblance.
65. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
66. The capital and largest city of Ghana with a deep-water port.
68. A plug used to close a hole in a barrel or flask.
72. A tool with a flat blade attached at right angles to a long handle.
74. A type of submachine gun that is designed and manufactured in Israel.
75. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
79. An associate degree in nursing.

Daily SuDoku

3	4			9	2
	9	4		8	
7		9			5
9		8		5	
		3	7		
	1		9		6
	3		1		5
		6		3	8
2	7			4	1

very hard

Yesterday's Solution

1	5	8	4	7	3	6	2	9
3	6	2	1	8	9	7	5	4
9	7	4	2	6	5	8	1	3
8	9	6	3	5	7	2	4	1
2	3	5	6	4	1	9	7	8
7	4	1	9	2	8	5	3	6
5	1	7	8	3	6	4	9	2
6	2	9	5	1	4	3	8	7
4	8	3	7	9	2	1	6	5

hard

Yesterday's Solution

A	L	S	O		S	P	A	T	I	A	L		A	D	D	
H	A	T	E		C	A	R	I	A	M	A		G	A	R	
A	D	A	D		O	D	I	N		N		L	A	M	A	
B	E	R	E	F	T		S	T	E	E	L	E		A	G	
					M	A		H	E	A	D	S	H	I	P	
A	D	D	A	X		I		C	P	I		G	A	G	A	
L	E	R			L	E	A	K		A	S	H	L	A	R	
K	W	A	C	H	A		Y		C	C		M	S	G		
Y	A	M	A		B	R	A	M	A		A	G	A	M	A	
D	R	A	B		L	E	H	A	R		R	U	R	A	L	
					A	M	A	H		I	D	E	A	L	N	I
W	A	N	N	A	B	E		D		B	A	D				
E	G	G	A	R		A	R	H	A	T		G	A	S	P	
B	O	W			U	N	R	O	O	F	E	D		G	C	A
E	N	E			P	A	S	T	O	R	A	L		D	A	B
R	Y	E			A	N	E	C	D	O	T	E		A	B	A

MONACO HAS F1 DANCING IN THE STREETS

MONACO: A lap of Monaco is much more than muscling a car round a twisty track, at breakneck speeds and millimeters from the metal barriers without crashing. With its harbourside backdrop, confined Casino Square, tight hairpin turns and tunnel stretch, Monaco is a blast from the past that allows the best to show off their skills and express themselves. "It's an incredible feeling, making a car dance through those streets," says Mercedes triple world champion Lewis Hamilton. "It's one of the purest thrills you can have in a racing car." Mexican Esteban Gutierrez, driving for the US-based Haas team after previously racing for Sauber, agrees about the dancing. "I love this track," he said. "Everything is about improvising...you don't have time to think. It's pure

driving and all the focus and concentration is really going into driving. "You have the car dancing and you make it dance."

The late Brazilian triple champion Ayrton Senna, a six-times winner in the Mediterranean principality, famously compared his qualifying lap with McLaren in 1988 to an out of body experience. "I suddenly realized that I was no longer driving the car consciously," he said in a later interview. "I was kind of driving it by instinct, only I was in a different dimension. It was like I was in a tunnel, not only the tunnel under the hotel, but the whole circuit for me was a tunnel. "I was just going, going. More, and more and more. I was way over the limit but still able to find even more. Then, suddenly, something just kicked

me. I kind of woke up and I realized that I was in a different atmosphere than you normally are."

Known as the Jewel in the Crown of the Formula One championship, Monaco has always been the race that drivers want to win but it also requires finesse to avoid the unforgiving barriers. Brazilian Nelson Piquet's comment that racing around Monaco was like riding a bicycle in your living room has become a well-worn cliché, but the sense of balance and poise remains as crucial now as then. "It's a course where speed is not terribly important," three-times winner Stirling Moss told Reuters at the recent Monaco Historic race. "It's just how good the car is, how well you can handle the car. "It really is a fabulous race." — Reuters

NIBALI WINS GIRO STAGE 19; CHAVES TAKES PINK

RISOUL: Italy's Vincenzo Nibali of Astana escaped alone to a summit-finish victory in the 19th stage of the Giro d'Italia yesterday whilst Colombia's Esteban Chaves rode into the pink jersey by coming third on the day. Pre-race favourite Nibali, 31, had been thought to be dead and buried at this Giro after starting the day fourth overall at 4min 43sec, but is now just 44 seconds off the pace in second, ahead of another mountain stage on Saturday. The 2013 champion looked like a man transformed on the final climb and wept openly after crossing the finish line for his sixth Giro stage win overall, before dedicating the victory to a deceased 14-year-old cyclist killed in an accident ten days ago.

The victory came after the 'Shark' had come in for fierce criticism in the Italian press throughout the race and had been on the brink of being withdrawn by his coach Paolo Slongo after suffering from an illness over the previous days. Sky's Mikel Nieve was second on the day, just a couple of seconds ahead of Chaves. Overnight leader Steven Kruijswijk finished almost five minutes off the pace after surviving a spectacular head-over-heels fall on the rapid descent of the Col d'Agnel but then getting dropped badly on the last climb.

Kruijswijk's teammates had all been dropped by the time of the fall, when he hit a huge wall of snow at 2700m altitude, and his team car was too far away to give him a new bike in good time, so he began the last climb already two minutes off the pace and with a bloody elbow. The overnight leader showed real guts going up the last climb alone but finished 4min 54sec off Nibali, dropping to third overall at 1min 05sec. The fifth-placed rider at the start of the day, Russia's Ilnur Zakarin ended it motionless at the bottom of a ditch with a broken collarbone after a terrible crash on interminable 40km descent between the day's two.

Chaves, a 26-year-old climber from Bogota, managed to stay within striking distance of Nibali and rode a wonderfully paced second climb, after also leading the first one, to finish 53sec adrift of Nibali. Spanish veteran Alejandro Valverde also struggled to follow the pure climbers Nibali and Chaves, and crossed the line with Rafal Majka 2min 11sec after the winner. The result sees Valverde drop from third to fourth overall. It leaves things finely poised ahead of Saturday's 134km mountain stage, the last opportunity for riders to make a victory bid, with three summits to scale at over 2000m. — AFP



RISOUL, France: Italy's Vincenzo Nibali of team Astana (right) is followed by Colombian cyclist Johan Esteban Chaves of Orica GreenEDGE (center) and the pink jersey Dutch Steven Kruijswijk of team (Lotto NL) during the 99th Giro d'Italia, Tour of Italy, from Pinerolo to Risoul yesterday. — AFP

FIFA IMPOSES STADIUM BANS, FINES FOR HOMOPHOBIC CHANTS

ZURICH: FIFA yesterday handed out fines to the football associations of Chile, Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Paraguay and Peru for homophobic chants by supporters during qualifying matches for the 2018 World Cup. Chile were banned from playing at the Estadio Nacional in Santiago for two official matches and fined 30,000 Swiss Francs (\$30,000, 27,000 euros). The first match-ban will be served at the next World Cup qualifier against Bolivia, with the second suspended subject to a two-year probation period. "The proceedings relate to homophobic chants by the team's fans and follow previous sanctions for similar incidents during the preliminary competition of the 2018

FIFA World Cup," FIFA said in a statement. Mexico were fined a total of 35,000 Swiss Francs for two cases, while Honduras were fined 40,000, El Salvador 35,000, Paraguay 20,000 and Peru 15,000 for individual cases related to incidents involving discriminatory and unsporting conduct by fans, including homophobic chants. Croatia were also ordered to play their next two World Cup qualifiers against Turkey on September 5 and Iceland on November 12 — without spectators and fined a total of 150,000 Swiss Francs for two cases of discriminatory chants by fans, which occurred at friendly matches against Israel and Hungary last March. — AFP

BLUE JAYS PUNCH YANKEES 3-1

BRADLEY'S STREAK ENDS AS COLORADO BEAT RED SOX

NEW YORK: JA Happ pitched seven strong innings and Edwin Encarnacion and Devon Travis had two-out RBIs as the Toronto Blue Jays beat the Yankees 3-1 on Thursday to win the three-game series. CC Sabathia was the tough-luck loser for New York, allowing just two unearned runs. Alex Rodriguez went 0 for 4 with two strikeouts in his first game since going on the disabled list May 4 with a strained right hamstring. Happ (6-2) allowed one run on three hits in seven innings with five strikeouts and three walks. He has given up three earned runs or fewer in 19 of his last 20 starts. Sabathia (3-3) retired the first seven batters before an error by shortstop Didi Gregorius on Travis' grounder with one out in the third. Roberto Osuna pitched a perfect ninth for his 10th save.

NATIONALS 2, CARDINALS 1

Bryce Harper hit a slump-busting home run, Danny Espinosa also went deep and Washington got seven strong innings from right-hander Joe Ross in a narrow win over St Louis. Washington trailed 1-0 in the sixth inning before Harper ended a 4-for-33 skid with a no-doubt-about-it shot into the upper deck, far beyond the wall in right field. It was his 12th homer of the season, the first since May 13. The light-hitting Espinosa snapped the tie in the seventh with a drive to right. Batting eighth, Espinosa came in with a .199 batting average and three home runs. Both homers came off Mike Leake (3-4), who won his previous three starts while allowing only two runs over 21 innings. Ross (4-4) gave up one run and six hits over seven innings.

ASTROS 4, ORIOLES 2

George Springer homered twice and the Houston Astros set a major league record for strikeouts in a three-game series in finishing a sweep of Baltimore. Houston starter Lance McCullers (1-1) allowed just one hit - a home run to Mark Trumbo - and had 10 strikeouts in five innings, helping the Astros break the major league record for strikeouts in a three-game series with 52. The previous mark was 47 by Washington



WASHINGTON: St Louis Cardinals starting pitcher Mike Leake and shortstop Aledmys Diaz (36) collide in the infield on ball hit by Washington Nationals' Stephen Drew during the seventh inning of a baseball game at Nationals Park on Thursday, May 26, 2016. — AP

earlier this season. Ken Giles gave up an RBI single to Manny Machado in the ninth but still finished up for his first save of the season. Baltimore's Kevin Gausman (0-2) allowed four runs and five hits - including three homers - in five innings.

BREWERS 6, BRAVES 2

Ryan Braun and Jonathan Villar homered as Milwaukee earned its first sweep in Atlanta. The Brewers began the three-game series with a 6-14 road record, but they found the right matchup at Turner Field. Atlanta is 2-20 at home, the worst record in the majors. Rain delayed the game 1 hour, 17 minutes in the seventh inning. Wily Peralta (3-5) gave up seven hits and Carlos Torres pitched the last two innings to earn his second save. Braves starter Matt Wisler (2-4) had a tough fourth, intentionally walking Martin Maldonado with two outs to get to Peralta, whose two-run bloop single made it 2-2. Wisler allowed six hits, three runs, two walks and struck out seven in six innings.

ROCKIES 8, RED SOX 2

Carlos Gonzalez, Trevor Story and Dustin Garneau hit two-run homers as Colorado stopped Jackie Bradley Jr's 29-game hitting streak in a comfortable win over Boston. The win ended a three-game losing streak by Colorado and it ended a four-game winning streak for the Red Sox. Bradley's major league-best streak was halted when he went 0 for 4 after moving up to the leadoff spot for the first time this season. Jon Gray (2-2) gave up a two-run home run to David Ortiz in the first, but pitched six scoreless innings before leaving in the eighth. Clay Buchholz (2-5) took the loss. He pitched three perfect innings before things came apart in the fourth, when he gave up Gonzalez's homer with the other two coming the following inning.

PIRATES 8, DIAMONDBACKS 3

Josh Harrison came off the bench to hit a two-out, two-run double in the sixth inning which put Pittsburgh ahead for good against Arizona. It gave the Pirates a 5-3 lead. Reliever AJ Schugel (1-1) got his first major league win after he had surrendered the lead inherited from starter Gerrit Cole in the top half of the inning. Schugel gave up a two-run single to Paul Goldschmidt in his only inning of work. Arizona starter Patrick Corbin (2-4) took the loss. He was responsible for both runners that scored on Harrison's double, which was hit off reliever Jake Barrett. Cole hit a 409-foot, three-run homer in the third inning to left-center field.

MARLINS 9, RAYS 1

Jose Fernandez struck out 12 in seven innings Thursday and won his sixth straight start for Miami. Fernandez (7-2) struck out eight of the last 10 batters he faced and struck out every hitter in the Rays lineup at least once. The 23-year-old right-hander from Tampa gave up six hits in beating his hometown Rays for the first time in three tries. Adeiny Hechavarria and Chris Johnson homered for the Marlins, who won three of four in their annual series against the Rays. Hechavarria's third home run drove in the final two runs of a three-run second inning off Rays starter Drew Smyly (2-6), who gave up five runs on six hits while striking out four in six innings. Johnson made it 5-0 with his second homer an inning later, Johnson's first hit in 22 interleague at bats. Brandon Guyer homered off Fernandez in the third.

WHITE SOX, ROYALS, PPD

The Chicago White Sox game at the Kansas City Royals was postponed because of rain on Thursday night. No makeup date was announced, but it will not be rescheduled as part of this series. — AP

MLB results/standings

Pittsburgh 8, Arizona 3; Miami 9, Tampa Bay 1; Toronto 3, NY Yankees 1; Washington 2, St. Louis 1; Colorado 8, Boston 2; Milwaukee 6, Atlanta 2; Houston 4, Baltimore 2.

American League Eastern Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	29	18	.617	-
Baltimore	26	19	.578	2
Toronto	24	25	.490	6
NY Yankees	22	24	.478	6.5
Tampa Bay	21	24	.467	7

Central Division

Chicago White Sox	27	21	.563	-
Cleveland	25	20	.556	0.5
Kansas City	24	22	.522	2
Detroit	23	23	.500	3
Minnesota	12	34	.261	14

Western Division

Seattle	28	18	.609	-
Texas	27	20	.574	1.5
LA Angels	21	26	.447	7.5
Houston	20	28	.417	9
Oakland	20	28	.417	9

National League Eastern Division

Washington	29	19	.604	-
NY Mets	27	19	.587	1
Philadelphia	26	21	.553	2.5
Miami	25	22	.532	3.5
Atlanta	12	34	.261	16

Central Division

Chicago Cubs	31	14	.689	-
Pittsburgh	27	19	.587	4.5
St. Louis	24	24	.500	8.5
Milwaukee	21	26	.447	11
Cincinnati	15	32	.319	17

Western Division

San Francisco	30	19	.612	-
LA Dodgers	25	23	.521	4.5
Colorado	22	24	.478	6.5
Arizona	21	28	.429	9
San Diego	19	29	.396	10.5



DUBAI: Nour El Sherbini (left) of Egypt plays a backhand to Laura Massaro of Great Britain during their semi-final match of the Dubai PSA World Series Finals squash tournament in Dubai yesterday. — AFP

SQUASH

DAVID BOOKS LAST 4

DUBAI: Nicol David, the most successful female squash player of the professional era, kept alive her hopes of winning yet another major title by beating Nouran Gohar, the world junior champion, 11-7, 11-9 to qualify for the last four of the PSA World Series finals. The eight-time world champion from Malaysia made light of any difficulties she may experience with the two-inch lower tin which has altered the tactical emphases of the women's game, moving the ball around well, usually picking good moments to play the ball in short, and coping with the hectic helter-skelter into which the rallies sometimes developed. David also resisted a dangerous-looking fight-back which took the hard-hitting Egyptian to a 9-8 lead in the second game, and won the match with a penalty point after a Gohar drive lurched into the middle allowing David no room in which to play the ball.

"This format really makes you stay in the moment," David said of the best-of-three-game group matches, in which her two wins and one loss carried her to second place in group A. "It means you have to make everything count," she said, with what sounded like a hint of relief that matches now revert

to the customary five-game encounters. "Nouran is a feisty player and definitely one for the future, and I am so pleased to come out with a win." David will complete a hat-trick of World Series titles after the women's event's three-year hiatus if she triumphs in Saturday's final, something which may feel especially welcome to her after an almost barren 17 months.

First though she must cope with Raneem El Welily, the former world number one from Egypt against whom she saved a match point to win the memorable 2014 world final in Cairo. Welily finished top of group B, unbeaten with three wins, after beating her friend Omneya Abdel Kawy 15-13, 11-9. The other semi-final is between Laura Massaro, the top-seeded former world champion from England and Nour El Sherbini, the 20-year-old current world champion from Egypt. Massaro notched her third win by overcoming Amanda Sobhy, the first American ever to make the world's top eight, 13-11, 11-9 in a tense, tight, and occasionally contentious match with a trickle of difficult refereeing decisions.

Sherbini, by contrast, rescued herself from a first day defeat with a calm and

authoritative 11-4, 11-6 success against Camille Serme, last year's British Open champion from France. This second victory kept alive her chances of a climactic finish to by far the finest season of her career. The other world champion, Greg Gaultier, was rewarded for his three wins with a semi-final against Miguel Angel Rodriguez, the dynamic fifth-seeded Colombian. The Frenchman had already been sure of qualifying worked hard and pulled out some extra tricks to prevail 7-11, 11-8, 11-1 against Omar Mosaad, yet another high level Egyptian.

What was effectively a dead match contained surprising drive and tension, emanating from its being a repeat of the World Open final six months ago in Seattle. Gaultier could go on to a final with the favourite Mohamed Elshorbagy, whose semi-final is against Cameron Pilley, the first Australian since Anthony Ricketts a decade ago to reach the semi-finals. Pilley beat Simon Rosner, the sixth-seeded German, 11-2, 11-7 and finished second in his group with two wins, attributing his improvement to "a couple of changes with technical things and training methods," which have "freshened" him. — AFP

OLYMPICS

BUCKET LIST TICKED, DRYSDALE BACK TO DEFEND TITLE IN RIO

WELLINGTON: Olympic rowing champion Mahe Drysdale's year off after his London campaign has not only refreshed him for his tilt at defending his single sculls title in Rio later this year, but also given him pause for thought about continuing until Tokyo. Drysdale, a five time world champion and bronze medalist at the Beijing Olympics, took 2013 off to "refresh his mind and body" and tick off some things on the bucket list.

He competed in Ironman triathlons, did the Coast-to-Coast multisport event where competitors, run, cycle and kayak the breadth of New Zealand's South Island, and climbed Mt Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Drysdale knew the year off was a risk-fellow London gold medalist Joseph Sullivan also took time off after the Games and when he returned in 2013 was essentially dropped from the high performance program-but he felt it was worth it in the end.

"Having that break was fantastic," Drysdale told Reuters in a recent telephone interview. "I had been rowing for 12 years in the squad and there were a lot of things I wanted to achieve outside of the sport. "Without that break I'd be a bit stale now and I'm feeling very refreshed and excited and it gave me that love and passion for the sport again." Drysdale returned to the team in 2014 and got back into the swing of things in a hurry, winning both of his World Cup events, though he finished second in the world championships behind the Czech Republic's Ondrej Synek by 0.73 seconds.

He again won both World Cup events in 2015 only for Synek to pip him for the world title by 0.34 seconds. The New Zealander, however, knew he was on the right path for Rio and keen to demonstrate that at a World Cup event in Lucerne this weekend. "I was a bit annoyed with myself last year because I didn't feel like I had raced to my best," he said. "Knowing that I was only 0.3 second behind has a silver lining, because I knew that I could have been a couple of seconds faster. "I very much know that I'm on track, but obviously Ondrej is a great competitor and he's never going to give it to you easily. It just re-affirmed to me that I need to be on my game in Rio."

Caught in a row

Drysdale said his training times over the New Zealand summer had been "very good". So good in fact he clocked a time just four seconds outside the world best of six minutes, 33.350 he set in Poznan in 2009. He did, however, unwittingly get caught in the middle of very public dispute between coach Dick Tonks and Rowing New Zealand late last year over a dispute about whether Tonks could do freelance coaching with foreign crews. The row escalated to an extent there were fears both Drysdale and the world champion women's double scull of Zoe Stevenson and Eve Macfarlane would need to change coach or step outside the centralized program altogether. "It was tough," Drysdale said. "I guess it was more the fact of not knowing what was going to come out of it."

"As soon as the solution was reached it was a huge relief to the double and myself because we knew where we were going." Where they are going, he hopes, is back to the top of the Olympic podium in Rio. Then who knows? Perhaps Tokyo as a 41-year-old? "Tokyo was never something that I thought could be on the horizon but after that break I have just loved the rowing so much and it's so exciting to still be improving," he said. "I have been pulling out my best results ever in training. I guess that has made me 50-50 as to whether I continue. "The biggest issue in that is could my body take another four years because ...you don't recover as quickly. "It does get harder." — Reuters

HINCHCLIFFE SEEKS INDY 500 WIN AFTER NEAR-FATAL CRASH

INDIANAPOLIS: Canadian driver James Hinchcliffe, who watched last year's Indianapolis 500 from a hospital bed after a near-fatal practice crash, starts on the pole for tomorrow's 100th running of the American oval classic. Hinchcliffe's third-turn crash into the outer wall last May shoved a steel rod from the car's suspension through his right thigh and into his left leg, causing massive bleeding that required safety workers to pump 14 pints of blood into him to keep him alive until he reached the hospital.

It's an accident Hinchcliffe can't remember due to a concussion. He had to ask those who rescued him from the wreckage to learn the details of what

happened. But the 29-year-old from Oakville, Ontario, says he never doubted he would return to racing and one year later, he finds himself the man to beat with the first pole of his IndyCar career. "The accident didn't change me. I'm just as hungry, just as driven," Hinchcliffe said. "There was never doubt in my mind or the team's mind that we would be back. To come here and do this the way that we did really puts a firm stamp on it and closes that chapter, and now we can look forward. Hopefully in a couple days we've got an even cooler story to tell."

Hinchcliffe drove his Honda-powered car to a four-lap qualifying average of 230.760 mph (371.372 k/hr) last Sunday

at 2.5-mile (4km) Indianapolis Motor Speedway to claim the inside from row spot in the 33-car field for the 200-lap feature event at the famed "Brickyard." Americans Josef Newgarden and Ryan Hunter-Reay join Hinchcliffe on the front row for the 100th Indy race with American Townsend Bell, Colombia's Carlos Munoz and 2015 Indy 500 runner-up Will Power of Australia in row two. France's Simon Pagenaud, the IndyCar points leader after winning the past three series races-all on road courses, starts in the middle of row three, flanked by Russian Mikhail Aleshin to the inside and three-time Indy 500 champion Helio Castroneves of Brazil to the outside.

Hinchcliffe eager, 'wiser'

But the popular fan choice will be Hinchcliffe, whose comeback bid is like few others ever attempted in a century at Indy. "As an entire team, to have come back from where we were a year ago, to now be sitting here, I would strongly argue anybody that would have tried to say that this pole would have meant more to them than it would us," Hinchcliffe said. "The power of the human mind is pretty incredible. It's tough to describe, to put into words, unless you've been through something like that. I always considered myself to be a driven person, a motivated person. — AFP

WARRIORS STAVE OFF ELIMINATION

DESPERATE WARRIORS BEAT THUNDER TO STAY ALIVE

OAKLAND: Andre Iguodala and Harrison Barnes bombed in 3-pointers on consecutive possessions during an eight-point flurry that opened a 12-point lead early in the fourth quarter, and the Golden State Warriors held on from there to stay alive in the Western Conference finals with a 120-111 victory over the Oklahoma Thunder on Thursday night.

The victory trimmed Golden State's deficit in the best-of-seven to 3-2, with the series returning to Oklahoma City for another possible close-out game for the Thunder on Saturday night. Game 7, if necessary, would be Monday in Oakland. Stephen Curry poured in 31 points, going 10-for-10 from the free-throw line, as the Warriors overcame a 40-point explosion by Thunder star Kevin Durant to keep their hopes of a title repeat alive.

The Warriors led just 81-77 before backup guard Shaun Livingston opened the fourth period with a short jumper. Iguodala and Barnes then nailed their 3-pointers, opening an 89-77 advantage, Golden State's biggest lead of the game to that point.

The advantage reached 13, but power forward Serge Ibaka wouldn't let the Thunder go quietly. He swished a pair of 3-pointers, and when Durant added a third, all of a sudden Golden State's lead was just 103-98 with still 4:34 to go. Curry then responded with his biggest hoop of the night, a driving left-hand-

ed floater on which he was fouled. He converted the three-point play, pushing the lead to eight.

The Golden State defense took it from there, holding the Thunder without a field goal until a Durant dunk with 56.9 seconds left, by which point the Warriors had pulled away into a commanding 112-101 advantage. Klay Thompson overcame 2-for-9 shooting on 3-pointers to back Curry with 27 points for the Warriors, who are now 4-1 after losses in the playoffs. The Warriors won despite making just nine of their 24 3-point attempts. Andrew Bogut had 15 points and a game-high 14 rebounds, and Draymond Green had an 11-point, 13-rebound double-double for the Warriors.

The Warriors shot 47.1 percent for the game to 42.9 percent for Oklahoma City. Golden State battled the Thunder even on the boards, 45-45. Durant's 40 points came on 12-for-31 shooting. Like Curry, he did serious damage at the free-throw line, going 13-for-13. Russell Westbrook backed Durant with 31 points to go with seven rebounds and a team-high eight assists. Ibaka had 13 points and Steven Adams a team-high 10 rebounds for the Thunder, who were able to eliminated Dallas and San Antonio in earlier series at first opportunity. The Thunder made 13 of their 30 3-point attempts, outscoring the Warriors 39-27 from beyond the arc.— Reuters



OAKLAND: Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) shoots against the Oklahoma City Thunder during the second half of Game 5 of the NBA basketball Western Conference finals in Oakland, Calif on Thursday, May 26, 2016. — AP

INJURED NADAL OUT OF FRENCH OPEN AS MURRAY SLAYS GIANT

PARIS: Nine-time champion Rafael Nadal sensationally quit the French Open with a left wrist injury yesterday as Andy Murray cruised into the last-16. Nadal, 29, stunned Roland Garros by calling a news conference at just 10 minutes notice to announce he was pulling out. The Spaniard said he had been playing with an anesthetic injection in the wrist in the first two rounds and that MRI scans had shown that the injury was getting worse. "It's not broken, but if I continue to play it will be 100 percent broken in a few days," said an emotional Nadal, the fourth seeded winner of 14 majors. "To win the tournament I need five more matches, and the doctor says that's 100% impossible."

Nadal, plagued by knee and wrist injuries throughout his career, added: "This is a very bad position, but that's life. "It's obvious that if it's not Roland Garros I would not take risks on playing the first two days, but it is the most important event of the year for me so we tried our best." Despite his latest setback, the charismatic Spaniard said he will keep playing although his participation at Wimbledon next month is now in serious doubt. "This is a tough moment and the toughest press conference I have ever had to give but it's not the end," said Nadal, who won the first of his nine French Opens as a 19-year-old in 2005. Nadal's withdrawal gives compatriot Marcel Granollers a walkover into the last 16. It's also a huge boost to world number one Novak Djokovic's hopes of lifting a first French Open crown. Nadal and Djokovic were seeded to meet in the semi-finals next Friday— the date of the Spaniard's 30th birthday. Second seed Murray cut down Croatian giant Ivo Karlovic to reach the last-16. Murray, a three-time semi-finalist, had needed two five-set matches and three days of play to get to the last 32. But yesterday the 29-year-old needed just a shade under two hours to beat 6ft 11in (2.11m) Karlovic 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

It was his seventh win in seven matches against the 37-year-old as Murray goes on to face either John Isner of the United States or Teymuraz Gabashvili of Russia. "At the end it was very close. I got off to a quick start and against someone like Ivo that's very important," said Murray. Kei Nishikori of Japan also reached the last 16 with a 6-3, 6-4, 3-6, 2-6, 6-4 win over Spain's Fernando Verdasco. The fifth seed, a quarter-finalist in 2015, will play Richard Gasquet for a place in the quarter-finals after the Frenchman defeated Australian Nick Kyrgios 6-2, 7-6 (9/7), 6-2. Canada's eighth seed Milos Raonic overcame a left hip injury to defeat Slovakian lucky loser Andrej Martin, the world number 133.

Kvitova out

Raonic won 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, 6-3 but only after requiring a medical timeout at the start of the third set to treat a hip injury. Raonic, a quarter-finalist in 2014, next faces 55th-ranked Albert Ramos-Vinolas after the Spaniard stunned American 23rd seed Jack Sock 6-7 (2/7), 6-4, 6-4, 4-6, 6-4. Ramos-Vinolas, 28, had not won a match at Roland Garros since 2011 before this year. Spanish fourth seed and last year's Wimbledon runner-up Garbine Muguruza won the last nine games to knock out Belgium's Yanina Wickmayer 6-3, 6-0.

Muguruza, a quarter-finalist in the last two years, next faces dangerous 2009 champion Svetlana Kuznetsova who beat Russian Fed Cup teammate Anastasia Pavlychenkova 6-1, 6-4. Romanian sixth seed Simona Halep, the runner-up to Maria Sharapova in 2014, needed three sets to see off 18-year-old Japanese player Naomi Osaka 4-6, 6-2, 6-3. Halep, 24, next faces 2010 finalist Sam Stosur who defeated 2015 runner-up Lucie Safarova of the Czech Republic 6-3, 6-7 (0/7), 7-5. Czech 10th seed Petra Kvitova became the fourth top 10 seed to exit by the third round after she lost 6-0, 6-7 (3/7), 6-0 to American world number 108 Shelby Rogers.

Kvitova, a semi-finalist in 2012, committed 36 unforced errors as 23-year-old Rogers reached the last 16 of a Grand Slam for the first time. Third seed Angelique Kerber, fifth-seeded Victoria Azarenka and Roberta Vinci, the seventh seed, all flopped in the first round. Rogers, who had put out Czech 17th seed Karolina Pliskova in the first round, next plays Romanian 25th seed Irina-Camelia Begu. With Halep also through, it's the first time since 1997 that two Romanian women have made the last-16. Later yesterday, defending champion and third seed Stan Wawrinka took on Frenchman Jeremy Chardy.— AFP

LAWMAKERS BACK EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN PLAYERS

WASHINGTON: US lawmakers joined calls for the United States women's soccer team to receive equal pay on Thursday, adopting a resolution demanding an end to the gender wages gap. The Senate passed a non-binding resolution from Democratic Senator Patty Murray urging the US Soccer Federation (USFF) ensure the World Cup-winning women's team was fairly compensated. "I am extremely proud that my Senate colleagues have adopted this resolution -these are great words of support for women across the country," Murray said after the resolution's passage.

In March, five members of the US women's team filed a complaint against US Soccer alleging wage discrimination. The women's team received \$2 million for winning last year's World Cup in Vancouver. The US men's team lost in the round of 16 at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil and received \$9 million. Addressing the Senate on Thursday, Murray said the resolution

wasn't "just about the money." "It's also about the message it sends to women and girls across our country and the world," Murray said. "The pay gap between the men and women's national soccer teams is emblematic of what is happening all across our country. "On average, women get paid just 79 cents for every dollar a man makes ... The wage gap isn't just unfair to women. It hurts families. And it hurts our economy."

The resolution, which has mostly symbolic value by putting public pressure on US Soccer officials, is part of a broader campaign to address the gender pay gap. Murray, the top Democrat on the Senate's Health, Education, Labor & Pensions committee, called on lawmakers to pass Senator Barbara Mikulski's Paycheck Fairness Act. "I hope Republicans will support equal pay for equal work for all American women with more than just words and will work with us to pass Senator Mikulski's Paycheck Fairness Act as quickly as possible," she said.— AFP



GUDJOHNSEN'S ICELANDIC SAGA TAKES EURO TWIST

MOLDE: When Iceland coach Lars Lagerback named Eidur Gudjohnsen in his 23-man squad for the Euro 2016 finals in France, it was the latest twist in the 37-year-old striker's long and colorful career. It is a tale that covers more than a dozen clubs and includes two Premier League titles with Chelsea, a La Liga crown and a Champions League winner's medal with Barcelona, and two decades of toil in a national team since his international debut at 17 coming on as a substitute for his father Arnor.

"I'm delighted," Gudjohnsen, now playing at Molde in Norway's top flight, told Reuters of Lagerback's decision to bring him to France for the Euros. "I played my first game for the national team 20 years ago, so it's a bit of an icing on the cake-but it's not just that. I'm not going there just to

travel there. Hopefully I can play an influential part in the team."

The journeyman attacker has played in Netherlands, Spain, Greece, Belgium and China, as well as in a handful of English clubs. "It was a bit of a strange situation where my contract in China finished in January and I wasn't sure if I wanted to stay," he explains. "I had to try to find a club where I would be certain of a lot of playing time and closer to home, where the national team coaches would have a closer eye on me as well." In February, he signed a two-year deal at Molde, where a former Premier League rival was running the show.

'Perfect option'

"After speaking with (Molde manager) Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, it seemed like the

perfect option. "It's a good club, good facilities, there is everything to concentrate purely on football, coming up to the Euros. It's been a perfect fit," he said, gazing out over the fjord outside Molde's Aker Stadion. "Being here reminds me of Iceland, it reminds me of a small town there. It's just nice and relaxed. A quiet place with lovely views, a town that its really interested in football. They live for the football club here."

Having all but hung up his international boots following Iceland's defeat to Croatia in a World Cup playoff in 2013, the journey back has been a long one. With Gudjohnsen absent as the Euro qualifiers began, Iceland hammered Turkey and Latvia 3-0 and then beat the Dutch 2-0 at home to set the pace in their group. "At that moment I thought, 'These boys might

be going to the Euros and I might miss out,' but then I just put my mind on it - 'right, let's do this - let's see how far you can get, see how fit you can be, see how well you can play still.'" By that stage he was in his second spell at Bolton Wanderers, signing a short-term contract and eventually winning back his place in the national team.

Scored on return

He scored on his return to the Iceland team in March 2015 as they beat Kazakhstan 3-0 away to edger closer to qualification before joining Shijiahuang Everbright in China. Gudjohnsen is eager to round off his international career with some fireworks in France but knows Portugal, Hungary and Austria will provide stiff opposition in Group F. — Reuters

NORTHERN IRELAND PRIMED FOR EURO SURPRISE

BELFAST: Northern Ireland manager Michael O'Neill believes his eclectic band of players from the lower divisions of English, Scottish and Irish football can pull off a surprise at Euro 2016 in their first major tournament for 30 years. The continental competition has witnessed a few major upsets in its 56-year history with Denmark hauling themselves off the beach just days before Euro 92 to claim the title and Greece winning in 2004 as rank outsiders. O'Neill's team travel to France to take on Poland, Ukraine and Germany in Group C confident they can cause an upset to the established order and make the knockout stages.

"The goal has to be to try and qualify and that has to be the same for any of the small countries," O'Neill said. "I'm sure the Albanians, the Icelandic players, everyone will have the same type of goal at the end of it. "Having got there, we don't just want to go and take part. We're in a tough group. But the small countries have punched above their weight and I think they're capable of doing it. "I think there will be a few surprise qualifiers for the round of 16 and we certainly aim to be one of them." Northern Ireland will be in the finals of a major tournament for the first time since the 1986 World Cup in Mexico. But the nation is no stranger to causing an upset on the biggest stage.

Gerry Armstrong famously scored the winner against hosts Spain in Valencia's Mestalla Stadium when Northern Ireland advanced to the World Cup quarter-finals in 1982. The memories of those successful days are fuelling Northern Irish hopes for Euro 2016. "It's been immense," the 46-year-old O'Neill said of the response to his team's qualification. "I look at myself and I'm at an age where I remember 1982 and 1986, but basically anyone under the age of 40 doesn't have that much recollection. "There's a whole generation of people 35 downwards who have never had the chance to go and watch Northern Ireland play in a major finals. Everyone's talking about it and it's dominating everything."

Old inspiration

O'Neill said the classes of 1982 and 1986 had been an inspiration to him. "When I came into the squad at 18, I was fortunate enough that some of those players were still around and I got to play with some of them as well," he added. "To get the chance to do this as a manager is fantastic." O'Neill, who recently signed a four-year contract to remain in charge of the team after the finals, has been at the helm of the Northern Ireland side since 2011.

O'Neill's squad qualified for France as group winners ahead of Romania and Hungary but his side also notched up a victory over Fabio Capello's Russia and drawn in Portugal in their previous World Cup qualifying campaign. "We've beaten Russia, we've competed with Portugal, we've obviously qualified top of our group. So the challenge for us will be, assuming we can get out of the blocks quickly, a squad like ours over seven games will be challenged," he said. "We've got to play three games of such a high intensity over eight days. But like anything, if we get momentum, get something on the board and give ourselves some belief, then this team can be successful." — Reuters



KUFSTEIN: Czech Republic's Roman Hubnik (right) is pictured in action during the friendly football match ahead of Euro 2016 between Czech Republic and Malta in Kufstein, Austria yesterday. — AFP

FRANCE'S COACH TO SUE CANTONA OVER RACIAL DISCRIMINATION SLUR

PARIS: France coach Didier Deschamps will sue Eric Cantona for slander after the Manchester United legend accused his former international and club teammate of racial discrimination in his choice of players for Euro 2016, his lawyer said yesterday. Cantona told British daily The Guardian on Thursday that Deschamps had snubbed Karim Benzema and Hatem Ben Arfa because of their "north African origins." "We are going to file a complaint for slander," Deschamps' lawyer, Carlo Alberto Brusa said. "These words are unacceptable, unworthy and Cantona brings shame on France, the French people and the France team which is the epitome of diversity. To bring up north African origins is to deny that the two players are French."

Cantona, who won 45 caps for France between 1987 and 1995, has in the past been very critical of his former teammate Deschamps, who in 1996 he branded a "vulgar water carrier". The former Marseille and Leeds United striker retired in 1997 before taking up a career in cinema. In 2007 he married Franco-Algerian actress Rachida Brakni. The exclusion of Benzema, of Algerian descent, follows his implication in an alleged attempt by one of his friends to blackmail international teammate Mathieu Valbuena over a sex tape. Ben Arfa, of Tunisian origins, had been hopeful of making the squad after relaunching his career at Nice but instead had to settle for a place on Deschamps's standby list of eight players. — AFP

FOOTBALL GENERAL MODRIC TOUGHENED BY CROATIA'S WAR

ZADAR: Bombs fell on the Croatian town of Zadar as Luka Modric refined his football skills in the corridors of a refugee hotel and in cratered car parks. Modric, 30, is now Real Madrid's midfield general, plotting attacks for Cristiano Ronaldo, Gareth Bale and Karim Benzema. He avoids tackles like an incoming shell. Maybe his upbringing in Croatia's independence war was an inspiration. Modric was "a vivid child who liked to socialise," recalled Miodrag Paunovic, one of Modric's trainers when he made his football debut with NK Zadar nearly 25 years ago.

"But among some 200 boys he immediately stood out, it was obvious that he would become a great player. A natural-born talent but also a hardworker," Paunovic said. The football star, who will be key to Croatia's hopes

at the European Championship finals, grew up near Zadar on the Adriatic coast. He was only six when war broke out in 1991. His father joined the Croatian army and the Modric family had to take refuge in Zadar to get away from Serb forces who occupied the region around the town. The former Yugoslav republic's proclamation of independence sparked the 1991-1995 war with rebel Serbs who opposed the move.

Living in a hotel, with hundreds of other refugees, Modric played football in the hotel corridors and the parking lot. His talent was clear however and NK Zadar invited him to join them after a scout spotted him. Zadar, now struggling in Croatia's second division, are used to producing top players. On the wall of club director Josip Bajlo is the flag of French club

Olympique Marseille. Josko Skoblar, or 'Monsieur Goal' as he was known in Marseille, started at Zadar. Skoblar won the European Golden Boot in 1971 after scoring 44 goals in the season. Croatian internationals Sime Vrsaljko and Danijel Subasic also started with Zadar.

But Modric is the hero. 'Training under shells'

"He was destined to become a great player," Bajlo, Zadar's first team coach during the Modric years said. "Luka was an extremely active kid, constantly playing with the ball. I remember he was small, looked physically fragile, but that was never an obstacle for him." The club moved Modric's family to another hotel closer to the ground to make attending training safer in the constant shelling. Zadar's

numerous Greek and Roman-era sites and spectacular sunsets over the seafront are now a tourist draw.

But the town was heavily shelled during the wartime siege by Serb forces. Water and electricity were often cut and the road to the capital Zagreb was closed for over a year. Some 50 civilians were killed in Zadar and around 400 in the surrounding region during the war. Zadar stadium was twice shelled but no one was there at the time. And no child was killed or wounded while going to the training sessions which helped them to overcome anxiety caused by the conflict. "Although shells fell during training these boys had something else on their mind. They were simply playing football then," Bajlo said. The adversity helped Modric to become the great player he is now, Bajlo said. — AFP



PITTSBURGH: Pittsburgh Penguins celebrate as they gather around goalie Matt Murray after defeating the Tampa Bay Lightning 2-1 in Game 7 of the NHL hockey Stanley Cup Eastern Conference finals on Thursday, May 26, 2016. — AP

PENS OVERCOME LIGHTNING

WASHINGTON: Sure, Sid and Geno still are around. Chris Kunitz and Kris Letang, too. But these Pittsburgh Penguins aren't just a team of big names, but one of guys still trying to make a name in the NHL, too. Bryan Rust, a rookie forward who was in the minors for half the season, scored both Pittsburgh goals and the Penguins beat the Tampa Bay Lightning 2-1 Thursday night in Game 7 of the Eastern Conference finals. Their 12th win in 18 playoff games this spring sends a team driven equally by stars and rookies to its first Stanley Cup finals in seven years. "We've been trying to get back," said Crosby, who helped lead the Penguins to the Stanley Cup in 2009. "It's not easy."

This game certainly wasn't either,

especially given the Penguins' three prior Game 7 losses in Consol Energy Center. Still, the Penguins dominated in shots and scoring chances and, aided by the steady-as-he-goes play of rookie goalie Matt Murray, finished off a comeback from a 3-2 series deficit to deny the Lightning a return trip to the finals. "We came out against a really good team that hit its stride late in season and carried that into playoffs," said Lightning defenseman Anton Stralman, who had been 7-0 in Game 7s. "You've all seen how well they played, not just against us but in previous two. ... They played better than us the whole series."

Pittsburgh will play host to the San Jose Sharks in the Game 1 of the finals

Monday. The Penguins will be playing in their fifth finals—they won three of the first four—and the Sharks will be in their first. "You always wonder if you're going to get back," Kunitz said. Riding the momentum of their 5-2 win in Tampa in Game 6 on Tuesday, the Penguins dominated the offensive zone play in the first two periods, then held off a Tampa Bay push early in the third. They relied throughout on Murray, who is 11-4 in the postseason after being expected early on in the playoffs to play only a few games. And Rust, who had only four goals during the season but now has five in the playoffs. "It's a real breakout night for him (Rust), but it doesn't surprise us," Murray said. — Reuters

HULL CITY'S PROMOTION ABOUT PRIDE NOT CASH

LONDON: Steve Bruce insists Hull City will be motivated by glory rather than greed when they face Sheffield Wednesday for the lucrative prize of promotion to the Premier League in today's Championship play-off final. With television revenue for Premier League clubs due to increase next season, the winner of the second-tier showdown at Wembley will land a record cash windfall to go along with their place in the top flight.

Wednesday would earn at least £170 million (\$246 million) from promotion and that figure could rise to £290 million if they avoid relegation. Hull can also expect a huge revenue boost if they triumph, although the value to them is less, at £110 million, as they will have to forgo parachute payments pending following their relegation from the Premier League last year. But Hull boss Bruce isn't worried about trying to improve the club's bank balance because he knows his players are solely focused on achieving a promotion that will allow them to face the country's best on the biggest stage.

After the anguish of relegation 12 months ago, former Manchester United defender Bruce has led Hull to within one game of an instant return to the elite and he ranks Saturday's clash as one of the most important games of his illustrious career. "This of course ranks up with the biggest for a long, long time because of what's at stake," Bruce said. "If you can get into the Premier League now it can really secure your club with the amount of money which is washing about, it's quite unbelievable. "But the one thing about a footballer is they don't worry about when they go on to a pitch is money. "All this 'it's a £170 million game', for them it's to perform on the biggest stage and who's going to be the hero if there is going to be one."

Big occasion

Bruce won promotion to the top-flight twice as Birmingham City manager, once via the play-offs, and steered Hull into the Premier League via automatic promotion in 2013. The 55-year-old will become the first manager to achieve four promotions to the Premier League if Hull win and he hopes the experience of playing in the 2014 FA Cup final at Wembley, a 3-2 defeat against Arsenal, will make it easier for his players to cope with the pressure of the big occasion. "We've got a squad that has been there before in the last couple of years, let's hope that's a bit of an advantage," Bruce said. "We've got some good players and let's hope we can achieve what we want to achieve."

Hull finished nine points above Wednesday in the Championship, but there was nothing to separate the Yorkshire rivals in their two draws this season. Bruce's team looked impressive in their 3-0 play-off semi-final, first-leg win at Derby, but gave a less solid showing in a 2-0 loss in the second leg. Wednesday, meanwhile, defeated Brighton and Hove Albion 3-1 on aggregate in their semi-final to move closer to ending their 16-year exile from the Premier League. Making their first trip to Wembley since 1993, Wednesday this week received an unexpected good luck message from pop group the Jacksons. — AFP

TORRES READY TO ECLIPSE CHELSEA TITLE FEAT

MILAN: Fernando Torres is dreaming of eclipsing his Champions League triumph with Chelsea and making history for the second time in the competition by leading Atletico Madrid to victory over Real Madrid today. Torres won the elite European title with the London side in 2012 when they beat Bayern Munich 4-3 on penalties to add their name to the trophy for the first time.

But on that occasion the Spanish marksman played only a bit part, and it wasn't with the club where he spent his entire childhood. Torres came through the ranks of Atletico, spending seven seasons in La Liga before

signing for Liverpool in 2007, then Chelsea three years later. The 32-year-old returns to familiar ground having spent an ill-fated loan spell with AC Milan in Serie A two seasons ago. Although it was his "hard work" that got him here, Torres admits he owes a debt to coach Diego Simeone. "The club and Simeone gave me a chance to come back to my childhood club. It's been hard," said Torres.

Kept on the bench by then Chelsea coach Roberto Di Matteo for the 2012 final, Torres only appeared six minutes from the end when he replaced Salomon Kalou and did not take any of

Chelsea's penalties on the way to their spot-kick victory. Now considered one of Atletico's veterans, Torres put his situation into perspective when he said: "Koke and Saul (Niguez) were only kids at the club when I was playing for Atletico's first team." Although he has scored only one of Atletico's 14 goals in the competition this season, as opposed to the seven-goal haul of French teammate Antoine Griezmann, Torres has been hugely influential. Four years on from Munich, Torres is ready to do it all again-although this time the Spaniard is expected to start.

"There's no doubt, it's the most

important game I am ever going to play," added Torres. "With Chelsea and the Spanish national team I've won a lot of titles, but this is really special for me. To me, it means everything. It's the game of my life. "To me it means everything. I've played for great teams... this one is special, it's different. It's maybe the biggest thing I dreamt of as a kid." He added: "Obviously I know this stadium and I have many friends here. I'm sure tomorrow they will be behind Atletico Madrid. "Let's hope the fans get behind us here tomorrow and create a magical night for us." — AFP

ATLETICO PROVIDE A PUZZLING DILEMMA FOR THE NEUTRALS

MILAN: Atletico Madrid's rise to the top of European football has been a refreshing lesson that money cannot buy everything, yet they can still be hard team to like. Neutrals are torn between admiration for the way in which coach Diego Simeone has transformed and reinvented his side over the last four years, and discomfort at the defensive tactics and gamesmanship that have been used to achieve it. Simeone, who prowls the touchline with the same menacing air with which he patrolled the Argentina midfield during his playing career, has turned the Mattress Makers from relegation candidates into one of Europe's top sides.

They have broken Real Madrid and Barcelona's stranglehold on La Liga, won the Europa League and today will meet neighbors Real in their second Champions League final in three years. In revenue terms, however, they are barely in Europe's first division. They were placed a modest 15th in Deloitte's money league for last season with a revenue of 187.1 million euros (\$208.4 million), below the likes of Tottenham Hotspur, Schalke 04 and even crisis-torn AC Milan. Success for Atletico can simply mean rebuilding as richer teams snap up their top players. Radamel Falcao, Diego Costa, Arda Turan and Thibaut Courtois are among the players to have left on Simeone's watch, but each time they lost a bug name, Atletico come back stronger and more determined. In the context of modern soccer, it is a unique achievement and has led to suggestions that Simeone is the world's finest coach. If only they were easier on the eye. Unable to afford the world-class talents of their rivals, Atletico have become arguably the modern game's greatest spoilers, almost always setting out to neutralise their opponents' game and happy to concede 70 percent of possession.

There are no concessions to tiki-taka or the romantic side of the game from Simeone, who said during his playing days that a footballer should play "with a knife between his teeth". They rules are pushed to the limit as players waste time and go down injured with exasperating frequency. Other tactics have included throwing spare balls on to the pitch to disrupt opposition counter-attacks, an offence that earned Simeone a three-match ban this season. Simeone, invariably dressed in black, offers no apologies.

"The best thing about this group is that they keep going, they prepare, get up again and reinvent themselves, without changing their identity or commitment," he told reporters yesterday. "When you repeat things again, again and again, and you persevere, then you achieve anything. "We are among the best teams in Europe. We have stability, balance, a clear idea of how we work, enormous competence in what we do. This puts us in a privileged place and the only way to keep it is by winning. "I am very respectful about other people's opinions," he added, when it was suggested to him that some people did not enjoy watching his team. "That is the beautiful thing about football; it's like politics and religion, everyone can have an opinion." — Reuters



MILAN: Pepe, Sergio Ramos and Cristiano Ronaldo (from left) get off the plane after landing at Malpensa airport in Milan, Italy yesterday. The Champions League final soccer match between Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid will be held at the San Siro stadium today. — AP

RONALDO AND REAL EYING 11TH CHAMPIONS LEAGUE CROWN

MILAN: Cristiano Ronaldo insists personal goals will be put to one side as Real Madrid seek to embellish their incredible European record with victory over Atletico Madrid in the Champions League final today. Ronaldo, a three-time world player of the year, has never scored a goal at the San Siro but has the chance to match and surpass his own record of scoring 17 Champions League goals in a season.

Yet two years after Real defender Sergio Ramos leveled at the death to inspire a stunning, extra-time comeback and secure a 10th triumph in Lisbon, the Portuguese superstar insists winning an 11th crown is far more important than who hits the net at the San Siro. "It would be nice to equal or even pass the (scoring) record, but I am not obsessed with that because the most important thing is to win," Ronaldo said when asked about adding to his 16-goal tally in the competition this season.

Victory would see Real Madrid embellish their reputation as the most successful club in Europe having won the inaugural edition, the European Champions Clubs' Cup, in 1956 when Argentinean Hector Rial struck the winner in a 4-3 victory over fallen

French giants Stade Reims in Paris. Atletico's achievements may pale in comparison, but the threat from Diego Simeone's men, who have restricted Real to only one win in their past 10 meetings since the 2014 final, is real. Before winning two Europa League titles in 2010 and 2012, the 'Rojiblancos' last continental trophy was the now defunct European Cup Winners' Cup in 1962.

Yet only two years after Lisbon, Simeone's men are back having stunned Barcelona in the quarter-finals, and ended the hopes of the Catalan giants' former coach Pep Guardiola when they ousted his Bayern Munich side on away goals in the semi-finals. Real fans may have the history, but Zinedine Zidane's men have beaten Atletico only once in 10 meetings since their 4-1 victory in Lisbon two years ago. Unsurprisingly, Simeone is bullish ahead of a clash that Ronaldo says will settle which side rules the roost in the Spanish capital. "We've already played two of the top three teams in the world and now we're facing the third in the final," Simeone told UEFA.com.

He believes the key to beating Real will be breaking down a solid defense and mak-

ing sure his players remain vigilant at set-pieces. "Madrid are different to Barcelona and Bayern; they're a much more direct team who are a massive threat from set pieces. "We'll be ready and will look to play the game on our terms. Fingers crossed, that will be enough for us to do what we want, which is to win."Whoever wins, says Ronaldo, will earn the local bragging rights: "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."

But Real have plenty of reason to be wary. Two years ago, Atletico were a whisker away from avenging their European Cup final defeat to Bayern Munich in 1974 (4-0) after Diego Godin gave Simeone's men a 36th minute opener. Ramos's 93rd minute leveler, however, pushed the match into extra time and, with the fresh momentum, Gareth Bale, Marcelo and Ronaldo, from the spot, struck to compound Atletico's misery. Now, it is Ronaldo, Bale and French striker Karim Benzema who could have their work cut out, while Ramos and Pepe, Zidane's preferred centre-back partnership, will be wary of a repeat of recent history. — AFP



Match on TV
(Local Timing)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Real Madrid v Atletico 21:45
beIN SPORTS 1 HD
beIN SPORTS 2 HD
beIN SPORTS 3 HD

Sports



Injured Nadal out of French Open as Murray slays giant

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LONDON: Media reporters surround football manager Jose Mourinho as he leaves his house in central London yesterday. Manchester United hired Jose Mourinho as its third manager in three years yesterday, entrusting the highly successful Portuguese coach with the job of restoring the status of England's most prestigious club. — AP

MAN UNITED ANOINT SUPERCOACH MOURINHO

LONDON: Manchester United yesterday anointed Jose Mourinho as their third new manager in less than three years in their bid to reinstate the club as a title-winning force in England and Europe. After three days of talks, Mourinho agreed a three-year contract on a bumper salary reportedly worth more than \$20 million (19.5 million euros) a year. But the 53-year-old Portuguese supercoach, who has 22 honors to his name, said it was the "mystique" of United that drew him to the challenge of reviving one of the world's biggest football clubs.

"Manchester United is one of these clubs where you need really to be prepared for it because it is what I used to call a giant club," Mourinho said. "Giant clubs must be for the best managers and I think I'm ready," he told the club's television channel. "To become Manchester United manager is a special honor in the game," Mourinho added. "It is a club known and admired throughout the world. There is a mystique and a romance about it which no other club can match." The Red Devils need dragging out of the doldrums after first David Moyes and then Louis van Gaal failed to emulate the title-laden glory years under Alex Ferguson, who retired in 2013. He told the club's television channel that he wanted to "forget the past three years" at United.

"I want to win," he said. "I will give absolutely everything to try and go in the direction we all want". Mourinho seemed destined to manage United ever since his Porto side eliminated Ferguson's men en route to winning the 2004 Champions League. He thought his time had come when Ferguson retired,

but concerns over his volatile personality prompted United to pick the more reserved Moyes instead. But with that move proving a disaster and Van Gaal faring little better, United's powerbrokers sacked the Dutchman on Monday and decided at last to gamble on Mourinho, despite his turbulent reputation.

Chelsea acrimony

"Jose is quite simply the best manager in the game today," said United's executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward. Mourinho has won league titles and cups in four countries with Porto, Chelsea, Inter Milan and Real Madrid. He won the Champions League for a second time with Inter in 2010. Mourinho was sacked by Chelsea in December after a disastrous start to the season that saw the defending champions hovering near the relegation zone amid acrimony between the manager and his players and staff. Before the new season begins, Mourinho will have to face the fall-out from his second spell at Stamford Bridge.

Former Blues doctor Eva Carneiro is claiming constructive dismissal in a case against Chelsea and has a separate personal legal action against Mourinho for alleged victimization and discrimination. The employment tribunal, which could take seven to 10 days, will be heard in public between June 6 and 24 unless a settlement is reached first. There was no word from the Red Devils on the future of club stalwart Ryan Giggs, who has spent nearly three decades at Old Trafford as a player and then as Van Gaal's deputy. Mourinho will hope

to make significant improvements to an unbalanced and often lacklustre United squad before the new season begins in August. Media reports said he will have £200 million (\$293m, 262m euros) to bring in fresh faces, with former Paris Saint-Germain forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Everton defender John Stones reportedly on his wish list.

The new season could become a battle royale between Mourinho and Pep Guardiola, the incoming boss of bitter rivals Manchester City. When Mourinho was in charge of Real Madrid and Guardiola running their sworn enemy Barcelona, the Portuguese relished taking a swipe at the Spaniard. United finished fifth last season behind champions Leicester, Arsenal, Tottenham and Manchester City, thereby failing to qualify for the lucrative Champions League.

Missing out on joining Europe's elite next season ultimately cost Van Gaal his job on Monday, despite winning the FA Cup two days before. Former United defender Rio Ferdinand said Mourinho needed to instill a winning mentality back into the club. "This is Jose Mourinho's most exciting and most challenging job yet," the former England captain said. After Chelsea, "this winner is now a wounded animal which makes him such a mouthwatering appointment. Mourinho's huge personality is made for this great club." Outside Old Trafford, fans were already snapping up Mourinho scarves. "We've had two managers who have tried and failed. Let's hope it's third time lucky," scarf seller John said. — AFP