



Amir attends Kuwait E-content award ceremony



Chad ex-dictator Habre gets life in 'warning' to despots



Erdogan rejects family planning for Muslims



French Open suffers first washout in 16 years



150 FILS
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40 PAGES

TOP COURT UPHOLDS DEATH FOR MOSQUE BLAST CONVICT

EIDAN HAD AIDED BOMBER, COLLECTED EXPLOSIVES BELT

Min 30°
Max 40°
High Tide 07:20 & 18:52
Low Tide 00:35 & 13:14

KUWAIT SIGNS KD 1.3BN AIRPORT DEAL

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Public Works Minister Ali Al-Omar yesterday signed a KD 1.3-billion (\$4.4-billion) contract with Turkish firm Limak Construction for a new airport terminal that will more than triple passenger capacity. The new terminal, due to be completed in six years, will raise capacity at Kuwait International Airport to 25 million passengers annually from around seven million now, the minister said. It will accommodate all aircraft types at 51 gates, an addition of 30 new gates, and will be able to serve 21 Airbus 380 superjumbos simultaneously, Omair said.

In a press statement after signing the contract with Limak, Omair said that the construction of the new terminal is part of a broad development plan aimed to propel Kuwait to regional prominence, adding that the new terminal would help upgrade Kuwait airport. "The project has long been overdue," Omair said, noting that the ministry will follow the progress of the project, while ensuring that "there would be no delays in construction".

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works Awatef Al-Ghunaim said that the new terminal would be a landmark in the country, adding that the building is spread over 700,000 sq m and is environment-friendly. Vice Chairman of Limak Holding Sezai Bacaksiz said that it is a "tremendous honor to have been selected to construct this new terminal", as he thanked Kuwait for its confidence in the company's capabilities. "This is not merely a new terminal, but an economic link between Kuwait and Turkey," he said, adding that "the terminal has been designed in a way to ensure smooth and convenient travel". — Agencies (See Page 3)



KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Ali Al-Omar and Vice Chairman of Limak Holding Sezai Bacaksiz exchange documents during the signing ceremony yesterday. — KUNA

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The court of cassation yesterday upheld a death sentence against the main convict who drove a Saudi suicide bomber to the Imam Al-Sadiq Mosque where he blew himself up, killing 26 people and wounding scores. The court also upheld all other sentences passed by the appeals court, which included sentencing four men and four women to jail terms between two and 15 years and acquitting 15 others.

The court of appeals in December upheld the death penalty against Abdulrahman Sabah Eidan, a bedoon, who drove the car that dropped the Saudi suicide bomber to the mosque in Kuwait City in June last year. Eidan, in his mid-20s, was also charged of bringing the explosives belt from where two Saudi brothers had smuggled it near the Saudi-Kuwait border. He later gave the belt to the bomber and provided him with shelter after he arrived from the kingdom.

At the criminal court, Eidan confessed to all the charges, including that he was a member of the Islamic State group or Daesh, but later denied the charges in the appeals and cassation courts. He remains the only defendant to receive the capital punishment verdict after the appeals court reduced the death penalty against one of the accused for being the leader of IS in Kuwait. He was later sentenced to 15 years in jail and the verdict was confirmed by the cassation court.

The case of five other men who were handed the death penalty in absentia was not brought before the cassation court because their sentences can be challenged only when they appear. They are four Saudis, including the two brothers who smuggled the explosives belt to Kuwait, and a stateless man. Among the supreme court's main verdicts yesterday, the court upheld the commuting of the death sentence for the alleged IS leader in Kuwait, Fahad Farraj Muhareb, to 15 years in prison. It also upheld the acquittal of Jarrah Nimer, owner of the car used to transport the bomber.



Smoke billows on the horizon as Iraqi military forces prepare for an offensive into Fallujah to retake the city from Islamic State militants yesterday. — AP

IRAQI FORCES PUSHING INTO FALLUJAH STREETS

BAGHDAD: Iraqi forces thrust into Fallujah yesterday, ushering a new urban phase in the week-old operation to retake the jihadist bastion that also raised concerns over the fate of trapped civilians. The drive to recapture the first city to be lost from government control in 2014 came as fighting also raged in neighboring Syria, leaving huge numbers of civilians exposed. Led by the elite counter-terrorism service (CTS), Iraq's best trained and most seasoned fighting unit, the forces pushed into Fallujah before dawn, commanders said.

"Iraqi forces entered Fallujah under air cover from the international coalition, the Iraqi air force and army aviation, and supported by artillery and tanks," said Lieutenant General Abdelwahab Al-Saadi, the commander of the operation. Yahya Rasool, the spokesman for the Joint Operations Command coordinating the fight against IS in Iraq, said the jihadists had so far resisted mostly with snipers, booby-traps and suicide car bombs. The forces have not yet ventured into the center but they recaptured some areas in a southern suburb and took up positions on the eastern and northern fringes.

The involvement of the elite CTS marks the start of a phase of urban combat in a city where in 2004 US forces

fought some of their toughest battles since the Vietnam War. The week-old operation had previously focused on retaking rural areas around Fallujah, which lies just 50 km west of Baghdad. It had been led by the Hashed al-Shaabi paramilitary force, which is dominated by Tehran-backed Shiite militias. They were still in action yesterday, attempting to clear an area northwest of Fallujah called Saqlawiya, officers said.

Only a few hundred families have managed to slip out of the Fallujah area ahead of the assault on the city, with an estimated 50,000 civilians still trapped inside, sparking fears the jihadists could try to use them as human shields. The only families who were able to flee so far lived in outlying areas and took serious risks to reach camps while those in the heart of Fallujah have been unable to leave. "Civilians are trapped inside the city of Fallujah as fighting intensifies. With every moment that passes, their need for safe exits becomes more critical," said Nasr Muflahi, the Norwegian Refugee Council's Iraq director.

In Amriyat al-Fallujah, a government-controlled town to the south of the jihadist stronghold, civilians trickled in, starving and exhausted after walking

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UK FM HAILS YEMEN TALKS 'PROGRESS'

IS CHALLENGED ON THE GROUND, SOCIAL MEDIA

3 ROYALS JAILED FOR INSULTING AMIR, JUDICIARY

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The criminal court yesterday sentenced five men, including three members of the Al-Sabah ruling family, to five years in jail each for allegedly insulting HH the Amir and accusing judges of bribery on Twitter and WhatsApp. The court also sentenced a sixth man to one year in jail, a seventh to 10 years in absentia and acquitted six more in the case locally known as "Fintas Group".

The ruling family members include Sheikh Athbi Al-Fahd Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the former chief of the State Security Agency and the younger brother of Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahd Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the former energy minister who currently holds several

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KUWAIT: UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond described the UN-brokered Yemeni peace talks, which are being held in Kuwait, as "making progress", with cautious optimism prevailing over the discussions. This remark was made by the visiting minister at a press conference yesterday after a meeting with the UN Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

Hammond, who is on a GCC tour to promote ties with Kuwait and the rest of the regional countries, expressed his appreciation to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's efforts in the Yemen peace talks. Hammond said that all parties involved should be "cautiously optimistic". Even though the talks were moving slowly, "progress is being made", he added. He said that all sides should understand there should be a political solution to the crisis because Yemen is getting dangerously close to an economic collapse.

Hammond said that there are many details that were still being disputed, yet "a broad settlement of framework is emerging". He urged to keep the talks



Philip Hammond

going and "keep everybody at the table" and not allow the posturing of any side to derail the talks.

Hammond also said the global coalition against the so-called Islamic State (IS) has been effective in countering the terrorist group on the ground and on social media. Speaking on the efforts to counter IS, Hammond told KUNA at the press conference that the Coalition's Strategic Communication Working Group

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This undated file photo shows Kamal Eldarat (left) and his son Mohammed Eldarat. — AP

UAE ACQUITS FOUR OF MILITANCY CHARGES

US EX-CEO JAILED FOR 15 YEARS

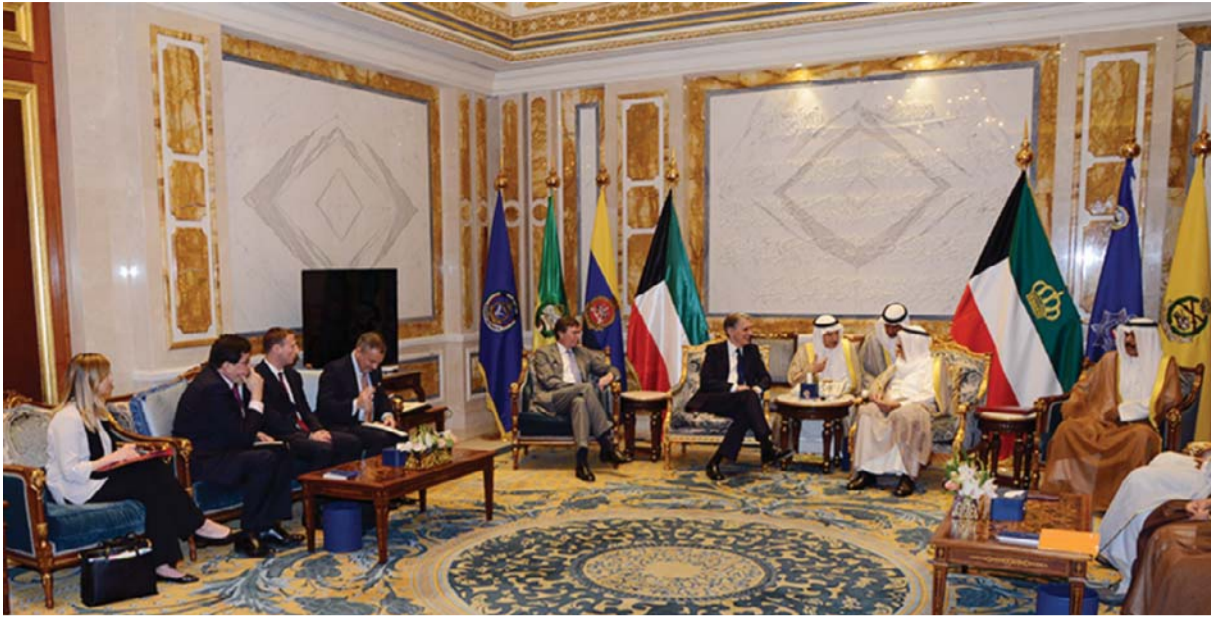
DUBAI: Two Libyan Americans detained in the United Arab Emirates for nearly two years were acquitted yesterday of charges they illegally raised funds for a foreign entity and took hostile actions against a foreign country. The family of Kamal Eldarat, 59, and his son Mohammed, 34, said after the verdict that the cast was "tainted with due process and human rights violations". The case included two other co-defendants, Canadian dual-national Sami Alaradi and Libyan national Issa Almanna, who were also acquitted of all charges yesterday.

The Eldarats, who are successful businessmen and longtime residents of the UAE, were arrested in Aug 2014. The older Eldarat fled Libya with his family years before the country's 2011 uprising and moved to the US, where they were granted political asylum. They moved to

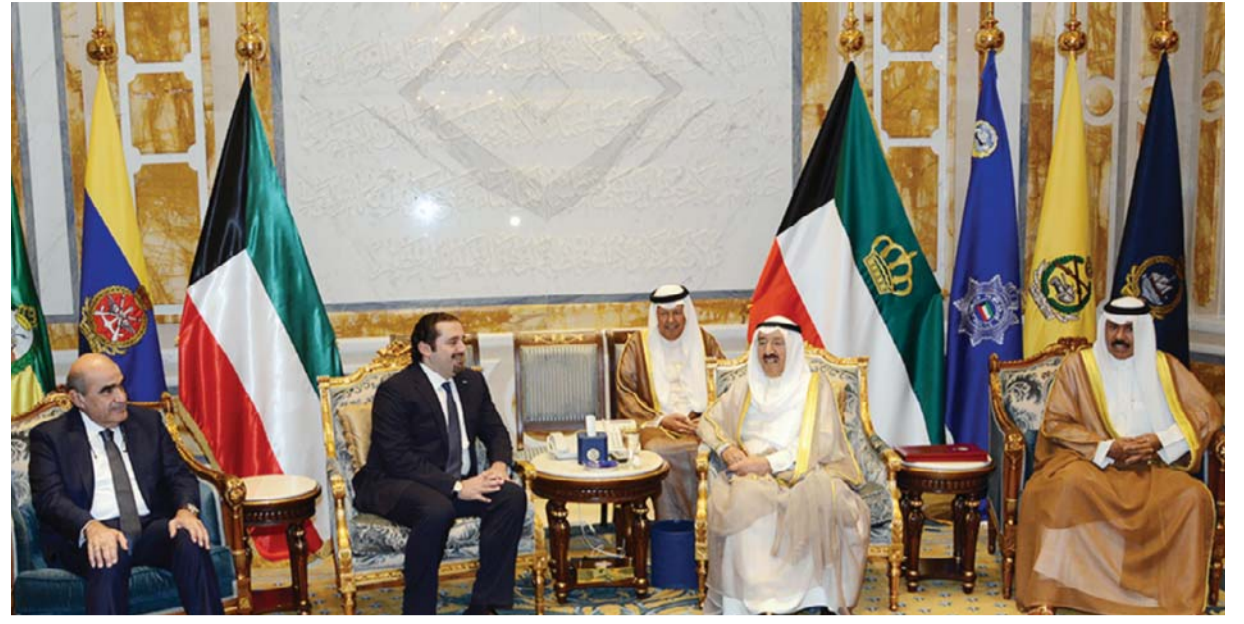
the UAE in 1997. Their arrest took place around the time that reports emerged of the UAE leading airstrikes against Islamic rebel groups in Libya. They were not formally charged until almost 18 months after their arrest, and their trial began in January.

The four were initially charged with supporting terrorist organizations in Libya, but the prosecutor withdrew those charges in March and they instead faced a maximum 15-year prison sentence on charges of illegally raising donations and taking hostile actions against Libya by sending humanitarian supplies without permission from the UAE government. The defendants denied ever raising funds for Libyan rebels affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood group, which is outlawed as a terrorist organization under UAE law.

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Philip Hammond, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former Prime Minister of Lebanon Saad Rafiq Al-Hariri, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

AMIR MEETS UK'S FOREIGN SECRETARY

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Philip Hammond and the accompanying delegation.

The audience was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-hamad Al-Sabah, as well as Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah. Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled meanwhile met separately with Hammond to discuss means to develop bilateral relations on all possible spheres, as well as on issues pertaining to regional and international developments.

Lebanon's former PM

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received former Prime Minister

of Lebanon Saad Rafiq Al-Hariri. His Highness the Crown Prince, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and Amiri Diwan Advisor Mohammed Dhaifallah Sharar attended the meeting. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem later met with the Lebanese guest as well. Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince received chief of the National Security Bureau Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

GCC Summit

In other news, His Highness the Amir and his accompanying delegation are set to leave to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia today to partake in the 16th GCC leaders' consultative summit. Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz is set to head the meeting today in which Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)'s leaders are set to



Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with UK Foreign Secretary Phillip Hammond.

discuss crucial topics of mutual concern. The summit, held since 1999, will discuss joint cooperation in politics, economy and security as well as the recent regional and interna-

tional developments including the Syrian crisis, the conflict in Yemen, and the nuclear deal.

In another topic, His Highness the Amir sent yesterday a cable to



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with former Prime Minister of Lebanon Saad Rafiq Al-Hariri.

King Hamad bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain, expressing his condolences and sympathy over the death of Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman bin Ahmad bin Mohammad

bin Isa Al Khalifa. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables of condolences to the Bahraini Monarch. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is pictured with the winners as well as Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences officials and staff. — Amiri Diwan photos

AMIR ATTENDS KUWAIT E-CONTENT AWARD CEREMONY

KUWAIT: The Kuwait E-content Award ceremony kicked off at Bayan Palace yesterday under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The ceremony, held to honor the winners, was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, top Sheikhs, and senior officials.

Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), which is organizing the award, aimed to invest in human resources to develop technology science in the country, said KFAS' Director-General Dr Adnan Shihab-Eldin in his open-

ing speech. The foundation is preparing its strategic plan for 2017-2021, to provide better means of boosting the abilities of youth to achieve development, he added.

Meanwhile, Shihab-Eldin mentioned the role of the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in establishing KFAS, also thanking His Highness Sheikh Sabah for his continuous support for the foundation. The official also spoke of KFAS' other awards aiming to develop societies, including the 'Abdulrahman Al-Sumait Prize for African Development' and 'Anwar Al-Nouri award for the best Arab PHD thesis in the educational field.'

Speaking on behalf of the winners, Ahmad Al-Saleh said that the world is now depending on information technology and digital contents to execute different official transactions in education, health, commerce and other fields. Kuwait on its part is applying technology sciences in the field of education to create further development and encourage the talents of youth, said Saleh. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and chief guests attend the ceremony.



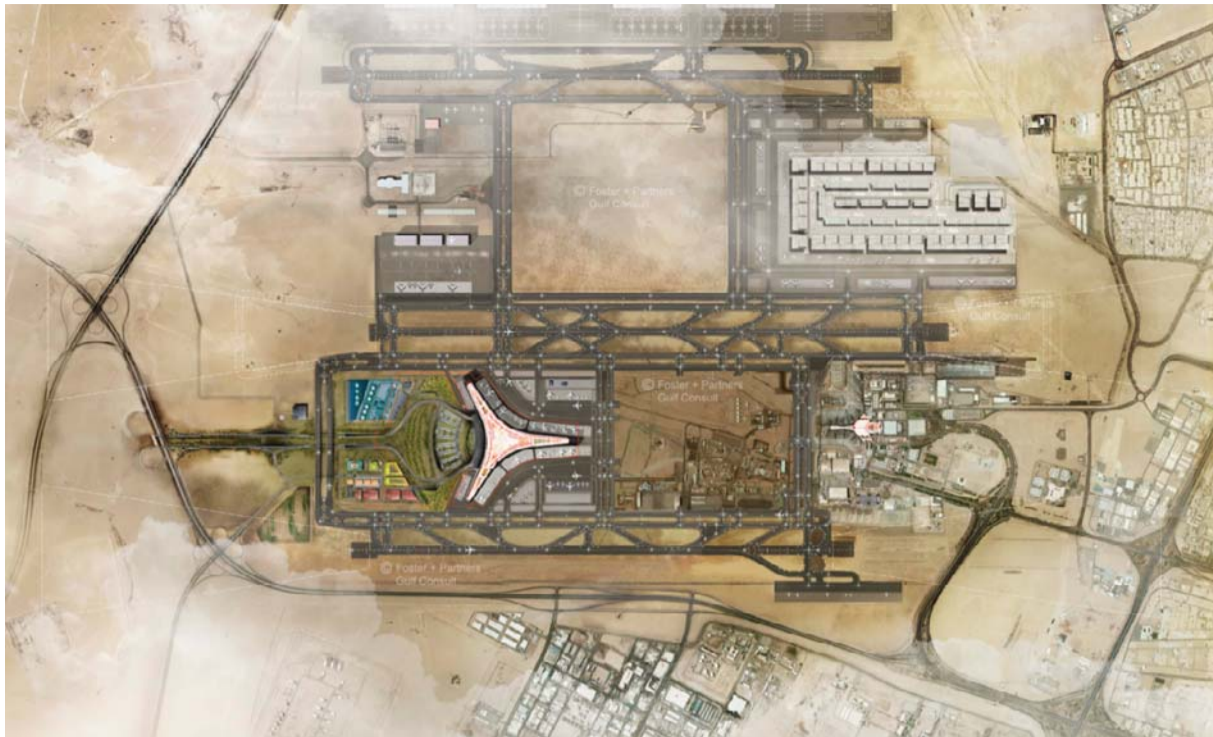
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah greets KFAS' Board Member Dr Faiza Al-Kharafi.



Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences' Director-General Dr Adnan Shihab-Eldin presents a memento to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



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



These two pictures show the project's site before (left) and after the terminal is built.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS SIGNS LIMAK TO BUILD STATE-OF-THE-ART TERMINAL

PROJECT SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN 6 YEARS

Project Facts and Figures:

- Client: Ministry of Public Works - Kuwait
- Design firm: Fosters + Partners, in association with Gulf Consult
- Construction firm: Limak construction
- Construction cost: KD1.312 billion (lowest bid)
- Passenger Terminal Area: 708,000 square meters.
- Construction period: 6 years
- Passenger capacity: 25 million passengers per year
- Aircraft capacity: Initial capacity of 51 gates and stands; ability to serve 21 A380s simultaneously
- Certification: Designed to International Air Transport Association (IATA) Level of Service A
- Energy Savings: The new passenger terminal is targeting to be one of the first airport terminals in the world to achieve LEED Gold certification for energy and environmental design.

Construction Phase Facts and Figures:

- The six-year construction phase will provide a boost to the local economy through local job creation and procurement, including the local housing and retail sectors
- The project will require over 1,000,000 cubic meters of concrete and over 100,000 tonnes of structural steel, procured locally
- Limak Construction will create more than 50 high-skilled job opportunities for Kuwaitis
- Limak Construction will provide training and growth opportunities for local hires

- Limak Construction will open the project to engineering, design and business students throughout the different phases of the project

The New Passenger Terminal Design:

The terminal has a trefoil plan, comprising three symmetrical wings of departure gates. Each facade spans 1.2 kilometers and all extend from a dramatic 25-metre-high central space. The terminal balances the enclosure of this vast area with a design that is highly legible at a human scale - for simplicity and ease of use there are few level changes.

The design incorporates the whole building under a single roof canopy with glazed openings that allow light in while deflecting the heat. The canopy extends to shade a large entrance plaza supported by tapering concrete columns inspired by Kuwait's traditional dhows.

Targeting to be one of the world's first LEED Gold-certified passenger terminals, the airport will combine the thermal properties of the concrete structure with a large expanse of roof-mounted photovoltaic panels to harvest solar energy. Drawing on the region's culture of hospitality and welcoming guests to Kuwait, the design establishes an elegant and memorable arrival sequence for passengers, which includes a baggage reclaim area surrounded by cooling cascades of water. The design also features a grand new landside access sequence from the south. Close to the building, the landscaping is a lush oasis, with strands of drier planting and species native to the desert climate extending further away from the terminal.



KUWAIT: Limak Construction was officially awarded the tender for the construction of the new terminal at Kuwait International Airport (KIA) in a signing ceremony held yesterday. The ceremony was attended by Kuwait's Minister of Public Works Dr Ali Al-Omair, Kuwait's Directorate General of Civil Aviation President Fawaz Al Farah, and Limak Group of Companies Vice Chairman Sezai Bacaksiz.

The new passenger terminal will have the capacity to handle 25 million passengers per year and accommodate all aircraft types through 51 gates and stands. The new terminal is scheduled for completion in six years and the contract includes the provision of maintenance for an additional two years.

Limak Construction, the lowest bidder, is an award-winning company and is part of the

Limak Group of Companies. The Group employs over 50,000 employees in 17 countries, and is a leader in building and managing state-of-the-art airports and other infrastructure projects, including dams and energy facilities.

Designed by the Pritzker Award winner global architecture firm Fosters + Partners, KIA's new terminal will be an iconic gateway to the country and one of the most advanced airports in the world. The terminal will herald new and advanced technologies including 12 mw cutting-edge solar power generation through 66 thousand solar panels placed on the roof of the terminal. The solar panels will partially power the terminal and assist in the low-cost operation and maintenance of the structure.

Limak Group of Companies Vice Chairman

Sezai Bacaksiz said, "It is an honor to be selected to build the KIA's new passenger terminal airport. We thank the Government of the State of Kuwait and its people for their trust and confidence in our company, and for making us part of their future."

"The project is more than an airport, it is a link between the two countries; Kuwait and Turkey, between two economies, between two societies. As a result of this link, new technologies will be introduced and transferred, new jobs will be created locally, planned local procurement will be in the hundreds of millions of dollars, local businesses will flourish, all while we train and equip Kuwaiti men and women of the future through the various education and empowerment initiatives that we have planned for Kuwait over the next six years and beyond."

CABINET COMMENDS FINANCE CONTROLLERS' EFFORTS

KUWAIT: The cabinet yesterday appreciated the role by the apparatus of finance controllers in tightening prior surveillance over financial practices that run counter to relevant laws and regulations, and in promoting financial and economic reforms. This came during a customary weekly meeting held at Bayan Palace under chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The cabinet made the appreciation while it discussed the agency's report on the enforcement of Law No 23/2015 authorizing the establishment of the apparatus of finance controllers, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said in a statement following the meeting.

The cabinet, in this context, listened to a presentation by the chairman of the agency, Abdulaziz Al-Dahil, his deputy Bader Al-Hammad and other senior officials of the agency on efforts to develop the tools of safeguarding financial resources, improving the efficiency of performance and redressing imbalances, he said. The ministers voiced much appreciation for all sincere efforts exerted in order to ensure law enforcement, the cabinet minister pointed out.

At the onset of the meeting, the cabinet was apprised of a message sent to His

Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven aiming at developing bilateral cooperation and commending Kuwait's humanitarian role.

The cabinet was informed about the delegation which will accompany His Highness the Amir during his visit to Saudi Arabia to attend the consultative summit of the GCC leaders due in Jeddah today, wishing more security, stability and development in the GCC member states.

Afterwards, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah briefed the cabinet on the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, during which His Highness the Amir called for reactivating humanitarian diplomacy with a view to alleviating the pains and woes of humanity and answering its needs, and urged the international community to attach more attention to the Syrian crisis.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also kept the cabinet posted on the outcomes of the GCC-UK strategic dialogue meeting held in Jeddah on Sunday, which focused on cooperation between both sides in all fields and domains in order to fight the current regional and international challenges. Finally, the ministers discussed several reports pertinent to the current political situations at both Arab and international levels. — KUNA



Officials inspect the project's site.



KIPCO and Health Ministry officials attend the ceremony.

KIPCO GROUP TO BUILD THE GULF REGION'S FIRST STEM CELL BANK AND RESEARCH CENTER

KUWAIT: Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO) and its Group companies have made a KD 7 million donation to the Ministry of Health to build the Sheikh Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Stem Cell and Umbilical Cord Center. This is the Gulf region's first-ever center to be dedicated to stem cell research and the storage of umbilical cords.

The facility, to be built over a 12,000 square meters' plot of land in the Sabah Health Zone, will include testing and research laboratories, blood and cord storage banks, research and medical libraries, as well as a lecture theater. KIPCO hosted a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the beginning of construction. The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Health and as senior executives of the KIPCO Group. Speaking at the ceremony, Faisal Al-Ayyar, KIPCO's Vice Chairman (Executive) said: "We are honored to be here today, to lay the foundation for the Sheikh Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Stem Cell and Umbilical Cord Center, an important addition to Kuwait's health and medical research efforts. It is a center that we know will contribute to the development of medical science and research not only in Kuwait, but in the region as a whole."

He added: "This donation, made by KIPCO Group through Masharee Al-Khair Charity Organization, stems from our deep belief in the important role that the private sector must play to support government entities, as they step up efforts to keep up with the swift scientific evolution that the world is witnessing. We look to the

future and see people whose lives have been made better thanks to the scientific breakthroughs brought about by stem cell therapy."

Direct impact

Meanwhile, Dr Reem Al-Radwan, Director of



Faisal Al-Ayyar, KIPCO's Vice Chairman delivers his speech.

the Department of Blood Transfusion Services at the Ministry of Health said: "Stem cell research has led to discoveries that have had a direct

impact on the quality of people's lives. People with previously incurable diseases - such as some types of leukemia, disorders of the blood, immune systems and metabolism - now have the chance to embrace a better quality of life with stem cell transplants."

She added: "This generous donation by KIPCO Group and Masharee Al-Khair Charity Organization reflects the private sector's interest in the well-being of the communities in which they operate. Such initiatives are at the heart of our values as Kuwaitis. On behalf of the Ministry of Health, represented by the Department of Blood Transfusion Services, we extend our deepest appreciation to KIPCO Group and Masharee Al-Khair for taking the lead on such a vital area of medical development. This center will strongly support the Ministry of Health's national plan to collect and store umbilical cords and stem cells in a state-of-the-art bank."

Ayyar, together with Dr Radwan and Abdulaziz Al-Jassar, Board Member and Treasurer of Masharee Al-Khair, laid the foundation of the building. This was followed by a viewing of the construction site. Stem cells are unspecialized cells that have the potential to develop into different cell types with specialized function, such as muscle cells, red blood cells or brain cells. As such, stem cells can be used to replace damaged cells that do not normally regenerate themselves. Stem cells come from three sources: embryos, adults and umbilical cords.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Renato Pedro Villa and Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Ali Al-Saeed cut the ceremonial cake. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



FILIPINOS IN KUWAIT NOW 220,000, UP BY 14 PERCENT COMPARED TO 2014: ENVOY PHILIPPINES MARKS INDEPENDENCE DAY

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: In celebration of the 118th Philippine Independence Day, a diplomatic reception was held on Sunday at the Jumeirah Messila Beach Hotel, attended by Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ambassador Ali Al-Saeed, Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Renato Pedro Villa welcomed guests and dignitaries from various embassies and lauded his country's strong and growing diplomatic ties with Kuwait. The Philippines marks its independence day on June 12, but the celebration was held earlier in respect of the holy month of Ramadan, due early next month.

In his speech, Villa said the Philippines recognized the state of Kuwait a few weeks after its independence in 1961. In 1979, the Philippines opened its embassy in Kuwait, while Kuwait established its embassy in Manila in 1996. "Many of us are aware that Filipinos are practically in every corner of the world - either as immigrants or contract workers," he said.

According to Villa, as of Feb 2016, there were about 220,000 Filipinos in Kuwait, up by 14 percent compared to 188,000 in Dec 2014. "Remittances by Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) amounted to \$36 billion last year and admittedly helped prop the Philippine economy, and for several years contributed to economic growth and development," he said. But Villa said there are downsides in the OFW phenomenon, because the best and brightest Filipinos are taking jobs abroad seeking greener pastures, and a few get in trouble with foreign authorities or are mistreated and abused.

Trade value increased

On trade, the total value increased significantly over the last five years. "The total trade value between the two countries amounted to \$69 million in 2011, rose to \$127 million in 2013, dropped to \$81 million in 2014 and significantly jumped to

\$779 million in 2015. The sudden increase was due to our importation of petroleum products, and the balance of trade has always been consistently in favor of Kuwait. For the Philippines, our top export was bananas, and as you can see, they are everywhere in the supermarkets of Kuwait," said Villa.

"Interestingly, in 2015, Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), through its investment bank, invested \$560 million in Philippines stocks. We also saw some direct investments from Kuwait. An investor purchased an island in Palawan and developed it into a major resort. Another Kuwaiti investor, who had 1,000 hectares of land in Davao, turned it into a banana plantation. This was 10 years ago - now the investor has an additional 500 hectares of land. Also, a group of Kuwaiti investors bought 180 hectares of land near Clark Air Field in Pampanga. They are building a luxury hospital complete with cutting-edge technology, and are developing world-class medical tourism facilities," he said.

Tourism

Villa said the Philippines is trying its best to cope with the ever-growing number of tourists

and visitors from neighboring countries such as Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore. "The number of tourists breached the five million mark last year - however, the numbers are too small compared to our neighbors. From Kuwait, it is now easier to travel to the Philippines, with several flights weekly. Kuwait Airways for example earlier flew only four times a week - it has now added two additional flights to Manila. Cebu Pacific has four flights a week, and the national carrier Philippines Airlines also flies four times a week flight to Philippines," Villa added.

Villa also mentioned the successful Philippine presidential elections on May 9, 2016, which according to him, will be the fifth peaceful transfer of power after the people power revolution of 1986. "It was generally peaceful and the canvassing of votes was done in record time, thanks to an automated election system. Rodrigo Duterte is also the first president to be elected from Mindanao. We are hopeful that there will be changes for the better in our beloved land," he concluded.



ZAIN DELIVERS 'MACHLA BOXES' TO MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

KUWAIT: As part of its preparations to welcome the Holy Month of Ramadan, Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced the delivery of essential food supplies (Machla Boxes) to the Awareness and Guidance Department of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor to cover the needs of underprivileged families.

Distributing (Machla boxes) is one of the main pillars of Zain's annual Ramadan campaign, which comes in line with the company's Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability strategies and as part of its solid cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. The Ministry's Awareness and Guidance Department Manager, Dr Ahmad Al-Kous, received the food supplies from Zain, and the Ministry will ensure distributing them to cover all areas of Kuwait before the arrival of Ramadan.

Zain's distribution plan for this year involved various entities, most notably the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Awareness and Guidance Department, Zakat House, and Kuwait Red Crescent Society. In addition, Zain's own team of volunteers packed the boxes, containing essential food supplies, at the company's main headquarters and delivered them to underprivileged families who are in need of support during the month of fasting.

Zain affirmed that its social and CSR campaign during the upcoming Holy Month of Ramadan will



include an extensive array of initiatives and programs that will focus on helping less fortunate people to enjoy Ramadan happily, as well as celebrating the true spirit of the Holy month brings.

It is worth noting that Zain recently won the CSR Award as part of 'The Cause' initiative, organized by Gulf University for Science and Technology, for launching a number of sustainable projects all year round. In addition, Zain received the 'Golden

Shield for Excellence in Environmental Sustainability' from the Arab Organization for Social Responsibility during the year 2015. The award recognized Zain's efforts in launching a series of initiatives and programs conducted throughout the year, which had a deep impact among the community it operates in, especially through the contributions made towards particular institutions and entities in the community.

AL-SABAH COLLECTION: BEACON OF KUWAITI CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

WASHINGTON: Just as important as are the political and humanitarian aspects of Kuwaiti diplomacy, the cultural role assumed by Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah, led by Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah and his wife Sheikhha Hussah Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, cannot be denied. The ancient antiquities owned by Sheikh Nasser, mostly ancient Islamic pieces known today as the Al-Sabah Collection, have travelled to the greatest museums and venues in the world.

From the Kremlin in Moscow to the Louvre in Paris to Madrid's Royal Palace to name a few - Sheikhha Hussah works tirelessly to shed a light on "the bright side of our culture." Her visit to Washington DC, after passing by New York, was to deliver a speech at the American Alliance of Museums' Annual Meeting and Museum Expo at the Walter E Convention Centre, which showcased discussions and meetings of museum leaders from around the world.

"In the US, we have been participating consistently as early as the 1980s mainly at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York," she told KUNA in an exclusive interview. Since then, these travels have "expanded," said Sheikhha Hussah, as the collection "became more known in America and in the West in general." "People became aware of our collection and they invited us to participate in exhibitions, so we either loaned them our pieces or we had our own exhibitions travelling or touring the world."

18 pieces

Before her stop at the US capital Sheikhha Hussah had spent some time in New York, where the Metropolitan Museum of Art, known locally as the Met, is housing around 18 pieces of the Al-Sabah Collection in an exhibition called Court and Cosmos: The Great Age of the Seljuqs.

Meanwhile, over 300 pieces are being showcased at a museum in Houston, Texas, which Sheikhha Hussah said will be there for around four years. In total, the Al-Sabah Collection has travelled uninterrupted for 13 years across seven US states and 13 nations around the world. Sheikhha Hussah said that many peo-



KUWAIT: Sheikha Hussah Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah delivers a speech at the American Alliance of Museums. — KUNA

ple were supporting the cause in Kuwait, either through financial contributions (companies, firms, financial institutions) or through voluntary services. Before meeting KUNA, she spoke to a large audience of intellectuals and museum enthusiasts about the many roles of women in Kuwait, how hosting one of the exhibitions in New York after the 9/11 attacks became a "loud denunciation" of terror and how the American Hospital in Kuwait, which currently hosts Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah, remains a symbol of unity between the US and Kuwait.

"When I visit a museum I allow myself to be a visitor, not a museum professional, and to be astounded by what I see. "I make myself look past the creative way objects are displayed or historic buildings are set up and focus on the objects themselves and the stories they tell," she said. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A Moroccan media delegation led by Abdulaziz Al-Maimouni, Editor in Chief of Resalat Al-Umma newspaper and Muhtat Al-Raqgas, General Manager of Al-Bayan newspaper visited Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA), where they were welcomed by Treasurer Adnan Al-Rashed and other KJA officials.



This handout photo shows eight person that police said they arrested inside a massage parlor where homosexual activities were being practiced.



Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hazardous Material Center technicians work inside a Sabah Hospital laboratory where a leak was reported.



Two other suspects arrested yesterday on charges of engaging in homosexual activities in Kuwait.



A third suspect arrested yesterday on the same charges.



A firefighter saves kittens from a fire reported in a Mirqab building.



A Kuwait Municipality inspector oversees the process of disconnecting power from violating buildings.

POLITICAL GROUPS PREPARE FOR ELECTIONS

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Political factions in Kuwait will hold meetings in Ramadan to prepare their candidates, statements and moves for the upcoming parliamentary elections, particularly as there is information that an agreement was made between the legislative and executive authorities to dissolve the parliament in March so that elections can be held before Ramadan. The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for July or August 2017 according to the constitution, which stipulates that the National Assembly's constitutional term is for four years from the first session it holds.

Informed sources said the Islamic Salaf Forum will hold its meeting in the second half of Ramadan to decide its candidates, and it will likely agree to back Public Works Minister Ali Al-Omar in the third constituency, who has won several times there, and Humoud Al-Hamad in the fifth constituency. Also, there are discussions to bring in former MP and minister Ahmad Baqer again, and it is expected he will run in the second constituency.

The forum will back former MP Mohammad Hayef Al-Mutairi in the fourth constituency, although he is not a member of the forum, but he is a Salafist who agrees with the forum over several points, and will support member of the first annulled Assembly Adel Al-Damkhi.

The Islamic Constitutional Movement will also hold a meeting after it announced it will participate in the elections. Sources said the movement will support Osama Al-Shaheen in the first constituency and Mohammad Al-Dallal in the second - both were members of the first annulled Assembly. Sources said the movement asked former MP Fahad Al-Sawwagh to run for the elections in the second constituency instead of the fifth, but he is still hesitant, and if he refuses, the movement will ask Hamad Al-Matar to run. The movement will back candidate Fahd Al-Enezi in the fourth constituency. The National Democratic Alliance will hold a meeting chaired by former MP Mohammad Al-Saqer, which will discuss whether to return to the elections again or not, and this depends on his chances of winning the speakership. This can only be decided by the government's stand - to support him or remain neutral.

ARAB CONSENSUS TO SUPPORT PALESTINIAN LABORERS: SUBAIH

GENEVA: There is a consensus amongst Arab nations to support Palestinian laborers, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih said yesterday. "Arab ministers stress the need to eliminate all restrictions placed on Palestinian laborers, which has major economic and social ramifications," Subaih noted in a statement at the start of an International Labor Organization (ILO) conference. She also added that Arab labor ministers have forged "a concerted stance on issues of mutual concern."

Moreover, Subaih addressed the issue of unemployment in the Arab world, saying that "Arab nations are cognizant of the magnitude of this problem, as the unemployment rate in the Arab world has exceeded 20 percent."—KUNA

POLICE ARREST 11 MORE SUSPECTS IN HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVITIES' CASE

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Following up the case concerning the arrest of a number of people infected with communicable diseases and involved in homosexual activities, residency detectives arrested three suspects while attempting to escape from the country through the airport. Investigations proved that the three - an Iranian, Egyptian and a bedoon - had sex with an Egyptian homosexual person who was arrested earlier. Examinations proved the Egyptian who was arrested earlier has AIDS, and attempted to leave the country after coming to Kuwait at the invitation of a health club. Tests are being done on the rest of the suspects.

Meanwhile, the department received information about a massage parlor where homosexual activities were being practiced, so a team was formed and arrested eight employees - four Syrians, three Filipinos and an Indian. There were minors among the suspects caught. The suspects were in violation of residency law, and confessed to working in the parlor to have sex with customers for money. All those arrested were sent to concerned authorities for

tests, and all those who were in contact with them are being sought.

Hazardous material leak

Industrial Shuwaikh Fire Center responded to a call about a leak in a Sabah Hospital laboratory. Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hazardous Material Center also responded, after a pipe broke and leaked dangerous material in the lab. Firemen evacuated the first floor of the hospital, and the material was diluted and siphoned using hazmat equipment. No injuries were reported.

No injuries in fire

Firemen put out a fire that broke out in a five-storey building in Mirqab. Capital, Hilali and technical rescue centers responded. Smoke had spread in the building, so firemen had to evacuate it. The fire was in the kitchen of a second-floor flat, and it was put out without injuries.

Violating houses

Kuwait Municipality branches in Hawally and Jahra cut power supplies to nine violating houses. The public relations

department said 25 violating houses were found in Hawally governorate and 45 houses in Jahra, and their power supplies will be cut in the coming days. The department said that the 25 violating houses included five where owners had built additional floors, besides 20 houses that had a high density of flats. In Jahra, power was cut to eight houses, with the rest of the homes soon to follow.

Municipality crackdowns

Kuwait Municipality launched inspection campaigns in the six governorates on food stores, restaurants, cooperatives and supermarkets as part of a media campaign by the public relations department in preparation for the holy month of Ramadan, under the slogan "your health is our concern." The Mubarakiya center carried out an inspection campaign at the fish market in Mubarakiya Market. The campaign was carried out on the instructions of Director General Ahmad Al-Manfouhi, and seeks to increase supervisory campaigns to make sure about quality of foodstuff sold to the public. The campaign resulted in destroying 22 kg of Saudi fish and issuing 19 citations.



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NOON WORK BAN ANNOUNCED

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Acting Director General of the Manpower Public Authority Ahmad Al-Mousa officially announced a decision to ban employers from forcing their employees to work in open areas from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm during the period from June 1 until the end of August. Mousa said the decision is in an implementation of law 6/2010 with regards to work in the private sector and in adherence to international treaties. He added that the decision concerns work in open areas and under harsh weather conditions, which makes working difficult.

US APPROVES HORNET JETS' SUPPORT PACKAGE FOR KUWAIT



KUWAIT: Kuwait is set to receive a support package for its fleet of Boeing F/A-18C/D Hornet fighter aircraft after the US State Department approved the \$420 million deal. Engineering, maintenance, and other support services are included in the package, says the US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) in a statement. Software upgrades, improvements for the fleet's General Electric F404 engines, spare parts, and documentation are among the areas it specifies.

"This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a friendly country that has been, and continues to be, an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East," says the DSCA. "Kuwait plays a large role in US efforts to advance stability in the Middle East, providing basing, access, and transit for US forces in the region." Kuwait operates 27 single-seat F/A-18C fighters, according to Flightglobal's Fleets Analyzer.

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NO MORE DIALOGUES

By Sami Al-Nisf

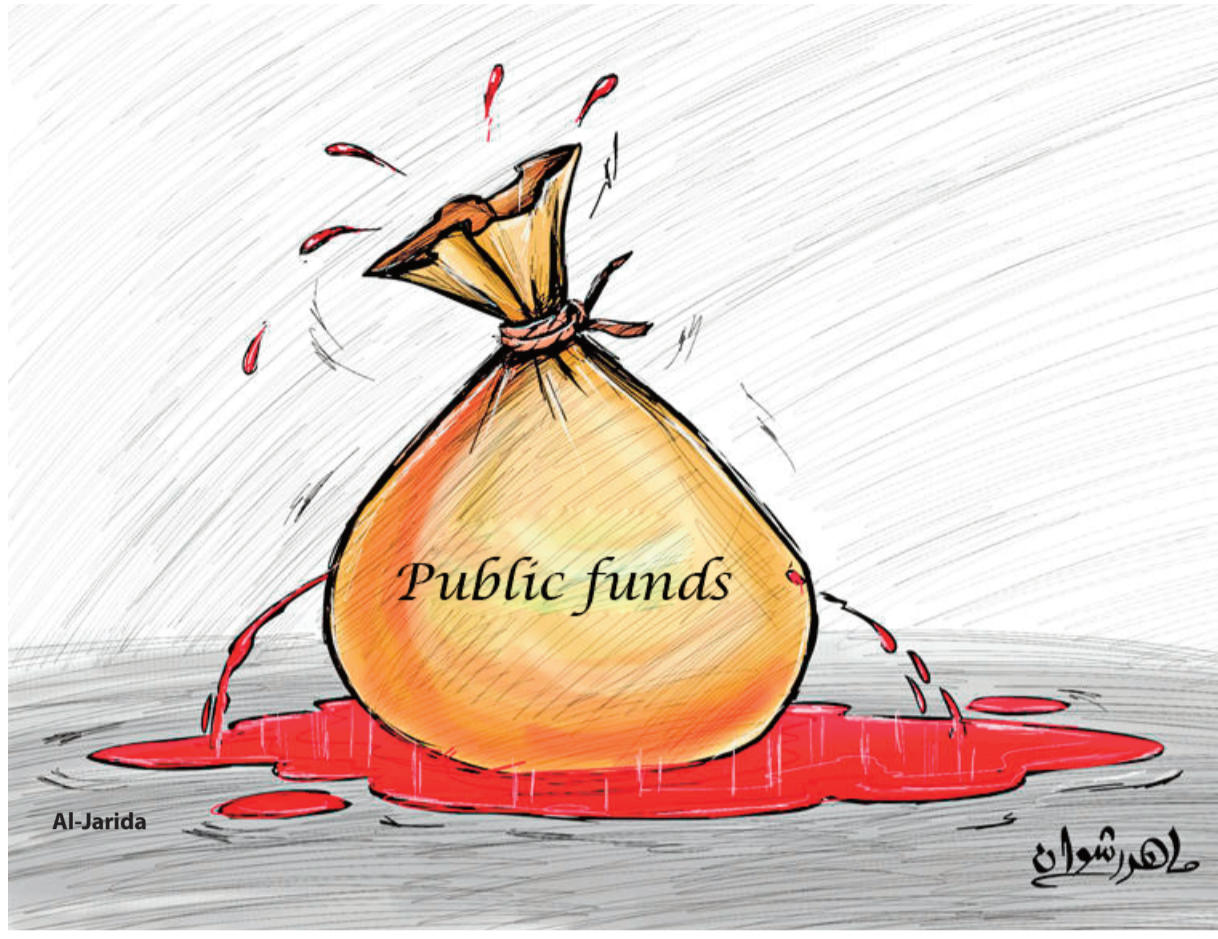
One of the disasters Arabs are currently suffering from is that they can no more discuss things amongst themselves. A Libyan can no more talk to a fellow citizen, nor can an Iraqi, a Syrian or a Yemeni do so without the help of international mediators, the majority of whom cannot even speak Arabic - the common language amongst the conflicting brothers.

What is even worse is that Arabs use killings, bombing, destruction and displacement to convey messages from one and other with the result that thousands have been killed so far and millions have been displaced, not by the enemy, but by brotherly Arabs belonging to the same nation, who are supposed to stand side by side to defend their country and prevent its occupation and looting of its resources. Arabs have, unfortunately, become Arabs' own worst enemy!

Lack of dialogue and speechlessness has caused a two-year presidential vacuum in Lebanon so far, which never happened even during the worst years of the civil war, when warlords found it hard to keep Lebanon as a nation for them all, and thus united, with bloody hands, to elect presidents, though they killed one or two later. After the war, they failed to elect a president after Elias Al-Harawi, and thus extended his presidency for three years.

They also failed to elect a president after Emil Lahoud and extended his tenure for three more years, which was the reason behind the assassination of PM Rafiq Hariri, who rejected the extension. Lebanese are once again voiceless and cannot conduct a dialogue, which has resulted in a stalemate, because they cannot extend Michel Suleiman's presidency, and so in an unprecedented event worldwide, the post has remained vacant ever since.

— Translated by Kuwait Times



ABK WINS 'EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR' AWARD FROM NASEBA AT 11TH HUMAN CAPITAL FORUM

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) received the 'Employer of the Year' award from Naseba at the 11th Human Capital Forum MENA 2016, in recognition of its successful HR Transformation Strategy. The event was held from 25 - 26 May 2016 at the Sofitel Palm Hotel, Dubai, UAE and was attended by Hamza Enki, General Manager of Human Resources and senior members of ABK's staff.

The 11th Human Capital Forum MENA 2016 is one of the region's leading human resource platforms and is dedicated to bringing together talent managers as well as business and thought leaders. Commenting on the Bank's involvement, Enki said: "This forum provides an excellent opportunity to meet HR specialists from around the world and learn different approaches and new ideas. In the current economic climate when the region is facing a range of different market challenges, this event offers a rare opportunity to share experiences and latest best practice. At ABK we believe human resources is fundamental to our success, and we are fully committed to investing and developing our people to help them achieve their potential. The knowledge and insight gained during this forum helps us to



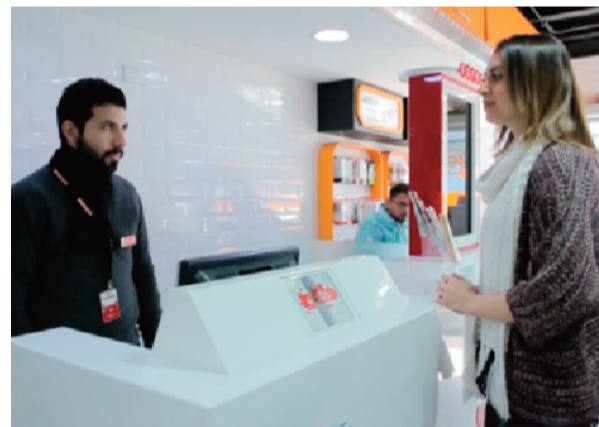
benchmark against global entities and drive further success in our operations."

"I would like to thank Naseba for recognizing the Bank's efforts and I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate ABK's HR team for their dedication and professionalism."

The Bank has launched a number of innovative HR programs such as Transparent Performance, Rewards and recognition schemes, a state of the art

learning platform, as well as heavily investing in automating and streamlining tedious personnel related processes.

ABK is committed to investing in its people and continuously reviews its approach and procedures to ensure a healthy, productive, and satisfying working environment. This enables employees to grow and develop their existing skills while making vital contributions to the Bank's success.



OOREDOO EXPAND SALES CHANNELS THROUGH ALFA AND OULA FUEL STATIONS

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, member of international Ooredoo Group continues to offer its customers with 24/7 mobile services through its 'Express Shops', by increasing its sales branches within Alfa and Oula Stations gas stations. The Express Shops are staffed by experienced Ooredoo Kuwait ensuring the highest quality, morning, noon or midnight.

Spread around Kuwait, Ooredoo Express shops are now available through Sultan Centre branches at Alfa stations in Gulf Street, Al-Shaab Al-Bahri, Al-Sabahiya and Al-Salmiya and through Trolley at Oula stations in Messilah, Qortoba and Mubarak Al-Kabeer. Mijbil Alayoub, Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "Through partnerships with Alfa and Trolley we aim at making our services and products available to customers 24/7, for them to buy or obtain at their convenience. Our customer's satisfaction has always been and will remain a priority for us"

The Sultan Center (TSC) is an



organization based in Kuwait, incorporating a diverse range of products and services. Mainly acknowledged for its retail business, it is the largest independent retailer in Kuwait. Operating eleven outlets, TSC opened its first retail store abroad in Muscat and

acquired Safeway Jordan. Trolley is a chain of convenience stores founded in 2010 catering to the niche markets located at private universities. Currently Trolley is expanding into gas station to offer customers easy and quick shopping experience.

BABBLING AND BUBBLING

By Saad Al-Motesh

Everything has its own sound and can sometimes be identified by it. Yet there are sounds that we do not know by name and others that might have similar names. However, sound names can often be very convincing and similar. For instance, the sound made by inhaling shisha smoke is called 'bubbling' (barbarah in the Kuwaiti dialect) because of the sound resulting from the movement of the inhaled air (smoke) through the water, making an endless annoying sound that only stops when we stop inhaling.

The same Kuwaiti Arabic word is also used to describe someone who keeps talking and saying

Some people have dedicated themselves to fighting success

nonsense, and we will go as far as saying that they only do this to attract attention. What is even more disastrous is that these people believe they really have an effect on the society. Some people have dedicated themselves to fighting success and have been babbling to discourage others, without knowing that lots of good Kuwaitis know their intentions and that they have to stop discouraging others.

Bubbling devices have many names like nargila, geddow (in GCC) and garsha or jouza in some countries. There are also known as 'hubbly-bubbly'. The same variety of names can also be used for babbling people who include trivial and silly people and those who claim to be holding the highest degrees, while all they can do is only babble!

A babbling person does not harm self-confident people. They only harm themselves. They will eventually eat themselves and those they babble for alive. So take cover you all, because you have been exposed and everybody knows about you and those ordering you to babble, even if you have to cover your heads with aluminum foil like flavored tobacco on a hookah!

— Translated by Kuwait Times

AUB ORGANIZES RAMADAN HOLY QUR'AN RECITATION COMPETITION



KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced yesterday that it will organize a Holy Qur'an recitation competition during the month of Ramadan. The initiative comes as part of the Bank's diversified range of activities tailored for the Holy month and overall commitment to society. The competition is divided into four primary categories - male and female employees to recite Ar-Rahman and Al-Waqiah verses by choice. Other categories include staff members' children and the wider public whose ages range between seven to fourteen years old, where they will need to recite An-Naze'at or Al-Mutaffin verses.

Abdullah Al-Shuaib, Sharia Assistant Manager at Ahli United Bank said, "The launch of this initiative reflects the Bank's continued commitment to promote the true values of Islam and encouraging our Muslim employees to memorize and recite the Holy Qur'an. The best time to memorize the Qur'an's verses is during the Holy month of Ramadan, a time that promotes pure meanings of love, obedience and worship."

"Ahli United Bank is committed to involve staff members and their families in similar religious and social activities every year. We have further developed the competition to include new categories, the all children section, where any child across Kuwait can participate as per the competition's guidelines," added Shuaib.

Shuaib pointed out that similar programs have been developed by the Bank during the Holy month as part of the Bank's social commitment to support activities aimed at raising awareness of Ramadan throughout society in Kuwait.

News

In Brief

Oil recovery delays fuel hike plans

KUWAIT: The recovery of oil prices globally has temporarily delayed plans to increase petrol prices in Kuwait, Al-Rai reported yesterday quoting sources familiar with the government's thinking. Kuwait's projected budget deficit has dropped from KD 12.2 billion to KD 9 after oil prices increased, said the sources, adding that hiking fuel prices has been put on hold for the time being. The government does not require the parliament's approval to increase fuel prices. Once approved, the increase would most probably cover both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti consumers, the sources said. — Al-Rai

Control over FTZ

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) made a verbal request to the Ministry of Municipality Affairs to take full control over the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) which the two departments currently share authority over. MCI believes that having one department manage the FTZ helps speed up transactions, such as issuing licenses for investors directly without requiring approval from the municipality. — Al-Rai

UK counter

KUWAIT: Kuwait and the United Kingdom discussed the possibility of setting up a special counter at Kuwait International Airport for the UK immigration office in order to put entrance stamps on Kuwaitis' passports instead of them waiting in British airports, said Waleed Al-Khubaizi, Foreign Minister's Assistant for Europe's Affairs. He added that the UK has repatriated three bedoons (stateless) carrying article 17 Kuwaiti passports back to Kuwait. — Al-Rai

Prisoners exchange

KUWAIT: While Kuwait has recently sent 47 Iranian prisoners back to their country as part of a prisoners' exchange agreement between Kuwait and Iran, sources said that eight other prisoners were not included in the exchange. They include two prisoners who have financial obligations towards others, three sentenced to death and three others whose cases are still in court. — Al-Rai



KUWAIT: KFH Group Chief Executive Officer, Mazin Saad Al-Nahedh honors Jouri Al-Azmi.

KFH HONORS BLIND STUDENT FOR WINNING FIRST PLACE IN READING COMPETITION

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) honored the blind student Jouri Al-Azmi for winning the first place in a local reading competition. This comes as part of KFH's social responsibility and efforts to patronize people with special needs.

KFH Group Chief Executive Officer, Mazin Saad Al-Nahedh said on honoring Azmi that KFH spares no efforts in recognizing the talented and determined people. He praised Azmi for her insistence and determination to beat odds and prove successful, expressing his desire to solicit creativity and innovation in the spirit of youth.

Nahedh added that KFH optimally assumes its social responsibility for the best interest of all segments of the society including the disabled people who are integral part of the society.

Meanwhile, Azmi expressed her thanks and gratitude to KFH for this generous and impressive gesture that reflects the bank's leading position, noting that the honoring represents an impetus for her for further achievements.

INTERIOR MINISTRY RECOGNIZES VIVA AT GULF TRAFFIC WEEK

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced its recognition at the closing ceremony for the 32nd Unified Gulf Traffic Week, under the patronage and presence of Assistant Undersecretary of the Interior Ministry for Traffic Major General Abdullah Al-Muhanna. Delegations from GCC participated in this event held under the title 'Your decision.. Makes your fate.'

General Muhanna presented a trophy to VIVA's representative, Ayman Salem Al-Muteiri, Senior Manager Corporate Communications, in presence of the chief of the ministry on interior's public relations and security media Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash, in recognition of its support for this event. This year's traffic week features several activities and events pertinent to road safety and protection which is mainly based on the avoidance of traffic violations.





Mexican police rescue kidnapped footballer Pulido

STARVING IRAQIS RISK ALL TO FLEE IS' CRUMBLING RULE



DAKAR: Chad's former dictator Hissene Habre raises his hands after his sentencing during court proceedings yesterday. — AP

CHAD EX-DICTATOR GETS LIFE IN PRISON

HABRE WAS ONCE WELCOMED AT WHITE HOUSE • HIS REGIME KILLED UP TO 40,000

DAKAR: A special court in Senegal sentenced former Chadian dictator Hissene Habre to life in jail yesterday for war crimes and crimes against humanity, an unprecedented conviction seen as a warning to repressive rulers worldwide. The verdict brings a long-awaited reckoning to relatives of the up to 40,000 people killed and many more kidnapped, raped or tortured during his 1982-1990 term as president of Chad. Habre - who was feted at the White House in 1987 by US President Ronald Reagan after expelling Libyan forces from Chad - was guilty of war crimes, crimes against humanity, rape, forced slavery and kidnapping, said the president of the court Gberdao Gustave Kam, sentencing him to life in jail.

The 73-year-old once nicknamed "desert fighter" had presided over "a system where impunity and terror were the law," Kam said, face-to-face with the onetime leader in his trademark billowing white robes and sunglasses. Habre raised his arms into the air on hearing the decision and shouted "Down with France-afrique!" referring to the term used for France's continuing influence on its former colonies. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said the verdict showed "nobody is above the law" at a time when the world is "scarred by a constant

stream of atrocities." The former leader has two weeks to appeal the sentence.

Victims groups who had travelled to Dakar to hear the verdict were visibly moved by a judgement that comes a quarter century after the abuses they suffered. "The feeling is one of complete satisfaction," said Clement Abaifouta, president of the Habre survivors association known by the acronym AVCRHH. "It's the crowning achievement of a long and hard fight against impunity. Today Africa has won. We say thank you to Senegal and to Africa for judging Africa," he added. The case was heard by the Extraordinary African Chambers (CAE), a special tribunal set up by the African Union under a deal with Senegal, and is the first time a country has prosecuted a former leader of another nation for rights abuses. In the Chadian capital, N'Djamena, up to 250 victims and their supporters gathered to watch the trial on television at their group's headquarters.

Women screamed with joy as the verdict was read out, embracing one another and shouting "We won!", before taking to the streets and blocking traffic as they spread the news. "This is a victory for the Chadian people against impunity and injustice, never again," said Jean Noyama, a local leader of the AVCRHH.

'A Powerful Message'

The precedent set by the verdict could be seismic, according to legal experts, especially after years of criticism that the International Criminal Court (ICC), based in The Hague, has tried African leaders many say should be judged on the continent. Reed Brody, a lawyer for Human Rights Watch who has spent the last 15 years working with victims to bring Habre to justice, said the conviction was a warning. "This verdict sends a powerful message that the days when tyrants could brutalize their people, pillage their treasury and escape abroad to a life of luxury are coming to an end," Reed said in a statement. "Today will be carved into history as the day that a band of unrelenting survivors brought their dictator to justice."

Amnesty International West Africa researcher Gaetan Mootoo said the verdict would serve as a guiding light for those living in repressive regimes around the world. "It is moments like these that other victims around the world can draw on in darker times when justice appears beyond reach," Mootoo said in a statement. Known as a skilled desert warrior often dressed in combat fatigues to fit the role, Habre fled to Senegal after his 1990 ouster by Chad's current President Idriss Deby. Witnesses recounted the hor-

ror of life in Chad's prisons, describing in graphic detail abusive and often deadly punishments inflicted by Habre's feared secret police, the Documentation and Security Directorate (DDS). Victims were subject to electric shocks and waterboarding while some had gas sprayed in their eyes or spice rubbed into their genitals, the court heard.

Inadequate Defense

Habre's defense team unsuccessfully sought to cast doubt on the prosecution argument that their client was an all-knowing, all-powerful head of the DDS, suggesting he may have been unaware of abuses on the ground. For more than 20 years, the former dictator lived freely in an upmarket Dakar suburb with his wife and children, swapping his military garb for white robes and a cap. He declined to address the court throughout the 10-month trial, refusing to recognize its authority. "What we have seen today is not justice. It is a crime against Africa," said Mahamat Togo, part of a Habre supporters group. "It's the dirty work of mercenaries in the pay of France-afrique." US Secretary of State John Kerry called the verdict a "landmark in the global fight against impunity for atrocities, including war crimes and crimes against humanity," in a statement released Friday. — AFP

NEW PICTURE OF MISSING JAPAN JOURNALIST EMERGES

TOKYO: Japan said yesterday that it believed a new photo posted online of a Japanese journalist missing in Syria - showing him for the first time since a video released earlier this year - is authentic. The photo, which received widespread coverage in Japanese media, shows freelance journalist Jumpei Yasuda, who has been out of contact since June last year, wearing an orange shirt, his hair and beard grown long. He is seen holding a piece of paper with a handwritten message in Japanese

that says: "Please help. This is the last chance. Jumpei Yasuda."

It was not clear when or where the image was taken, but Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters that the man is likely Yasuda. "The government is now analyzing the image," he said. Footage of Yasuda was posted online in March. In the one-minute video, the bearded man wearing a black jumper with a scarf around his neck says in English: "Hello, I am Jumpei Yasuda. Today is my birthday, 16 March."

The footage was posted online by Tarik Abdul Hak, who told AFP it had been provided to him by a group called Al-Noor, which he said "has been mandated by (the Al-Qaeda-linked) Al-Nusra to carry out a mediation for his release." Japanese public broadcaster NHK reported that the same person posted the new photo online. Militants from the self-styled Islamic State group last year beheaded Japanese war correspondent Kenji Goto and his friend Haruna Yukawa.

The government in Tokyo was criticised for what detractors saw as a flat-footed response to the crisis at the time, including apparently missed opportunities to free both men. Earlier this month, three Spanish journalists, who had been held hostage in Syria by an Al Qaeda-linked group, were released. They shared part of their time in captivity with Yasuda, according to Spain's Europa Press news agency. — AFP



This undated picture shows Japanese freelance journalist Jumpei Yasuda holding a piece of paper with a handwritten message in Japanese. — AFP

DUTERTE SNUBS HIS PROCLAMATION

MANILA: Rodrigo Duterte snubbed his proclamation as the next Philippine president yesterday, reinforcing his image as a maverick outsider intent on challenging the nation's political establishment. A joint session of the House of Representatives and the Senate in Manila endorsed the official count of this month's election, which saw the trash-talking politician who revels in threats to kill criminals win by more than six million votes.

Duterte declined to attend the nationally televised event, preferring to remain more than 900 km away in his southern hometown of Davao that he has ruled as mayor for most of the past two decades and he admits is his comfort zone. "I am not attending the proclamation. I've never attended any proclamation (in) all my life," Duterte, who will be sworn into office on June 30, told reporters on the weekend. Duterte, 71, won the elections largely due to an incendiary law-and-order platform headlined by a vow to wipe out crime within six months. He pledged to give security forces shoot-to-kill orders, and vowed that tens of thousands of criminals would die. Since the election Duterte has continued to encourage police to kill drug suspects, and said he would bring back the death penalty. Another key message of Duterte's campaign was his pledge to take on the nation's political and economic elite, selling himself as an explosive political outsider that could shake up a power structure overseeing one of Asia's biggest rich-poor divides.

Duterte railed against the elites and promised to fight for the poor, despite having created his own political dynasty in Davao and his own vice presidential running mate coming from one of the nation's richest families. Since the elections, Duterte has refused to travel

to Manila and promised to remain in Davao until he assumes the presidency. This has forced politicians, powerbrokers, business leaders and courtiers to fly to Davao for an audience.

In further blows for so-called "Imperial Manila", Duterte has named many politicians from the southern Philippines to cabinet posts. Duterte has also repeatedly expressed his disdain for spending time in Manila, describing it last week as a "dead city" overrun by slums. He also said he planned to spend as little time as president in the capital as

possible, and that he hoped to be able to fly each day to and from Davao. Duterte's absence at the Manila ceremony yesterday delivered a message that he would not be beholden to lawmakers, said Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute of Political and Economic Reforms. "As a symbolism he simply doesn't want to be confined by Congress," Casiple told AFP. However even some of Duterte's supporters were disappointed that Duterte shunned such an important date on the Philippines' democratic calendar. —AFP



MANILA: Philippine Senate president Frank Drilon (left) and House speaker Feliciano Belmonte raise the hands of Leni Robredo during her proclamation as vice president at the Session Hall of the House of Representatives yesterday. — AFP

STARVING IRAQIS RISK ALL TO FLEE IS' CRUMBLING RULE

AMRIYAT AL-FALLUJAH, Iraq: Eight hands stretch towards the aluminium plate - it's the first meal of rice this Iraqi family who just escaped jihadist rule in the Fallujah area has had in two years. The tent has just been put up, a sheet of bubble wrap strewn on the gravel as a makeshift rug and the heat is searing but Nasra Najm, her daughter and grandchildren have a smile on their face. "We had been dreaming of this. I wasn't sure rice existed anymore, so when we saw this plate, we couldn't believe it," said the elderly woman with traditional tattoos on her face.

She and her relatives reached the camp in Amriyat al-Fallujah 12 hours earlier, after walking through much of the night to dodge the surveillance of the Islamic State group. Iraqi forces a week ago launched a broad operation aimed at retaking the city of Fallujah, one of IS's most emblematic bastions, in the western province of Anbar. The progress of pro-government forces has created a window for some civilians to flee from the city's outlying areas and attempt to reach safety.

The Norwegian Refugee Council, which runs several camps in Amriyat al-

Fallujah, south of Fallujah, is providing shelter and assistance to around 3,000 people who fled over the past week. Their stories give an insight into the dire conditions endured by the estimated 50,000 people still trapped inside a city which has been largely cut off from the rest of Iraq for months. In Nasra's tent, Maher Sabih, a tall middle-aged man explained it this way: "Look I used to weigh 103 kilos (235 pounds), now I'm on 71."

All the newly-arrived displaced civilians from the Fallujah area have the same stories of being deprived of rice or bread. "It was an ordeal over there. We had to grind the stones from the dates to make flour," said Madiha Khudhair, sitting in her empty tent with her two daughters. "It's very sour, no one wants to eat that," said the woman, who had been living in a village under IS rule near Fallujah. Her sunken eyes, framed by a red scarf wrapped around her head, started watering when she recounted their flight. "We just left it up to God, picked up our things and left. Actually, we ran. At one point, we spotted one of their (IS) trucks and we all crouched. Eventually, we made it," she said.

Risk Everything

Rasmiya Abbas, a black-cloaked elderly woman cradling her five-day-old grandson, said IS (Daesh) fighters would ration the population and keep the good food for themselves. "A bag of sugar lately was around 50,000 dinars (\$40). For the rice, they sometimes gave a quarter of a kilo, barely enough to make a meal for the children," she said. "We only had that dark barley bread. If you saw it, you wouldn't eat it. Daesh kept the rice, the good bread and all the best things for themselves," she added.

All of the 252 families housed in the Fallujah camp that opened on Saturday arrived over the weekend. In the sand-colored tents all tethered in neat lines, exhausted children sleep in the shade to recover from their journey and shelter from the noon sun. Those who are awake fill plastic bottles from a water truck while others queue with their mothers in front of an ambulance handing out basic medicine.

Nearby, workers scramble to build latrines for the brand new camp's booming population. The Fallujah battle yielded its biggest wave of displaced civilians on Sunday but as the



AMRIYAT AL-FALLUJAH, Iraq: Displaced Iraqi children stand outside a tent at a newly-opened camp in this government-held town on Sunday. — AFP

fighting intensifies - forces led by Iraq's elite counter-terrorism service entered the streets of the city yesterday - a bigger influx is to be expected. "We're re-positioning more aid in order to give it to more families we're hoping will be able to escape," said Becky Bakr Abdulla, the Norwegian Refugee Council's Iraq media coordinator.

Ahmad Sabih said reaching the camp is dangerous. "You have to try to pick a clear road but those who didn't know their way very well got killed," said the 40-year-old father, who reached the camp in Amriyat al-Fallujah at 4:00 am. "I just decided to risk everything. I was either going to save my children or die with my children." — AFP

TURKEY OFFERS US JOINT SYRIA OPERATION WITHOUT THE KURDS

ANKARA: Turkey is offering to "join forces" with Washington for a special operation inside Syria on condition it doesn't include a Syrian Kurdish militia blacklisted by Ankara but seen as an ally by the US, the foreign minister said. Washington's support of Kurdish fighters in Syria in the fight against Islamic State jihadists has angered Ankara, especially after AFP pictures last week revealed US commandos sporting patches of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) detested by Turkey.

"If we join forces, they (the US) have their own special forces and we have our special forces," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told a small group of journalists in the Mediterranean resort of Antalya. Such a coalition could "easily" head to IS' de facto capital in Raqqa to the south in a second front, he said. There was no immediate reaction to the proposal from the United States, whose strategy for fighting jihadists inside Syria is pinned on its alliance with the battle-hardened Syrian Kurds.

The US is supporting an alliance of Kurdish and Arab fighters, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), as the most effective fighting force on the ground against IS. But the SDF is still dominated by the YPG, which Turkey sees as the Syrian branch of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) which has fought a three decade insurgency against the Turkish state. Cavusoglu said Syrian Arab opposition forces opposing the regime of President Bashar Al-Assad could be backed up with special forces from Turkey, the United States as well as from France, Britain and Germany.

'Terror Group as Partner'

"The subject we are discussing with the Americans is the closure of the Manbij pocket as soon as possible... and the opening of a second front," Cavusoglu said, referring to a backdoor border route favoured by IS for smuggling jihadists into and out of Syria. "We say okay, a second front should

be opened but not with the PYD," he said, referring to the Democratic Union Party, the YPG's political wing. "Unfortunately, both Russia and the United States see a terrorist organisation as a partner and support it." In Ankara, government spokesman Numan Kurtulmus declined to comment on details of any operation but said Turkey placed top priority on protecting a line stretching between Syria's flashpoint towns of Marea and Jarablus. "Turkey is determined whatever is needed to protect the line from terrorist groups," he said yesterday after a cabinet meeting.

'US not Keeping Promise'

The dispute over the role of the YPG has proved a major bone of contention in relations between the two NATO allies. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the weekend accused the US of dishonesty. Cavusoglu lamented the delay in the delivery of American light multiple rocket launchers to be deployed along its border with Syria to combat IS. The High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) was to have been deployed along the Turkish border by the end of May, but Cavusoglu said it would now only happen in August. "The United States is unfortunately not keeping its promise," he charged. "We are completely ready. Not us, but the US is responsible for the delay."

The system would allow Turkey to hit IS positions within a 90-km range, while Turkish artillery has a more limited range of 40 km. Yet Turkish cooperation is critical for the US-led fight against IS, with coalition war planes using the southern Turkish base of Incirlik as a hub for attacks on the group. Cavusoglu said US support for YPG was "very dangerous" for the future of Syria. Asked if it could have implications for the US use of Incirlik, he replied: "The United States is our NATO ally, model partner. To be honest, we don't want the business to reach that stage." — AFP



ISTANBUL: Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (center), his wife Emine Erdogan, (in yellow), his son Bilal (third in first row) and members of an educational foundation applaud yesterday. — AP

FAMILY PLANNING NOT FOR MUSLIMS, SAYS ERDOGAN

PRESIDENT ACCUSES RUSSIA OF ARMING PKK MILITANTS

ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday that family planning and contraception were not for Muslim families, in his latest comments promoting population growth that angered women's activists. Erdogan said it was the responsibility of mothers to ensure the continued growth of Turkey's population, which has expanded at a rate of around 1.3 percent in the last few years. "I will say it clearly... We need to increase the number of our descendants," he said in a speech in Istanbul. "People talk about birth control, about family planning. No Muslim family can understand and accept that! As God and as the great prophet (PBUH) said, we will go this way. And in this respect the first duty belongs to mothers."

Erdogan and his wife Emine have two sons and two daughters. Earlier this month, the president attended the high-profile marriage of his younger daughter Sumeyye to defense industrialist Selcuk Bayraktar. His elder daughter Esra, who is married to the up-and-coming Energy Minister Berat Albayrak, has three children.

The Platform to Stop Violence Against Women, which campaigns to stop the killings of hundreds of women every year, condemned Erdogan's comments as violating the rights of women. "You (Erdogan) cannot usurp our right

to contraception, nor our other rights with your declarations that come out of the Middle Ages," the group said in a statement on Twitter. "We will protect our rights," it added.

Erdogan has often annoyed feminists and women's activists with his comments on sex and family planning. In a speech marking International Women's Day this year, he said he believed that "a woman is above all else a mother". In 2014, he described birth control as a "treason" which risked causing a whole generation to "dry up". And he has famously urged mothers to have four children, saying: "one (child) means loneliness, two means rivalry, three means balance and four means abundance."

Women in the Workforce

According to the statistics office, Turkey's population rose to 78.741 million last year. The population in 2000 was less than 68 million. Meanwhile, the composition of Turkey's new cabinet under Prime Minister Binali Yildirim announced last week also annoyed activists with just one female minister. Fatma Betul Sayan Kaya, who wears the Islamic headscarf, heads the family and social policy ministry, a post which has always gone to a woman.

According to economists, one of the key

problems for the Turkish economy is the failure to integrate women into the workforce. But the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) which Erdogan co-founded angrily rejects allegations of sexism and says it has done more than any other Turkish government to encourage women to work.

Erdogan's wife Emine yesterday spoke at a conference on promoting women's employment, saying "we should ensure gender equality" in terms of women working but added the employment rate among women had increased 52 percent in the last years. According to official statistics from 2015, just 31.5 percent of women participate in the labor force in Turkey.

Russia Slammed

Meanwhile, Erdogan has accused Russia of providing anti-aircraft weaponry and rockets to militants of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), government officials said yesterday, confirming reports in local media. Speaking to reporters on board his airplane after a visit to the southeastern province of Diyarbakir over the weekend, Erdogan accused Moscow of transferring weaponry to the PKK via Iraq and Syria, the pro-government Star newspaper said.—Agence



YUKSEKOVA, Turkey: People stand in front of the rubble of a damaged building after heavy fighting between Turkish government troops and Kurdish fighters in this southeastern Turkey Kurdish town near the border with Iraq and Iran yesterday. — AFP

BAHRAIN DOUBLES JAIL TERM OF OPPN LEADER

DUBAI: A Bahrain court more than doubled a jail sentence against opposition leader Sheikh Ali Salman yesterday, in a ruling his bloc warned risked stoking fresh unrest. The appeals court increased the sentence for charges of inciting violence to nine years from the original four, a judicial official said. Bahrain's public prosecutor said the stiffer sentence related to "crimes of promoting change to the political system by force", according to state news agency BNA. Salman was sentenced in June to four years in prison for inciting unrest. Defence lawyers appealed in September, saying that prosecutors had presented as evidence excerpts of his speeches that were taken out of context. Prosecutors responded with their own appeal asking the court to reverse Salman's earlier acquittal on more serious charges of seeking to overthrow the political system by force.

"He was in the habit of such incitement and promoted (it) in his speeches on various occasions, including extremist appeals in which he justified acts of violence and sabotage, provoking regime change and calling

for jihad (holy war) as a form of religious duty," BNA said, quoting the prosecution. The court extended his prison term as a result. His lawyers said they have 30 days to appeal against the ruling.

Salman's Al-Wafaq bloc condemned the verdict as "unacceptable and provocative", warning that it "entrenches the exacerbating political crisis" in Bahrain. Human rights group Amnesty International issued a statement denouncing the verdict as "clearly" politically motivated. And Britain's visiting Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond tweeted: "Raised Sheikh Ali Salman sentence in Bahrain today. Understand there is a further stage in the legal process - will follow case closely."

Al-Wafaq was Bahrain's largest parliamentary bloc until its 18 MPs walked out in February 2011 in protest at the use of violence against demonstrators. It said the verdict "reflects the Bahraini regime's settlement to reject national reconciliation by turning its back on international calls urging to address the country's political crisis".

BROTHERHOOD CHIEF SENTENCED TO LIFE

HEAD OF JOURNALISTS UNION DETAINED

CAIRO: An Egyptian court yesterday sentenced the Muslim Brotherhood's leader and 35 other people to life in prison over violent clashes after the army overthrew Islamist president Mohamed Morsi, a judicial official said. Mohamed Badie, the Brotherhood's supreme guide, has already been sentenced to death and prison terms in other trials. The court also sentenced 48 defendants to jail terms ranging from three to 15 years, and acquitted 20 others. The authorities have arrested thousands of Brotherhood leaders and members, including Morsi, since his ouster by the army in 2013. Hundreds have been sentenced to death, although many have appealed and won retrials.

On Monday, the court convicted Badie and the other defendants of involvement in clashes in the Suez Canal city of Ismailiya that killed three people. The country was rocked by violence for weeks after Morsi's supporters set up protest camps and demonstrated against his overthrow. The police killed hundreds of his supporters in clashes, including more than 600 on August 14, 2013 as they dispersed a Cairo protest camp.

Morsi, a senior Brotherhood

leader, had won the country's first free election in 2012, more than a year after a popular uprising ousted veteran strongman Hosni Mubarak. His rule was divisive and millions held protests in Cairo demanding his resignation, prompting the army to overthrow and detain him.



Yahya Qalash

Meanwhile, the head of Egypt's journalists union and two of its board members have been questioned by

prosecutors over allegations that they spread false news and harbored journalists wanted by authorities, one of the three and their lawyer said yesterday. They were ordered released on a 10,000-pound (\$1,000) bail each, but they refused to pay and were consequently detained at a police station in central Cairo, board member Khaled El-Balshy and defense lawyer Sayed Abu Zeid told AP. "We refused to pay because the accusations are related to publishing news and that should not involve imprisonment or bail," said Balshy.

The move against the three came less than a month after the head of the union, Yahya Qalash, called for the interior minister's resignation and a presidential apology over an alleged police raid to snatch two journalists wanted for allegedly inciting protests and who had taken refuge inside the union building in downtown Cairo. Authorities deny the allegation that they forcibly entered the building, saying police had an arrest warrant and coordinated in advance with union board members. Qalash, the union's head, later sought to ease the tense standoff with the government, dropping his demand for a presiden-

tial apology and not repeating his demand for the minister to step down. The incident led to an uproar among journalists and rights activists who saw the alleged police raid as evidence of the low esteem in which the media is held by President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi's government. Sisi has significantly curbed the freedoms won following the country's 2011 popular uprising, defending a 2013 law that effectively bans street protests and repeatedly stating that Egypt's human rights record must not be judged by Western standards.

Yesterday, Sisi again showed a desire to have a government influence on the media and entertainment industry. He spoke at an inauguration ceremony for a new housing project in Cairo for low-income Egyptians. The project is a substitute model for the shanty towns that ring the Egyptian capital and are often depicted in movies as violent, crime infested and morally degenerate areas. He used the opportunity to angrily demand an end to such cinematic depictions, lending his considerable weight to media criticism of such movies as tarnishing the image of Egypt.—Agencies

MOMMY LOVES YOU!: BOY RESCUED AFTER GORILLA IS SHOT AT ZOO

CINCINNATI: Panicked zoo visitors watched helplessly and shouted, "Stay calm!" while one woman yelled, "Mommy loves you!" as a 400-pound-plus gorilla loomed over a 4-year-old boy who had fallen into a shallow moat at the Cincinnati Zoo. The boy sat still in the water, looking up at the gorilla as the animal touched the child's hand and back. At one point, it looked as though the gorilla helped the youngster stand up.

Two witnesses said they thought the gorilla was trying to protect the boy at first before getting spooked by the screams of onlookers. The animal then picked the child up out of the moat and dragged him to another spot inside the exhibit, zoo officials said. Fearing for the boy's life, the zoo's dangerous-animal response team shot and killed the 17-year-old ape, named Harambe. The child, whose name was not released,

was released from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center on Saturday night, hours after the fall. His family said in a statement Sunday that the boy was home and doing fine. "We extend our heartfelt thanks for the quick action by the Cincinnati Zoo staff. We know that this was a very difficult decision for them, and that they are grieving the loss of their gorilla," the family said.

Tough choice

Zoo Director Thane Maynard said the gorilla didn't appear to be attacking the child but was "an extremely strong" animal in an agitated situation. He said tranquilizing the gorilla wouldn't have knocked it out immediately, leaving the boy in danger. "They made a tough choice and they made the right choice because they saved that little boy's life," Maynard said.

Zoo officials said the 4-year-old climbed through a barrier at the Gorilla World exhibit and dropped 15 feet into the moat Saturday afternoon. He was in there for about 10 minutes. Two female gorillas also were in the enclosure. The two females complied with calls from zoo staff to leave the exhibit, but Harambe stayed, Maynard said.

Witness Kim O'Connor said she heard the boy say he wanted to get in the water with the gorillas. She said the boy's mother was with several other young children. "The mother's like, 'No, you're not. No, you're not,'" O'Connor told WLWT-TV. O'Connor shared video she and her family recorded of the boy and Harambe.

The two appear in a corner of the exhibit while visitors yell, "Somebody call the zoo!" and "Mommy's right here!" The station did not air portions of the video showing the

gorilla dragging the boy. Another woman said that just before the boy fell, she saw him in bushes beyond a fence around the exhibit. "I tried to grab for him. I started yelling at him to come back," Brittany Nicely told The Cincinnati Enquirer. "Everybody started screaming and going crazy. It happened so fast." Zoo staff cleared the area and visitors heard gunfire a few minutes later. Firefighters then rushed into the enclosure and picked up the boy.

Lt Steve Saunders, a Cincinnati police spokesman, said there are no plans to charge the parents. Animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals said the zoo should have had a second barrier around the exhibit.

"Even under the 'best' circumstances, captivity is never acceptable for gorillas or other primates, and in cases like this, it's

even deadly," PETA said. The exhibit opened nearly 40 years ago, and this was the first breach, the zoo said.

Maynard called the killing a tragic death of a critically endangered species and a huge loss for the zoo and the gorilla population worldwide. The gorilla came to Cincinnati in 2015 from the Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville, Texas.

Visitors left flowers at a gorilla statue Sunday. Gorilla World remained closed, but the rest of the zoo was open. One father said he was shocked that the boy was able to get past the fence and bushes that surrounded the exhibit. He expects the zoo will take a close at it. "They probably thought the moat and the fence was good enough," said Alex Salcedo. "Unfortunately, it doesn't seem like it was if a 4-year-old can get through." — AP

ON CUTTING-EDGE VOTER DATA, TRUMP STILL BEHIND CLINTON

PHILADELPHIA: Donald Trump trails Hillary Clinton by months, even years, in using fast-evolving digital campaigning to win over voters, data specialists working with the GOP say. The presumptive Republican presidential nominee has dismissed the science that defines 21st century political campaigns, a tool that President Barack Obama used effectively in winning two terms and the Clinton campaign has worked on for nearly a year.

And while it is too early to tell whether the late start signals trouble for Trump, it illustrates the difference between Trump's proudly outsider campaign and the institutional knowledge within Clinton's. "She's been able to prepare a general election campaign since the beginning," said Alex Lundry, former senior technology adviser to Mitt Romney's 2012 Republican presidential campaign. "That head start in terms of time is extraordinarily valuable."

Tracking supporters

Precision digital-marketing data, a person's online footprints, have become an electoral science that Democrats have dominated, and Republicans have chased, for a decade. Campaigns used the data at first simply to track supporters. The information now guides a range of decisions, like the types and volume of advertising, where to deploy campaign staff to mobilize voters and where a candidate should visit.

Trump's team has been unclear about its use of data in the general election. Trump told The Associated Press this month the tool was "overrated" and he planned "limited" data use during the general election, though his campaign has worked with firms and a small in-house staff to track voters during the primaries.

Later, senior adviser Rick Wile, who was hired in April, suggested Trump would run a "state of the art" campaign and use data strategically, relying on Trump's own list of supporters, the Republican National Committee's voter list and a data service financed largely by the RNC called Data Trust. "All of the data points - whatever they are - our ability to harvest that data is invaluable," said Wile, the RNC's former executive director. He has since left the campaign, after what a source close to the matter said were disagreements with

Trump loyalists about who should lead campaign efforts in key states. The person spoke on condition of anonymity, lacking authorization to discuss internal campaign matters publicly. Given how Republicans have long trailed Democrats in digital campaigning, Trump's grudging talk and Wiley's departure hardly signal a rush to catch up. Trump spent more than \$1 million in April on campaign paraphernalia like caps, T-shirts and signs. Even as he was effectively seizing the nomination, he spent less than a third of that amount on data and related functions such as telemarketing.

Electoral revolution

Obama's 2008 presidential campaign revolutionized the way technology could be used to identify and keep track of supporters who attended his campaign events and gave money to his candidacy. In 2012, Obama's re-election campaign profiled potential voters by monitoring what online, mobile, reading and shopping choices they made. The data helped them project election outcomes based on advertising decisions in specific markets aimed at select voter types.

Obama's 2012 re-election was viewed as a breakthrough in the political application of what had been a commercial tool, while Romney's own data effort started late, was more limited in scope and ultimately crashed. Clinton's campaign has been collecting data since she announced her candidacy 11 months ago. Elan Kriegel, an analytics director for Obama in 2012, now heads Clinton's analytics team. And,

Jeremy Bird, credited with using the data in 2012 for decision-making that preceded the president's re-election, is advising the Clinton campaign. Kriegel said the nearly yearlong preparation has allowed his team to build intricate voter turnout models aimed at predicting voter behavior, especially in potential swing states. "If you weren't doing it several months ago, then you really are starting from scratch," Kriegel said.

Trump's challenge may be even more difficult, said Andy Burkett, the Republican National Committee's former chief technology officer. As the party's nominee, Trump will have full use of the committee's data program, in which it has invested heavily in recent years. — AP



TAMAULIPAS: Mexico's Governor Egidio Torre Cantu (c) speaks to members of the press following the release of the Mexico football star Alan Pulido (4th left). — AFP photos

MEXICAN POLICE RESCUE FOOTBALLER ALAN PULIDO

MURDERS AND KIDNAPPINGS AFFLICHTING THE STATE

MEXICO CITY: Mexican footballer Alan Pulido was rescued hours after he was kidnapped in his hometown after the striker managed to call police while his captors were distracted, authorities said yesterday.

Pulido, who plays for Greek giants Olympiakos, had a bandage on his right hand when he appeared briefly at a news conference in the early hours of yesterday in the crime-plagued northeastern state of Tamaulipas. The 25-year-old player, who was wearing a multicolored sleeveless shirt and shorts as he stood alongside Governor Egidio Torre Cantu, told reporters that he was "very well, very well, thank God."

The abduction put a spotlight on the murders and kidnappings afflicting the state, where thousands of people have disappeared and drug cartels have fought brutal turf wars for years. Pulido, who played for Mexico in the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, was kidnapped by four men late Saturday after he left a party in his hometown of Ciudad Victoria, authorities said. Officials earlier said six gunmen were involved.

"During a moment of inattention by the captors in the place where he was located, he was able to make a phone call and ask for help, giving his location and we were able to immediately rescue the victim," Tamaulipas state prosecutor Ismael Quintanilla told reporters.

One man was arrested during the operation, Quintanilla said, adding that the suspect was from the neighboring state of Veracruz and was a member of one of the gangs operating in Ciudad Victoria. Federal police chief Enrique Galindo said Pulido, 25, had a small injury but was otherwise "safe and sound" after police swooped in to save him.

The player underwent a medical exam after his rescue. Galindo told Radio Formula that there was "no violence" during the rescue. There had been a negotiation but no ransom was paid, he said. The kidnappers apparently kidnapped Pulido because he appeared to be wealthy "or because it could give the kidnappers a nice profit," Galindo said.

Pulido was part of the Mexican national team at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, though he did not see any playing time. He was not called up for the Copa America Centenario tournament, which starts this week.

Crime-plagued state

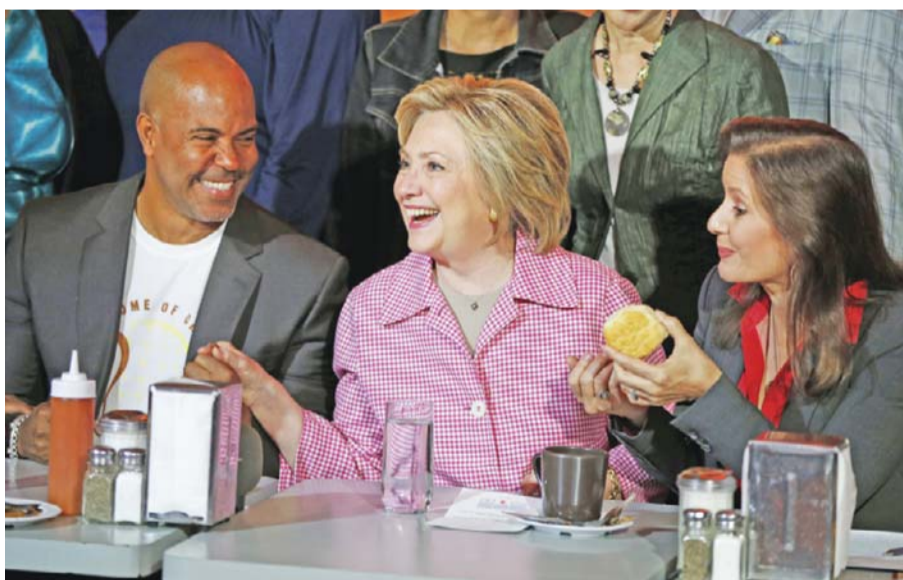
His rescue is a major success for the authorities in one of Mexico's most dangerous states, with the population regularly terrorized by kidnappings and gunfights in the streets of large cities. Some roads are so dangerous that the federal police sometimes escort travelers in protec-

ive convoys. More than 5,500 people have disappeared in the state, out of a total of around 28,000 reported missing across Mexico. Local media reported that Pulido had accompanied his girlfriend to a party in Ciudad Victoria, and that their car was intercepted by a convoy of vans that blocked the road and forced him out. The young woman was released almost immediately and did not know where he was taken.

Olympiakos thankful

Pulido's kidnapping shocked his current and former clubs. "Alan is safe and healthy with his family," Olympiakos said on Twitter. "We thank each and every one of you for your concern and prayers in these difficult times," the club said. Pulido played in the Greek Cup final on May 17 — his team lost to AEK, 2-1 before leaving for Ciudad Victoria.

He signed a four-year contract with Olympiakos last season. He scored four goals in six matches this season. He previously played for Mexican club Tigres of Monterrey. His abduction brought back memories of the kidnapping of Argentine manager Ruben Omar Romano in Mexico City in 2005. Romano was rescued after 65 days of captivity. Romano was coaching Mexico City club Cruz Azul at the time of his kidnapping. — AFP



OAKLAND: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, center, speaks with Derek Johnson, left, and Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf at the Home of Chicken and Waffles. — AP

RAPE, RACE AND GLARE OF MEDIA DIVIDE TOWN

DIETRICH: Teaching her children how to peacefully respond to racist comments in a tiny Idaho town was not new for the mother of 20 adopted children, many of whom are black. She often found herself echoing the virtues taught in Dietrich's only church. Kindness and patience can overcome ignorance in the mostly white, rural community, she told her kids. Forgive. Turn the other cheek.

Then her black teenage son joined the football team. Within months, three of his teammates used a coat hanger to sexually assault him in a school locker room, prosecutors say. The attack came after the woman said she spent months trying to convince school officials that her and her husband's concerns about the repeated racist harassment directed at their children needed to be treated seriously.

The allegations of prolonged racist taunts and physical abuse were revealed this month when the family filed a \$10 million lawsuit against the Dietrich School District. It claims the school failed to prevent the abuse even though much of it happened in front of football coaches and school officials. Three teens have been charged in the Oct. 23 assault: Two with

felonies in adult court and one in juvenile court. In the lawsuit, the victim contends one of his teammates pretended to want to hug him but instead held him down so 17-year-old Tanner Ward and 18-year-old John Howard could assault him.

Ward has pleaded not guilty, and Howard has not yet entered a plea. The juvenile court case is sealed. "Sometimes I wish I hadn't said anything," the mother said. "Then we could have lived a quiet life. But when you're right, you sometimes have to stand alone." The Associated Press does not generally identify victims of sexual abuse and is withholding the woman's name to avoid identifying her son.

Ward's attorney declined to comment, saying he was court-ordered not to discuss his client's case with the media. Howard's attorney did not return a request for comment. The victim's mother, who is white, said her son was not alone in experiencing hurtful comments from fellow students. Another son was called the N-word in grade school, a daughter was called "Aunt Jemima," and another child was told by fellow students to "go back to Africa." The school district treated the taunts with indifference, she said. — AP

WASHINGTON: It's hardly a dog's life of just eating and sleeping for President Barack Obama's pets, Bo and Sunny. The pair of Portuguese water dogs - Bo with his distinctive white chest and front paws, and the all-black Sunny - are canine ambassadors for the White House, very popular and so in demand that they have schedules, like the president. "Everybody wants to see them and take pictures," Michelle Obama said. "I get a memo at the beginning of the month with a request for their schedules, and I have to approve their appearances."

The dogs have entertained crowds at the annual Easter Egg Roll, and Bo has been at Mrs. Obama's side when she welcomes tourists on the anniversary of the president's inauguration. The dogs also have cheered wounded service members, as well as the hospitalized children the first lady visits each year just before Christmas. In a sign of just how recognized Bo and Sunny are, authorities in January arrested a North Dakota man who they say came to Washington to kidnap one of the pets.

Bo, now 7, joined the Obama family in April 2009. He was a gift from the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass, a key supporter of Obama's 2008 presidential campaign who became close to the family. Bo helped Obama keep a promise to daughters Malia and Sasha that they could get a dog after the election.

Sunny, nearly 4, came along in August 2013. Bo already had a job as a "helper" to Dale Haney, the head groundskeeper at the White House, which happens to be a national park. "He leaves every morning and he goes down with Dale ... and he's with all the National Park Service guys. And you'll see him, and he's like walking around with them

and looking at the plants," Mrs. Obama said. "I think he thinks he has a job because he takes it very seriously. So if I go out and see him, he kind of ignores me when he's with his worker crew people."

President's best friend

The dogs have a pretty nice life. "They can sit on my lap, they sit on my chair, they cuddle with me," Mrs. Obama said. "I like to lay on the floor with them and blow in their face."

I like to make them run and chase each other.

But they're so cute, I just love to just cuddle them and massage them." Presidential pets are always popular and many presidents kept dogs as companions. President Harry S. Truman famously advised: "If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog." President George H.W. Bush's English Springer Spaniel, Millie, "wrote" the best-seller "Millie's Book." President Bill Clinton's chocolate Labrador Retriever, Buddy, helped Clinton weather the scandal over his affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. — AP



WASHINGTON: In this Dec 14, 2015, file photo, first lady Michelle Obama, sitting Bo Obama, center, and Luna Fera, 11, finishes reading "Twas the Night Before Christmas" to a group of children at the Children's National Health System. — AP

INDIA DRAFTING NEW LAW TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

NEW DELHI: India is drafting a new law to tackle human trafficking, a government minister said yesterday, with millions of victims, mostly children, pushed into the illegal trade every year. The draft law is the first to deal exclusively with trafficking and will overhaul the current regime under which victims are sometimes punished, Maneka Gandhi, the Women and Child Development Minister, said.

"At present both trafficked and the trafficker are sent to jail. But this bill is far more of compassion and makes a distinction between them," Gandhi said in New Delhi as the draft bill was launched for public consultation. India's present hotchpotch of laws dealing with human trafficking has done little to quash the thriving trade.

A US State Department report in 2013 estimated up to 65 million people were traf-

ficked into forced labor, both into and within India. Trafficking victims, mostly children, are typically pushed into prostitution, forced labor or begging. The law would jail traffickers who use drugs or liquor to exploit their victims, or who use chemical substances or hormones on minors to hasten sexual maturity-offences that previously went unpunished. "The proposed bill is an effort to plug loopholes and (include) addi-

tional crimes which have not found place in the Indian Penal Code," Gandhi said. The bill, which will be tabled in parliament at the end of the year, would double jail terms for some offences and set up special courts to speed up the prosecution of offenders. It would also prevent the identity of victims from being revealed.

More than 14 million adults and children are trapped in modern slavery in India, the

most of any country, according to the Walk Free Foundation's 2014 Global Slavery Index. The proposed law also calls for joint working groups with neighboring countries such as Nepal or Bangladesh to bring in preventive measures. India's official statistics appear to heavily underestimate the scale of the problem, with the National Crime Records Bureau finding only 5,466 cases of human trafficking in 2014. — AFP



KAMPALA: South Korea's president Park Geun-hye, center left, and Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, center right, attend a ceremony to open the South Korea-funded National Farmers Leadership Centre. — AP

UGANDA TO STOP SECURITY COOPERATION WITH N KOREA

KAMPALA: Uganda is cutting military ties with North Korea to comply with UN sanctions over North Korea's nuclear program, a Ugandan official said yesterday following a meeting between President Yoweri Museveni and South Korea's visiting president. Uganda's government is simply "disengaging from military co-operation" and not cutting diplomatic ties with the North Koreans, said Col. Shaban Bantariza, a spokesman for the Ugandan government.

The policy shift came as South Korean President Park Geun-hye visited Uganda. She later flew to neighboring Kenya for a three-day visit, the last leg of her three-nation African tour in which she has pressed for the isolation of North Korea and has offered trade and development agreements. Speaking to the African Union in Ethiopia on Friday, Park urged African leaders to support international efforts to persuade its hostile neighbor, North Korea, to stop its production of nuclear weapons.

In Uganda, Park attended a state banquet Sunday hosted by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. At the event, Uganda and South Korea signed 10 cooperation agreements in areas such as defense, health and education. It appears Museveni assured the

South Korean delegation he would sever security ties with North Korea, which has good diplomatic relations with Uganda.

North Korea has been training the Ugandan security forces in physical fitness, marine warfare and weapons handling, and senior leaders from North Korea have visited Uganda over the years. Museveni, in power since 1986, previously praised Pyongyang as an exemplar of the fight against what he described as Western imperialism. In 2014 Museveni hosted a state dinner in honor of North Korea's ceremonial leader, Kim Jong Nam, and said the North Koreans are "friends who have helped Uganda for a long time."

Now, the recently re-elected Museveni is looking to seal development deals with Asian partners such as China and South Korea as this East African country tries to industrialize its economy. Chinese contractors are involved in road construction in Uganda and the Chinese national oil company has invested in Uganda's oil sector. During her stay in Kenya Park is expected to sign bilateral agreements in security, health, agriculture, ICT, trade and culture, according to South Korean ambassador to Nairobi Young Dae Kwon. — AP

TRIAL OF STRASBOURG 'JIHADISTS' BEGINS

PARIS: Seven suspected jihadists, including the brother of one of the suicide bombers in last November's Paris attacks, went on trial in Paris yesterday. The men, now aged between 24 and 27, travelled to Syria at the end of 2013 and returned to France a few months later. Arrested in May 2014, they all deny having fought as jihadists while there.

Among the defendants was Karim Mohamed-Aggad, the brother of Foued Mohamed-Aggad who took part in the November 13 Paris attacks that killed 130 people. Foued Mohamed-Aggad travelled with the same group to Syria but did not return home with them. Nearly two years later he blew himself up at the Bataclan concert venue in Paris where 90 people were murdered.

Defense lawyer Xavier Nogueras stressed the difference between the Bataclan bomber and the defendants. "They came back before the others," he said. "They had completely broken with the idea of belonging to a radical ideology." The lawyer for Karim Mohamed-

Aggad, Françoise Cotta, denounced the media obsession with her client. "You couldn't care less about the others and you are trying to stick it to Karim, who will be judged by what his brother did," she told reporters outside the court.

According to one source close to the case, the defendants have told investigators they only carried out humanitarian work while they were in Syria. While they occasionally handled weapons when they were in Syria, it was only for training or propaganda photos, never for combat. All seven face charges of criminal association with a view to commit acts of terrorism, punishable by up to 10 years in jail.

Last week, defense lawyers objected to the prosecutor's decision to use leaked Islamic State documents which list the defendants as "combatants". The documents, acquired by Sky News television in March, include an estimated 173 names of French citizens or residents of France, said a source close to the investigation, but the defense says their authenticity must first be investigated. — AFP

FUJIMORI SAYS HE'S READY FOR PRESIDENCY IN FINAL DEBATE

LIMA: Peru presidential hopeful Keiko Fujimori touted her political leadership skills Sunday in a final debate with center-right rival Pedro Pablo Kuczynski one week before a runoff vote. Fujimori, 41, a right-wing populist with the Popular Force party, has 46 percent of public backing going into the June 5 vote, polling firm Ipsos found in a survey also published on Sunday.

Her rival, 77-year-old center-right economist Kuczynski, running under the banner of his self-created party Peruanos por Cambio (Peruvians for Change), is lagging with 40.6 percent support. Fujimori, the daughter of the disgraced ex-president Alberto Fujimori, used the debate to underscore how in the past five years she had built her party into the Andean nation's leading force; it controls 73 of 130 congressional seats.

"I have done the work. And I am ready," she said. "We know what we want to do... I have the strength to work for a country at peace with itself," she said, aiming jabs at her rival. Former World Bank executive Kuczynski spoke forcefully about economic plans but did not quickly respond to many of Fujimori's attacks.

Fujimori, who would be Peru's first woman president, is the political heir to her father's controversial rule from 1990

to 2000. Alberto Fujimori, 77, is serving a 25-year sentence for massacres committed by an army death squad during his rule. His decade-long tenure saw the economy grow but was also plagued by corruption and brutal human rights abuses, committed in the name of wiping out the communist guerrilla group Shining Path. Kuczynski, who goes by the nickname PPK, said a Keiko Fujimori presidency would be a return to widespread graft and abuse of power.

"We need an experienced pilot to fly this jet through turbulent skies," Kuczynski said, not someone whose government would mark "a threat to democracy." Since winning 39 percent of the vote to 21 percent for Kuczynski in the first round on April 10, Keiko Fujimori has sought to distance herself from her father's authoritarian image and has vowed to work to unite a deeply polarized Peru.

She appears not to have been hurt so far by allegations of money laundering during her first run for the presidency in 2011. Her campaign also has been accused of dirty tricks, after her vice-presidential candidate Jose Chlimper was accused of sending a doctored video to a television station in an alleged bid to smear their political enemies. — AFP

NO LONGER JUST A JOB: UNLIKELY CREW SAVING LIVES IN THE MED

MIX OF KEEN YOUNGSTERS AND SALTY OLD SEA DOGS

ABOARD THE MS AQUARIUS, Italy: They are unlikely members of the same crew: Career seamen for whom it was initially just another job and landlubber humanitarian workers trying to make the world a better place. But together, aboard the MS Aquarius, they get the job done. Since it joined the international search and rescue operation off Libya in February, the boat chartered by medical charity MSF and French NGO SOS Mediterranee has safely delivered some 1,500 migrants to Italian ports.

Once the property of the German coastguard, the Aquarius switched to oil prospecting in 2009, surveying prospective fields from Nigeria to the Arctic. Now it is stuffed full of life jackets, blankets, nutrition packs and bottles of water.

On the deck, SOS Mediterranee volunteers rotate the watch. Several of them are merchant seamen themselves, a mix of keen youngsters and salty old sea dogs. Most have given up three to six weeks of holiday time to help out. "Working only for yourself is not necessarily what makes you proud in this life," said one of them, 25-year-old merchant seaman Antoine Laurent.

'A unique experience'

Down several narrow flights of steps, the MSF medical team—a doctor, midwife, two nurses and two technicians—prepare to take charge of rescued migrants who will be spending anything from a few hours to several days on board. Unlike the SOS Mediterranee crew, most of them had never set foot on a boat before but can call on vast reserves of experience acquired in humanitarian hotspots from the Ebola clinics of West Africa to the earthquake-ravaged mountains of Nepal.

Dutch doctor Erna Rijnierse, who has been working with MSF for a decade, describes the work on the boat as a one-off. "I've been involved in long term projects, I've been involved in emergencies... This however is very unique. There are elements of different MSF missions but the fact that you do this on water, with people in flight that have been travelling already quite a bit, and on the doorstep of Europe, makes it very unique."

What is notable aboard the Aquarius is the commitment of the boat's permanent crew—a motley collection of taciturn Russians and Ukrainians, several Ghanians and a worrisome Greek. None of them chose the mission but all them have thrown their hearts into it. Going to the aid of stricken boats is a moral and legal obligation at sea but picking up migrants represents a headache for merchant ships with deliveries and collections to be made, and fears of infection by sick shipwreck survivors abound.

But it is the veteran seamen who have the skills required. Aquarius seaman Ebenezer Tandot, 45, has long worked around North Sea oil platforms, where hypothermia can claim even the strongest swimmers in as little as eight minutes.

'Doing something good'

So it is the Ghanaian who is tasked with guiding the first lifeboat to be launched. "We pick up



Russian captain Alexander Moroz poses aboard the "Aquarius", a ship rented by humanitarians SOS Mediterranee and Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders) to organise rescue operations. — AFP photos



French volunteer of SOS Mediterranee, Antoine Laurent, looks on aboard the "Aquarius".

the migrants, we drop them off, it has become the routine," he tells AFP. But his nonchalant tone changes quickly as he emotionally recalls the impact of rescuing men in a state of shock or paralysed by hypothermia and the relief at seeing them begin to come round and recover.

Such emotions help to explain how the crew has bonded, despite their vastly different backgrounds. "We actually feel like one big team trying to take the best care we can of the people we have rescued," says the MSF doctor. The boat's skipper is Alexander Moroz, a 45-year-old

Belarusian with a dry sense of humor. He is the point man who receives instructions from Italy's coastguard and directs operations.

The work has nothing in common with his boat's past. "But my feeling is I am in the right place and that I am doing something good." Asked if the presence of rescue boats is only encouraging people traffickers to send their human cargoes to sea, the skipper adopts the same line as the humanitarian contingent on board. "The only question is, if we were not here, how many more would die?" — AFP



OBERNZENN: A woman stands amidst the water flooding a horse farm in Oberzenn, southern Germany. — AFP

4 DEAD, MORE INJURED IN GERMANY FLOODS

BERLIN: Four people died and several more were injured in southern Germany after violent storms with torrential rains caused severe flooding, authorities said yesterday. One of those killed was a 13-year-old girl who was hit by a train Sunday while seeking shelter from the rains under a railway bridge.

A boy, 12, who was with her was not physically injured but had to receive trauma counselling, said police in the southern city of Aalen. In Schwaebisch Gmuend near the city of Stuttgart, a volunteer firefighter died on Sunday trying to

rescue a man trapped in a shaft of a flooded railway station, municipal authorities said.

The man who was trapped was also presumed dead although neither body has been recovered, according to local police. In Weissbach, just to the north, a 60-year-old man died in a flooded underground garage on the same day. The regional authorities in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg put the number of injured at around 10.

A number of people had to be rescued from cars trapped in the floods. National news

agency DPA said a river broke its banks in Braunsbach, destroying one house and damaging several others. Eyewitnesses posted videos on social network sites showing cars being carried away by the floods and crashing into shop windows. The head of one rural district in Schwaebisch Hall, Michael Knaus, said that more rain fell in the space of a few hours than normally falls over several months. State authorities said that as many as 7,000 firefighters, police and rescue workers were called out in some 2,200 incidents. — AFP

MUMBAI POLICE ASK WEBSITES TO BLOCK PARODY TENDULKAR VIDEO

MUMBAI: Indian police said yesterday they had asked YouTube and Facebook to block a video poking fun at cricket great Sachin Tendulkar, sparking the country's latest row over freedom of expression. Comedian Tanmay Bhat posted the clip, which also mocked famous Indian movie singer Lata Mangeshkar, on his Facebook page last week, angering right-wing politicians in Mumbai who complained to police.

Police in the western Indian city received two complaints-one from a local politician belonging to Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party who said the clip was defamatory. The other was from

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena, a fringe pro-Marathi party in Mumbai, which is the capital of Maharashtra state, force spokesman Sangramsinh Nishandar said.

"We have sought a legal opinion. In the meantime we have written to YouTube and Facebook to block the above-mentioned video," Nishandar told AFP. In the two-minute clip Bhat, a member of online comedy group AIB, mimics a conversation between Tendulkar and Mangeshkar. He said Mangeshkar, who is 86, looked like she'd been kept in water for eight days and suggested she should die. Bhat posted a comment with the video describing it as "nonsense".

"Also I obviously love Lata and Sachin, just having some fun," he wrote. AIB fell foul of authorities last year when they were at the centre of an obscenity investigation over some sexually explicit jokes in a comedy "roast" show featuring several Bollywood stars.

India, the world's largest democracy, has long been proud of its tradition of artistic, cultural and religious freedoms but a series of bans recently sparked accusations of a growing climate of intolerance under Hindu nationalist PM Modi. Last year a British-made documentary about an infamous 2012 gang-rape in Delhi was banned while a government-appointed board of

censors blocked the release of the erotic movie "Fifty Shades of Grey" in cinemas. Critics say the bans show how thin-skinned their politicians have become in the Internet age. Many social media users accused Bhat's video of being vulgar and unfunny on Monday but also defended his right to make it.

"If only political parties got this worked up about rape, communalism & homophobia like they did about @thetanmay's video! #TanmayBhat," wrote one Twitter user. "Totally agree. video is crass & not funny. But does he have right to make it? Hell Yes. #TanmayBhat," wrote another. — AFP

MYANMAR SAYS DRUG SEIZURE HAS STREET VALUE OF \$36M

YANGON: Authorities in Myanmar seized roughly 21 million methamphetamine pills with a street value of around US \$35.5 million near the border with China, state-owned media said yesterday, the country's second largest haul of the contraband.

Although better known for its opium production, Myanmar, a country with restive and porous borders, is a major producer and exporting hub of low-purity pills made primarily of caffeine and methamphetamine. The pills, which deliver a cheap high, are taken both by recreational users and laborers toiling for long hours who need to stay awake. The seizure was made in Kutkai Township, in northern Shan State, on Saturday, the Kyemon newspaper said, adding that Aung Aung, a truck driver, told police he had been paid to deliver the cargo of tablets to Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest city.

Investigation showed the seized drugs belonged to a fugitive connected with another seizure of drugs in Mandalay on March 5, it

added. The seizure was Myanmar's second largest drug bust, following a seizure with a street value of \$100 million last year in the commercial capital of Yangon, said Police Col. Zaw Khin Aung at police headquarters in Naypyitaw, the capital.

Myanmar has become an exporting center for the drug, and police believed the latest seizure was meant to be distributed outside the country, Zaw Khin Aung said. "The final destination of these big hauls of stimulants is not the domestic market," he added. Myanmar was the point of origin of methamphetamine pills found across Southeast Asia and beyond, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime said in a report last year.

"Reports of methamphetamine tablets originating in Myanmar and seized in China and Thailand indicate that increasing quantities are being trafficked from Myanmar across their joint borders," it added. Police figures show 49.95 million of the pills were seized in 2,815 busts across Myanmar last year. — Reuters

CHINESE WORKER WOUNDED IN PAKISTAN BOMB ATTACK

KARACHI: A Chinese worker and his driver were wounded in Pakistan yesterday in a bomb attack claimed by ethnic nationalists opposed to plans for extensive Chinese investment, police said. The attack is likely to raise concern about a planned China Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC), involving \$46 billion in Chinese investment in roads, power plants, railway lines and a new port in Pakistan.

Pakistan, battling Islamist militants as well as separatist guerrillas in parts of the country, has promised to ensure security for the project. The Chinese man and his Pakistani driver were slightly wounded in the attack in the southern province of Sindh, provincial police chief Allah Dino Khawaja told Reuters. "Apparently, the attack was aimed at the Chinese national," Khawaja said, adding that the man was travelling with his driver and a security guard.

A low-intensity bomb went off by the

road in a suburb of Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, shattering the windows of the van the men were travelling in. Television footage showed construction helmets in a rear seat. A pamphlet signed by a group called the Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army, an ethnic Sindhi separatist group, was found at the site, police said.

"The world's most plunderous nation has set its eye on Sindh," the pamphlet said, according to a photograph of it seen by Reuters. "They want to attack Sindh and enslave its people." The group was apparently referring to the China-Pakistan corridor, which was announced last year, though it was unclear whether the unidentified Chinese national was working on a CPEC project. CPEC is part of China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative, aimed at easing the passage of Chinese exports to foreign markets by connecting southwestern China to the Arabian Sea, through Pakistan. — Reuters



KABUL: This file photo taken on August 22, 2014 shows an Afghan burqa-clad woman in front of the ruined Darul Aman Palace, once the residence of former Afghan king Amanullah Khan between 1920-1929. — AFP

AFGHAN OFFICIAL SAYS TALEBAN ATTACKS KILLED 12 POLICEMEN 15 YEAR OLD SOUTHERN INSURGENCY INTENSIFIES

KABUL: A string of coordinated Taliban attacks on police checkpoints in the increasingly volatile southern Afghan province of Helmand killed at least 12 policemen, an official said yesterday. Also, seven police officers were wounded in the attacks and seven others were missing, presumably abducted by the Taliban. The attacks, which took place in the province's Gereshk district, were launched Sunday night and lasted for many hours, said Hismatullah Daultazai, head of police for the greater Helmand zone.

The 15-year insurgency in Afghanistan has intensified across the south as the Taliban concentrate their war on Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan provinces.

Many of the attacks target police checkpoints, with Taliban fighters stealing weapons, ammunition and vehicles - and often abducting Afghan forces. On Saturday, Taliban fighters killed at least four policemen in Helmand's Nahri Sarraj district in similar attacks.

The fight in the southern, opium poppy-producing region is led by Mullah Yaqoub, the son of the one-eyed founder and late leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammad Omar. Mullah Omar's successor, Mullah Akhtar Mansour, was killed in a US drone strike this month almost a year after officially taking over when the death

of his predecessor was revealed. After Mansour's death, Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, a conservative cleric with no battlefield experience and a deputy to Mansour, was named to lead the group.

As the summer fighting season progresses, military officials are expecting the violence to escalate with Akhundzada's need to consolidate power. Yaqoub and the head of the brutal Haqqani network, Sirajuddin Haqqani, were named as deputies to Akhundzada. Rivalries have also become entrenched, with the main dissident group that broke away to protest Mansour's leadership - and which is now led by Mullah Mohammad Rasool - has vowed not to reconcile with the Taliban.

Restoration starts at palace

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Monday launched restoration work at Kabul's historic Darul Aman Palace, whose bombed out ruins have long symbolized the suffering caused by decades of conflict. The once-grand hilltop palace at the edge of Kabul was also the venue of Ghani's cabinet meeting on Monday, the first such official gathering there in nearly a century.

The building's lion-headed buttresses are broken, its colonnades pockmarked by bullets,

the metal sheets of its roof crumpled. Up to \$20 million will be spent on restoring the former glory of the palace, built by Afghan King Amanullah Khan in the 1920s, Ghani's office said, calling the project a symbol of national pride.

"Today we are returning to our past... to set the foundation for our future," Ghani said at the inauguration of the project. "We are determined to reconstruct the historical structure from the budget of the Afghan government." The palace fell victim to the carnage of the early 1990s as rival mujahideen groups fought for power following the fall of a Soviet-backed regime after Moscow withdrew its troops from Afghanistan.

Despite Ghani's rhetoric, some in Kabul were against the restoration, however-albeit for different reasons. "I think it is a waste of money," Daud Hotak, a Kabul shopkeeper, told AFP. "It comes at a time when the economy is in free fall and security is deteriorating. That money could have been spent to create jobs as thousands of people flee the country."

Omaid Sharifi, a civil society activist, also pleaded against the restoration, though from a different perspective. "President @ashrafghani keep #DarulamanPalace like this, let's remind our younger generation (of) the brutality of war," he said on Twitter. — AFP



KARACHI: Pakistani security officials examine a damaged vehicle in which a Chinese National was travelling, following a roadside bomb attack. — AFP

INDIA POLICE ARREST TWO AFTER GANG-RAPE, HANGING OF TEENAGER

LUCKNOW: India police have arrested two men over the gang-rape of a teenage girl whose body was found hanging from a tree, a senior officer said yesterday, a grim reminder of a similar case in the same state. The girl, reportedly 15 and from one of India's low social castes, was strangled-allegedly by three men-on Friday night outside her village in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

Her body was found the next morning hanging by her scarf from a tree about a kilometer from her home in Bahraich district, said police Superintendent Salik Ram Verma. Two men were arrested and "the third accused is on the run", Verma told AFP. The girl had left her sleeping family to secretly meet one of the men, only to discover that he had brought along two of his friends who attacked her.

"When the girl resisted their bid, she was raped and later strangled. To make it look like a case of suicide, they hung her body from a tree and left the spot," Verma told AFP. Four local police constables have also been suspended after an initial lack of action over the incident sparked

outrage among villagers.

"I have suspended four constables for laxity and have issued stern instructions to the inspector concerned to book the third accused soon," Verma said. "The medical report has confirmed rape and strangulation," he added. The case comes two years after two girls from a low caste were found hanging in a village in Uttar Pradesh. Their families said they had been gang-raped before being lynched.

The families said the cousins, aged 12 and 14, had been attacked after they went outside after dark to relieve themselves because their ramshackle homes did not have a toilet. The case sparked a political row after federal investigators concluded the girls had committed suicide and were not raped. It also reignited anger about high numbers of attacks against women, after the public outrage that erupted over the fatal gang-rape of a student in Delhi in 2012. That incident sparked tougher punishments for rapists and improved policies for police handling of assault cases, to try to encourage more victims to report the attacks. — AFP

INDIAN MISSILES, COPTERS AND SUBS: AMBANI'S AMBITIOUS DEFENSE PLAN

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI: Anil Ambani's Reliance Group has never made a military helicopter, missile system or submarine in its history but that isn't stopping the Indian tycoon from seeking to win contracts to manufacture all of that military hardware and more.

Known for taking some ambitious bets over the past decade, some of which have failed to deliver, Ambani's plans to turn Reliance into a major defense company may be one of his boldest yet. It has already bid for 840 billion Indian rupees (\$12.5 billion) in Indian government contracts, senior executives said, though it hasn't yet won any of those. The success of the strategy will depend partly on whether he can persuade government officials and international partners that he can build sophisticated equipment and partly on whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi can get India's notoriously slow procurement process to work.

Modi has made defense a big part of his "Make in India" program. As part of any defense contract, he is demanding foreign companies tie up with a local partner, transfer technology and move some manufacturing to India. At stake is \$250 billion in defense contracts the government is expected to award over the next 10 years as it looks to upgrade the military's aging equipment.

"We hope to have a significant share of this pie," said R K Dhirga, chief executive of Reliance Defense. He predicted the company will "emerge as a key player in the defense sector over the next few years." Reliance's ambition is greeted with skepticism by many in the defense world.

An Indian military official involved in defense procurement said Reliance is overreaching in wanting to make everything from ships to planes. Some rivals and potential partners for the contracts said Reliance will struggle to master the manufacture of such a wide range of sophisticated military hardware. "There is no quick money in this branch," said Jan Widerstrom, head of Saab India Technologies, a unit of Saab AB. "It requires a lot of experience, high tech culture, investments and a long-term business plan." Still, Saab and Reliance are working together

in developing the next generation Combat Management System for the Indian Navy and Coast Guard. Recently, Reliance's lack of experience and questions about its ability to handle sensitive technology and intellectual property counted against it in its bid to partner with the Russians to build 200 Kamov helicopters, said a Russian diplomat in New Delhi, who declined to be identified in this story because they weren't speaking in an official capacity. The contract, estimated to be worth a little over \$900 million went instead to Indian state-controlled company Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.

Ambani should identify core areas and concentrate on them rather than "be an inch deep and a mile wide," said Nitin Gokhale, founder of

defence website Bharat Shakti. The Reliance conglomerate split into two in 2005 after a bitter feud between Anil Ambani and his older brother, Mukesh. The latter got the flagship Reliance Industries, with interests in petrochemicals, oil and gas exploration, refining and textiles. Anil got telecoms, power, entertainment and financial services businesses. But some of his businesses struggled, especially an ill-timed foray into infrastructure, and debt piled up.

Its Reliance Infrastructure arm, which includes the defense operations, aims to be debt free in the current financial year ending March 2017, according to Lalit Jalan, who is acting CEO of the unit. — Reuters



NEW DELHI: People stand in a queue to receive free food outside a hospital, in New Delhi, India, yesterday. The city has been witnessing light rain and dust storms continuously for the past week, which has brought down temperatures from days of relentless summer heat storm. — AFP

CHINA ANGRY AFTER INDONESIA DETAINS BOAT, TENSIONS RISE

JAKARTA: Beijing insisted yesterday a Chinese boat detained close to Indonesian islands had been fishing legally, in a fresh flare-up of tensions between the countries in the South China Sea. The Indonesian navy seized the Chinese boat in waters near the Natuna Islands on Friday for allegedly fishing illegally, the military said.

The boat was towed to shore and eight Chinese crew members have been detained. Jakarta and Beijing

have clashed before over the islands on the southwestern fringe of the disputed South China Sea, where China is also at loggerheads with several other countries because of its overlapping claims. Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying insisted the detained vessel had been operating legally. "The Chinese fishermen were conducting normal fishing operations in the relevant waters," she told a press briefing. "We have made stern representations with Indonesia

concerning this matter." Achmad Taufiqerochman, the commander of Indonesia's Western Fleet, said the vessel—the Gui Bei Yu—was "strongly suspected" of having carried out illegal fishing because of the catch that was found onboard. The military said the boat was detained in Indonesia's "exclusive economic zone", waters where a state has sole rights to exploit resources.

The boat's detention shows Indonesia "will enforce the law

against boats that commit violations in Indonesia's jurisdiction", it added. The most serious recent row between Jakarta and Beijing happened in March when Chinese coastguards rammed a Chinese boat detained near the Natunas and helped it escape as the Indonesians towed the vessel to shore.

Jakarta responded furiously, lodging a protest and summoning China's top envoy in Indonesia. Indonesia does not have overlapping territorial

claims in the sea with China, unlike other nations, but it objects to Beijing's claims as they overlap with the exclusive economic zone around the Natunas. An increasing number of foreign trawlers have been detained in Indonesian waters after Jakarta in 2014 launched a tough crackdown on illegal fishing. The clampdown involves sinking foreign boats caught fishing without a permit after impounding the boats and removing the crews. —AFP

EVEREST RESCUERS ABANDON RECOVERY OF CLIMBERS' BODIES

KATHMANDU: Nepali rescuers abandoned plans to retrieve the bodies of two Indian climbers missing on Mount Everest on Monday, hoping instead to bring them down next year, an expedition operator said. The two men—identified as Pares Nath and Goutam Ghosh—were near the summit of the 8,848-meter mountain on 21 May when they lost contact with the rest of their team.

Rescuers found Nath's body last Friday near the South Col, located at an altitude of 8,000 metres and marking the beginning of the "death zone". Ghosh's body was also spotted the same day on the Balcony—a mid-way stop between the South Col and the summit, before strong winds forced back rescuers, Wangchu Sherpa of Trekking Camp Nepal told AFP.

With the short window for climbing on the mountain now closing and bad weather setting in, rescuers said they could not recover the corpses. "Rescue workers have called off their operations to bring back the dead bodies of Indian climbers Goutam Ghosh and Pares Nath because of bad weather," Sherpa said. "We hope to recover (them)... next season."

The cause of their deaths has not been established. But the "death zone" is notorious for its difficult terrain and

thin air, as low levels of oxygen raise the risk of altitude sickness. The missing climbers were part of a team of four, one of whom—Subhash Pal—died after falling ill on Sunday while the fourth member, a woman, was rescued and taken to hospital.

Subhash Pal was the third mountaineer to die on Everest this season after an Australian and a Dutch climber succumbed to altitude sickness. All three bodies were transported to Kathmandu last week. Some 400 people, including more than 150 foreigners, have summited Everest this season after two consecutive years of deadly disasters that led to almost all attempts being abandoned.

Hundreds fled Everest last year after an earthquake-triggered avalanche at base camp killed 18 people. Only one climber reached the top in 2014 after an avalanche killed 16 Nepali guides that year. Despite the risks and recent disasters, Everest's allure remains undimmed, with Nepal issuing 289 permits to foreigners for this year's spring climbing season. Mountaineering is a major revenue-earner for the impoverished Himalayan nation. The successful summits this season is expected to boost the industry, which was left reeling after an earthquake last year killed almost 9,000 people nationwide. —AFP



BEIJING: In this May 18, 2016 photo, Chinese fan websites for Donald Trump are displayed on a computer with the words "Donald J. Trump super fan nation, full and unconditional support for Donald J. Trump to be elected US president". —AP

THOUGH BASICALLY UNKNOWN, TRUMP FINDS FANS IN CHINA

'TRUMP COULD BE THE BEST PRESIDENT FOR CHINA'

BEIJING: China features prominently in the rhetoric of presumed Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who accuses the country of stealing American jobs and cheating at global trade. In China though, he's only just emerging as a public figure, despite notoriety elsewhere for his voluble utterances, high-profile businesses and reality TV shows.

Although the government has denounced Trump's threats of economic retaliation, many Chinese observers see a silver lining in his focus on economic issues instead of human rights and political freedoms. That could make him an attractive alternative to his likely rival, Democrat Hillary Clinton.

Trump "could in fact be the best president for China," Hong Kong Phoenix Television political commentator Wu Jun said during a recent on-air discussion. "That's because the Republican Party is more practical and Trump is a businessman who puts his commercial interests above everything else," Wu said. Clinton, on the other hand, "might be the least friendly president toward China."

National investment

It's not clear how familiar Trump actually is with China. While he's claimed to have made "billions of dollars dealing with China," he has no known investments in the nation. Chinese, however, are customers for Trump's hotel, golf course and real estate ventures, while Trump-branded clothing and accessories have been made in China. Trump mentions the country so often that

a popular YouTube compilation video exists in which he says the word China more than 200 times in just over 3 minutes. Still, Trump was largely unknown in China until his campaign for the Republican nomination began gathering momentum last year. Trump's call for a 45 percent tariff on imports that would hit China hard has been lambasted by Finance Minister Lou Jiwei, who said enacting such a tariff would cost the US its global leadership.

Still, Chinese are used to American candidates making strong comments about their country during elections, only to moderate their positions once in office, said Nanjing University foreign relations expert Zhu Feng. "The most important thing is that he or she be solid in their knowledge about China and know how to strike the right balance," Zhu said.

Sweet music

Many Chinese may also be relieved that Trump is focused so relentlessly on China's role in the US economy, rather than on human rights and similar issues. Trump's questioning of US foreign military commitments is also sweet music to the ears of Chinese nationalists who want China to be top dog in Asia and challenge US dominance in the rest of the world. His opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal, which seeks to offset Chinese influence, also goes down well in Beijing. The Chinese public, meanwhile, seems unfazed by Trump's anti-immigration stance, with its overwhelming focus on Mexico, and the candidate's vow to bar

Muslims from entering the US. In contrast, many Chinese have qualms about Clinton, who as a former secretary of state under Barack Obama is closely associated with Washington's "pivot" to Asia that has been heavily criticized by Beijing. Overall, Chinese public sentiment toward Trump appears mixed. Comparing him to a figure from folklore known for sowing chaos, the official Global Times newspaper proclaimed him a symptom of an "American disease."

"I don't think many people knew him as a businessman before the campaign," said Shanghai IT engineer Kong Kong, who was unimpressed with Trump's vaunted political outsider status. "Politics is not entertainment and simply being fresh may not be a good thing," Kong said. "A lack of political experience and an excess of personality may lead to an imbalance among interest groups and an abuse of authority, which are not good things for America."

Zhong Heng, a Shanghai paralegal, said she regards much of what Trump says as bluster. "He's like an artificial performance-enhancing drug being fed to the American people," Zhong said. Trump, though, does seem to have won some Chinese supporters, particularly online. There, chat groups such as "Donald Trump Super Fans Club" and "God Emperor Trump" have popped up in recent months. One posting in a Weibo messaging service chat group was unreservedly enthusiastic. "The more I know about Donald Trump," it said, "the more I feel that he's not only saving the US, but also the entire world." —AP

HK DEMOCRACY PROTESTER GIVEN FIVE WEEKS FOR POLICE ASSAULT

HONG KONG: A Hong Kong pro-democracy activist was sentenced to five weeks in prison yesterday after he was found guilty of assaulting and resisting officers during mass rallies in 2014 when he splashed liquid on police.

Political activist Ken Tsang vowed to appeal the sentence over the liquid splashing incident, which happened the same night he was allegedly beaten by another group of police in a brutal attack captured by television cameras and beamed around the world. Tsang is the first conviction for a high-profile figure involved in the rallies, dubbed the "Umbrella Revolution", which blocked major highways in the city for over two months, with protesters calling for a free vote on the city's leader.

Activists have accused authorities of going after those at the forefront of the movement. "We are going to stand until the last minute. We are going to fight until the last minute. We will never give up," 40-year-old Tsang told reporters, adding he would appeal the sentence. Tsang was given concurrent sentences—five weeks for one count of assaulting police and three weeks each for two counts of resisting officers during his arrest near the government's headquarters. He has been bailed pending appeal.

'Shameful police'

During sentencing, magistrate Peter

Law said Tsang showed "extreme insult and provocation" towards police officers. "Up to now he has shown no sign of remorse... I believe a jail term is the only option and it is indeed appropriate," he told the courthouse, which was packed with Tsang's supporters. Tsang, a social worker and a member of Hong Kong's pro-democracy Civic Party, sat calmly as the sentenced was delivered.

Around 30 supporters, some carrying yellow umbrellas—a symbol of the democracy movement—protested outside the courthouse, shouting "shameful police" and "I want true universal suffrage". Tsang has said police brought assault charges against him to distract from the case against them. The police who allegedly beat him, who are not the same officers Tsang is convicted of assaulting, are to stand trial separately.

The two incidents took place at the height of mass protests seeking free leadership elections in Hong Kong, and rocked the reputation of the city's police force. Video footage showed a group of men hauling a handcuffed Tsang to a dark corner in a public park and then one man standing over him punching him while three others were seen repeatedly kicking him. The officers have pleaded not guilty to the charges and their trial is set to begin on June 1. —AFP



HONG KONG: Hong Kong activist Ken Tsang, second from right, talks to reporters after a court sentencing hearing. — AP

S KOREA MINISTRY: NORTH PREPARING MISSILE LAUNCH

SEOUL: South Korea's defense ministry said yesterday it had detected signs that North Korea was preparing a ballistic missile launch, as Japan reportedly put its military on intercept alert. UN resolutions ban North Korea from any use of ballistic missile technology, although it regularly fires short-range missiles into the sea off its east coast. Tensions have been running high on the divided Korean peninsula since the North's fourth nuclear test in January, followed by a long-range rocket launch the following month.

And in recent weeks Pyongyang has voiced anger at Seoul's refusal to accept repeated offers of military talks to de-escalate the situation. "We are tracking signs that North Korea is preparing a ballistic missile test and are maintaining combat readiness," a defense ministry official told AFP. The official did not specify the missile type, but the fact that signs of a launch had been detected would point to a medium-range missile or larger.

In April the North tried and failed three times to test-fire a powerful new mid-range missile known as a Musudan. In Tokyo, public broadcaster NHK said the Japanese government had put its military on alert for a possible launch, with orders to intercept any missile that threatened Japanese territory. Under the order, the Self-Defense Forces will deploy Aegis destroyers equipped with missile interceptors offshore and PAC-3 surface-to-air anti-ballistic missiles, NHK

said. A Japanese defense ministry spokeswoman declined to confirm the news reports. The Musudan is believed to have a range of anywhere between 2,500 and 4,000 kilometers. The lower range covers the whole of South Korea and Japan, while the upper range would include US military bases on Guam. The missile has never been successfully flight-tested. The three failures in April were seen as an embarrassment for the leadership, coming ahead of a party con-

gress which was meant to celebrate the country's achievements.

During the congress, North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un personally extended the offer of military dialogue with the South. The proposal was repeated several times by the North's military, but Seoul dismissed all the overtures as insincere "posturing" given Kim's vow at the same congress to push ahead with the country's nuclear weapons program. —AFP



SEOUL: NATO General Petr Pavel, chairman of the NATO Military Committee, right, and South Korean Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen Lee Sun Jin inspect during a welcoming honor guard ceremony for Pavel at South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. — AP



Retired Army Maj Gary S Conley gets help from his granddaughter Kailynne Conley, 4, straightening flags on Memorial Day at the Dayton National Cemetery yesterday in Dayton, Ohio. — AP

UAE ACQUITS FOUR OF MILITANCY CHARGES

Continued from Page 1

Instead, the defendants acknowledged raising money for humanitarian supplies for Libya's National Transitional Council with documented approval from the UAE government. The NTC headed the internationally-backed Libyan opposition to longtime leader Muammar Gaddafi during the 2011 uprising and then governed Libya for a period of time after he was killed. The four say they were tortured by UAE state security officers during their first three months of detention. Alaradi's lawyer previously said his client was beaten with hoses and other instruments.

A group of UN human rights experts said they received credible information that the detainees were tortured and forced to sign confessions, and were allegedly held incommunicado in secret locations and in solitary confinement for prolonged periods of time. The judge later allowed a brief medical examination to take place during the course of the trial. US State Department deputy spokesman Mark Toner said Friday that Washington was concerned that the defendants were denied consular access and access to legal representation at the start of their detention. He said US officials raised these issues, including allegations of abuse, with UAE officials and visited the Eldarats in prison, most recently last week.

The UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said earlier this year that US consular officials were allowed to attend the trial and the defendants were allowed to contact their lawyers, diplomatic representatives and families. After the verdict was announced, Amal Eldarat said the family is "grateful and overjoyed" that her father and brother were found not guilty, but that "this trial should have never taken place". Speaking to reporters by telephone from the US, she said it could take a few days or several weeks for them to be released due to procedural issues.

Paul Champ, a human rights lawyer representing

Alaradi - who was arrested while visiting the UAE - said that although the men had been acquitted, they had yet to be released from custody. Alaradi "was apprehended back in August 2014, held in a secret prison and the state security didn't even acknowledge they were holding them for months, so we won't be comfortable until he's on a plane back home", Champ told Reuters by phone from Canada.

Canada's Foreign Minister Stephane Dion said Canada welcomed the acquittal and expected an "expedited process to promptly reunite him with his family and friends". Alaradi's daughter, Marwa Alaradi, told the Canadian Broadcasting Corp from Doha: "It is a relief that the courts have said that and confirmed my father is innocent but what we're waiting for is him getting out of prison."

Separately, a Dubai court sentenced an American-Lebanese businessman to 15 years in prison over fraud and misuse of power in a property deal, local media reported yesterday. Zack Shahin, a former CEO of Emirati property firm Deyaar who has been in detention for more than eight years, was sentenced Sunday along with two others over a \$6.3-million-dirham (\$15.3-million) fraud, Khaleej Times reported. The prosecution said Shahin, 51, had "misused his power as CEO of Deyaar back in Nov 2007 and committed irregularities and fraud"; the paper said.

He was accused of submitting a misleading feasibility study to the company's board for the purchase of a plot of land in the United States, causing Deyaar to lose the \$15 million, the paper said. The two other defendants, both Americans working for a private US realty firm, were also sentenced to 15 years in jail each but local media said they remain at large. The court, which could not be contacted yesterday, acquitted five other Deyaar staff of complicity. Several fraud cases surfaced in the United Arab Emirates in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis that hit Dubai's economy. — Agencies

3 ROYALS JAILED FOR INSULTING AMIR...

Continued from Page 1

posts in international sports federations like FIFA, the Olympic Council of Asia and the International Olympic Committee. They also include Sheikh Khalifa Al-Ali Al-Khalifa, the former editor-in-chief of Al-Watan newspaper and TV, which were both shut by the government

last year for violating the financial requirements for commercial companies in the country. The men were charged of using the Internet to insult HH the Amir and accuse top judges of accepting bribes. They were also accused of spreading false news against the country. The sentences are not final as they can be challenged at the appeals court.

IRAQI FORCES PUSHING INTO FALLUJAH STREETS

Continued from Page 1

through the countryside for hours at night, dodging IS surveillance. "I just decided to risk everything. I was either going to save my children or die with my children," said Ahmad Sabih, 40, who reached the NRC-run camp early on Sunday. A senior police commander said his forces had assisted 800 civilians fleeing areas north of Fallujah yesterday.

Fallujah is one of just two major urban centers in Iraq still held by IS jihadists. They also hold Mosul, the country's second city and de-facto jihadist capital in Iraq, east of which Kurdish-led forces wrapped up a two-day operation yesterday. Nine villages were retaken from IS in the operation, which peshmerga officers said left 140 jihadist fighters and four peshmerga dead. The jihadists holed up in Fallujah are believed to number around 1,000.

What resources IS will invest in the defense of Fallujah remains unclear. The city has been isolated for months but it looms large in modern jihadist mythology. Fallujah is expected to give Iraqi forces one of their toughest battles yet but IS has appeared weakened in recent months and has been losing territory consistent-

ly in the past 12 months. The government says IS now controls around 14 percent of the national territory, down from 40 percent in 2014.

However, as the "caliphate" it declared two years ago unravels, IS has been reverting to its old tactics of sowing terror by targeting civilians. A fresh wave of bomb attacks claimed by IS struck the Baghdad area yesterday, killing 11 people in three separate blasts. In northern Syria, clashes raged around the flashpoint town of Marea as IS pressed an assault on non-jihadist rebels. The IS onslaught has threatened tens of thousands of people, many of them already displaced from other areas, who have sought refuge in camps near the Turkish border.

Gerry Simpson, senior researcher at Human Rights Watch, told AFP 165,000 civilians were now stuck between IS fighters, Kurdish forces and the border. "What more does the US, EU and UN need to call on Turkey to give these people refuge," he asked. In divided Aleppo city, 15 people, including two children, were killed in the rebel-controlled eastern neighborhoods in heavy bombardment yesterday morning, the civil defense said. — AFP

UK FM HAILS YEMEN TALKS 'PROGRESS'

Continued from Page 1

has been "successful in doing two things - firstly, challenging Daesh (IS) in its way of using the media itself. Secondly, countering its narrative with its own media messages." The minister said that "one of Daesh's defining features in its early phases is its incredibly skilled use of social media and modern communications channels". The group's efforts were effective because IS has lost its media dominance and it has lost fighters and ground control, Hammond added.

On Syria, the UK minister stressed that the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad will never be part of the solution to the ongoing crisis. The only solution Assad could offer was to "resign from his post". On his visit to Kuwait, Hammond said that it will entail enhancing bilateral ties in all domains, hoping that the new "successful" electronic UK visa waiver would increase the flow of Kuwaitis to UK. Hammond said that "11,000 to 13,000 Kuwaitis have traveled to the UK since the new visa waiver was launched in February with no failure to the system." — Agencies

ROME STUDENT BURNED ALIVE BY EX-BOYFRIEND

ROME: A Rome university student was burned alive by her ex-boyfriend after she left him, authorities said yesterday - a slaying one investigator called the most atrocious crime he has seen in his career. Sara Di Pietrantonio, 22, died before dawn Sunday after Vincenzo Paduano, 27, set her car afire, prosecutor Maria Monteleone told reporters. He then chased her after she ran out of the car, setting her ablaze when he caught up with her, authorities said. Investigators said her attacker used a cigarette lighter to set Di Pietrantonio's face on fire after dousing her with alcohol.

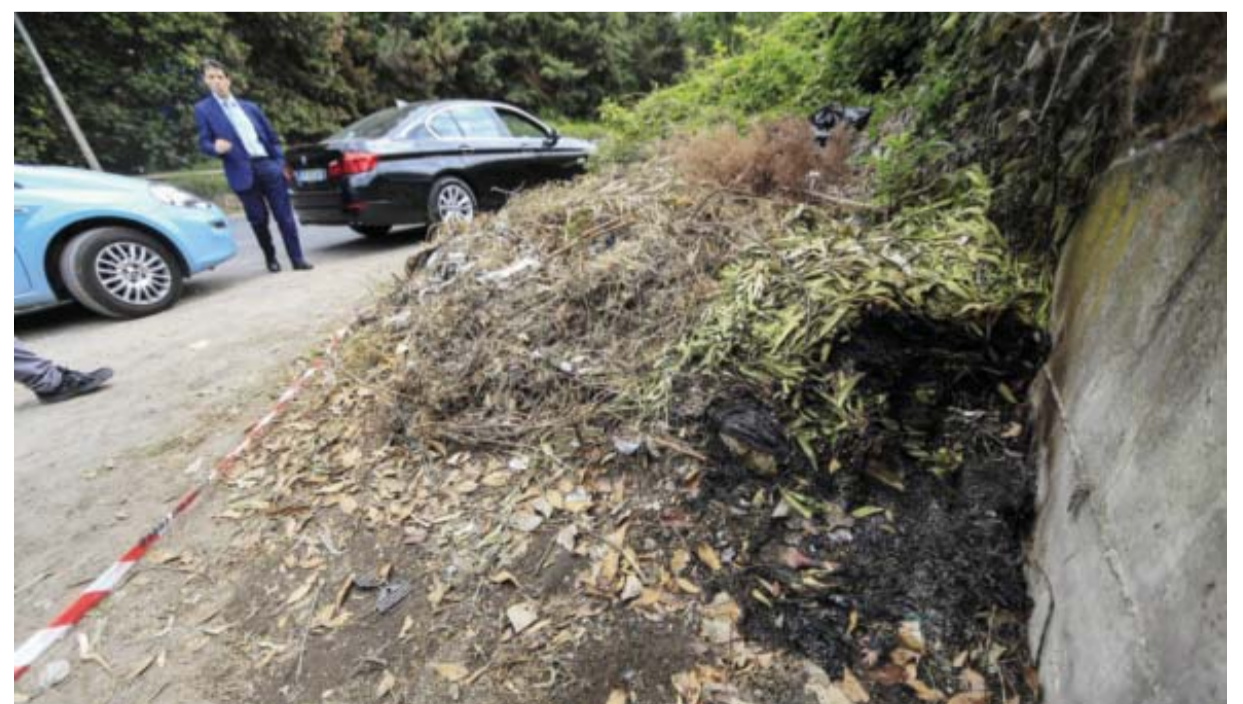
"I can say that in 25 years in this work I have never seen something so atrocious," said Luigi Silipo, the lead police official in the investigation. Paduano was being held for investigation of premeditated murder, Monteleone said. The suspect first denied killing the woman, but after eight hours of interrogation, confessed to killing her, Silipo told reporters. Paduano "didn't accept being abandoned" by the woman, Monteleone said. "He organized, he planned the aggression," the prosecutor said.

Silipo said the suspect walked off his job as a security guard about 3 am and waited outside the home of Di Pietrantonio's current boyfriend. Then, after the woman left the home and drove off by herself, Paduano drove off, eventually forcing her car to the side of the road, he said. "He got into her car, and after an argument, doused the car (interior) with a small bottle of alcohol, and doused Sara, too," Silipo said. "She ran out, he torched the car,

caught up with her, and after about 100 meters" set her ablaze, leaving her to die "in an atrocious manner", the police official said.

A surveillance camera in the area captured some of the events, including at least two cars that passed by while the woman screamed in vain for help as she tried to flee, authorities said. Monteleone made what she said was a fervent appeal to citizens to help such women, "not to look the other way". She added that if passersby had helped, the woman's life might have been saved. She also encouraged women "not to keep hidden any threatening behavior by those who insist they love you, but it's not that way".

Italian women's advocates have been trying to change mentalities in a country where men often turn violent when a woman breaks off a relationship. One such champion for women to be more assertive in protecting themselves is an Italian lawyer whose face was mutilated in an acid attack ordered by her ex-boyfriend. She courageously testified at the ex-boyfriend's trial. Sounding a call yesterday to Italian women to denounce threats by men to police was Chamber of Deputies President Laura Boldrini. The parliamentary leader said a change in cultural mentality was needed, starting in early childhood classrooms. Women "must understand that those who should be ashamed are the violent ones, not the women who suffer threats," Boldrini said. — AP



Police officers inspect the site where the body of slain 22-year-old student Sara Di Pietrantonio was found on the outskirts of Rome yesterday. — AP

Kuwait Times

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Focus

HOPES, FEARS FOR
JOBS AS AFGHAN
FACTORY REOPENS

By Mirwais Harooni and James Mackenzie

A desert warfare specialist, Chad's Hissene Habre seized power in 1982 and quickly embraced the role of ruthless dictator, with brutal atrocities the hallmark of his eight-year reign of terror. Often dressed in combat fatigues that complemented his "desert fighter" nickname, Habre fled to Senegal after he was ousted by Chad's current President Idriss Deby in 1990. Sentenced to life yesterday for war crimes, crimes against humanity and a litany of other charges, the 73-year-old's rule was marked by fierce crackdowns on dissent, including alleged torture and executions of opponents, earning him comparisons to Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet. Investigators found that more than 40,000 people were killed during his rule.

The son of a farmer, Habre was born on August 13, 1942 in Faya-Largeau, northern Chad, and grew up among nomads in the Djourab desert. His intelligence landed him a job as a local official before he left for Paris in 1963 to study law and attend Sciences-Po, a prestigious political science school. One of his influences at the time was Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Habre joined the Chad National Liberation Front a year after returning home in 1971 and became its leader, before breaking away to form another rebel group, the Northern Armed Forces (FAN).

He made headlines in 1974 when he kidnapped a French ethnologist who was held for three years before France agreed to terms for her release. A staunch nationalist, Habre then served as prime minister in the government of president Felix Malloum and as defense minister under his sometime ally Goukouni Weddeye who later became president. Habre, unlike Weddeye, was an outspoken opponent of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and the relationship did not last. Habre broke from his Tripoli-backed ally just months after the formation of Weddeye's 1979 government, triggering violence in Chad's capital, N'Djamena. He fled the city for eastern Chad in 1980, but returned to fight his way to power in 1982.

'Emptying the Coffers'

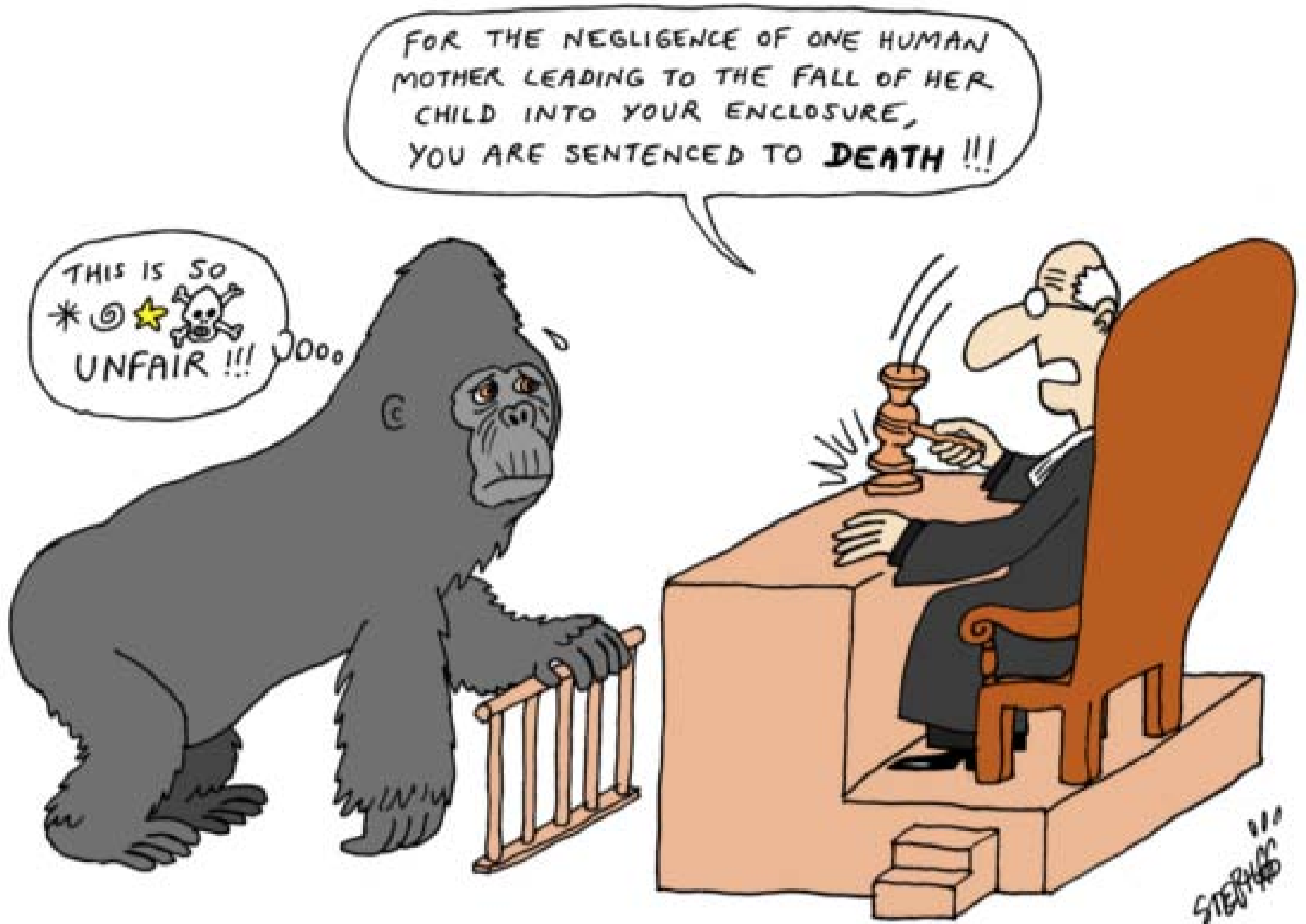
During his rule, opponents - real or imagined - were arrested, tortured and often executed by the dreaded Documentation and Security Directorate (DDS), Chad's secret police. Habre's reign ended as dramatically as it had begun when Deby, a formerly loyal general, led a rebel force that drove him from power and into exile in Senegal. The former dictator lived freely for more than 20 years in an upmarket Dakar suburb with his wife and children, swapping his military garb for billowing white robes and a cap. He was considered a discreet, generous neighbor and a pious Muslim who helped finance the construction of several mosques.

US lawyer Reed Brody, who investigated Habre's regime for Human Rights Watch, said the ex-dictator took the precaution of "emptying the coffers" before leaving Chad and built up a "protection network" in Senegal. In his 2014 memoirs, then-president Abdou Diouf said it was a battle to convince Habre to return the Chadian state-owned plane that had flown him to Dakar.

The African Union (AU) mandated Senegal to try Habre in July 2006, but President Abdoulaye Wade delayed the process for years despite an agreement to create a special court for the process. Belgium also sought his arrest over allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity after three Belgian nationals of Chadian origin filed a suit in 2000 for mass murder, arbitrary arrest and torture during his regime.

Belgium issued an arrest warrant for him in Sept 2005, and he was arrested in Senegal shortly after, but the African country said its courts did not have the jurisdiction to rule on a Belgian extradition request. Habre was arrested again in Dakar on June 30, 2013 and the AU decided his trial should take place there, making Habre the first African leader accused of atrocities to face justice in another African country rather than in an international court. — AFP

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SWEDEN SEES HISTORIC GENDER BALANCE SHIFT

By Karl Ritter

Famous for its efforts to put women on an equal footing with men, Sweden is experiencing a gender balance shift that has caught the country by surprise: For the first time since record-keeping began in 1749, it now has more men than women. Swedes don't quite know what to make of this sudden male surplus, which is highly unusual in the West, where women historically have been in the majority in almost every country. But it may be a sign of things to come in Europe as changes in life expectancy and migration transform demographics.

"This is a novel phenomenon for Europe," said Francesco Billari, a University of Oxford demographer who is president of the European Association for Population Studies. "We as researchers have not been on top of this." The tipping point in Sweden happened in March last year, when population statistics showed 277 more men than women. The gap has since grown to beyond 12,000. While that's still small in a population of almost 10 million, it's "not unreasonable" to suspect that Sweden will have a big male surplus in the future, said Tomas Johansson, a population expert at the national statistics agency, SCB.

Despite a natural birth rate of about 105 boys born for every 100 girls, European women have historically outnumbered men because they live longer. An AP analysis of national and European Union population statistics suggests women will remain in the majority in most European countries for decades to come. But the number of men per 100 women, known as the sex ratio, is increasing, slowly in Europe as a whole and quickly in some northern and central European countries.

Norway swung to a male surplus in 2011, four years before Sweden, while Denmark and Switzerland are nearing a sex ratio of 100. Germany, which had an unnatural deficit of men after two world wars, has seen its sex ratio jump from 87 in 1960 to 96 last year. Meanwhile, Britain's sex ratio rose from 93 to 97 in the same period. British statistics officials project that men will be in the majority by 2050.

Researchers don't have a clear idea of what happens to a

society when the population becomes more masculine. Tomas Sobotka, of the Vienna Institute of Demography, said in theory a male surplus could increase the bargaining power of women by allowing them to be choosier when picking a partner. But they could also face an increased risk of harassment from frustrated males struggling to find a mate.

Sweden's rapid shift to a male majority - which experts didn't see coming just 10 years ago - has triggered debate among some feminists about the potential impact on women in one of the world's most egalitarian countries. Statistics officials say Sweden's demographic shift is mainly due to men catching up with women in terms of life expectancy. But the arrival in recent years of tens of thousands of unaccompanied teenage boys from Afghanistan, Syria and North Africa is also having a significant impact.

Sweden's biggest male surplus is in the 15-19 age group, where there are 108 boys for every 100 girls. That imbalance could grow to 115-to-100 this year when the impact of last year's record number of asylum-seekers - including more than 35,000 unaccompanied minors - is reflected in the population statistics. Valerie Hudson, director of a program on women, peace and security at Texas A&M University, said this should make Swedes concerned, because her research has linked skewed sex ratios in China and India to more violence against women and higher crime levels. What's happening in Sweden, Hudson said, "is one of the most dramatic alterations of demography over such a short period of time that I've ever seen." She called it ironic that a country considered a beacon of women's rights isn't paying more attention to the issue. "Are people thinking about whether this could undermine the gains that have been made by Swedish women over the last 150 years?" Hudson said.

Gender Equality

Other feminist researchers disagree. "Hogwash," said Jacqui True, a professor of politics and international relations at Monash University in Australia. How many men there are in a population matters less than how much a society is shaped by "hyper-masculine" gender characteristics such as aggression

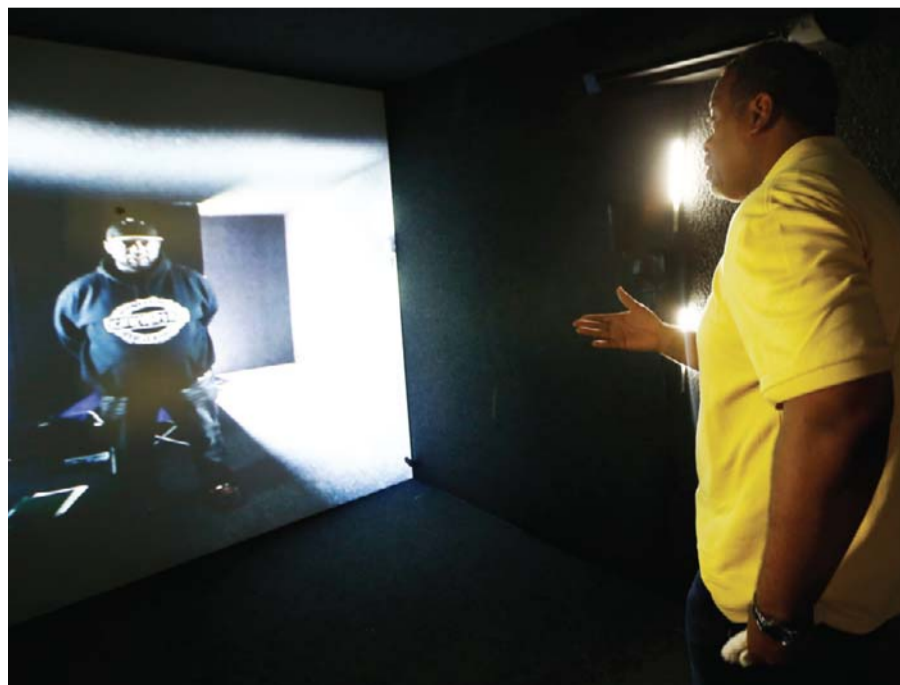
and hierarchies where males are preferred, True said. Annick Wibben, of the University of San Francisco, said gender equality is so "deeply embedded" in Swedish society that comparisons with China or India, where sex-selective abortions have resulted in unnatural surpluses of men, don't tell you much. "The way in which masculinity works in different societies needs to be taken into account," she said.

In Sweden, there's been little discussion about the surplus, perhaps because of the link to immigration, a sensitive subject in the Nordic country. Equality Minister Asa Regner, of the governing Social Democrats, twice turned down requests to be interviewed. The main opposition party, the center-right Moderates, also declined to comment.

Elsewhere in Europe, the gender balance is stable or tipping further in favor of women in some countries, including Italy, Spain and Greece. But overall, the proportion of men in the 28-nation European Union is increasing slowly, according to the bloc's statistics agency, Eurostat. Last year there were 12 million more women than men in the EU, which has a population of just over 500 million people. That gap is projected to narrow in coming decades "mainly because of the decreasing gap in life expectancy," said Eurostat spokeswoman Baiba Grandovska. Experts say men, particularly in western Europe, are living healthier lives than their fathers, drinking and smoking less, and benefiting from better treatment of heart disease. In wealthy countries, men have moved away from mining and other dangerous occupations to safer white-collar jobs. Eurostat projects the male-female gap will dip below 1 million in 2080. But such projections are highly uncertain, as the Swedish example shows.

In 2003, Sweden's SCB projected that a male surplus wouldn't happen until 2050. Three years later it moved up the date by 10 years. It barely had time to recalibrate its projections before the moment arrived last year when men outnumbered women. SCB expert Lena Lundkvist said the gender balance could shift rapidly in other places as well. "In some countries, the mortality rate for men is still very high," she said. "If men change their behavior, things are going to move quickly in those countries, too." — AP

INSTALLATIONS PUT SOCIAL IN SOCIAL SCIENCE



(Left) In this May 27, 2016 photo, Divad Sanders stands inside a container in Newark, New Jersey, as he converses with Lewis Lee, standing in a container in Milwaukee, as part of an art installation at Military Park in downtown Newark. (Right) Timothy Little reads information about the container on May 27, 2016. — AP

By David Porter

The truck-size metal container sitting in a downtown park here isn't meant to raise awareness about the global shipping industry, though it may nudge some people's curiosity in that direction. Step into the carpeted interior, and it's something completely different: a combination of an art installation and social science research project that lets people converse with others in far-flung regions of the world, on a life-size screen.

The gold-painted shipping container in Newark's revived Military Park is the hub of a 10-week pilot program sponsored by Shared Studios, an arts and technology collective, in collaboration with local arts group Gateway Project Spaces and researchers at Rutgers-Newark and Yale University. The program has two basic components. Participants can connect to similar portals set up by Shared Studios in cities including Havana; Tehran, Iran; Nairobi, Kenya; Mexico City; Kigali, Rwanda; and Erbil, Iraq. Or, they can take part in a conversation

about policing and social justice with people in Milwaukee.

Both Milwaukee and Newark suffer from high incarceration rates of young black men and are grappling with residents' deep mistrust of law enforcement. Newark's police department is under a recently signed federal monitoring agreement after a report detailed rampant misconduct and unconstitutional practices. "These are two cities where there are police and community tensions," said Shared Spaces co-founder Michelle Moghtader. "It's a way for people to engage with peers who are facing similar challenges."

The portal's criminal justice piece has been an eye-opener as it substitutes freewheeling conversations for more conventional research methods of focus groups and direct interviews. "What we've found is people have these very rich and detailed and passionate conversations with strangers," said Rod Brunson, the incoming dean of Rutgers-Newark's school of criminal justice.

Lewis Lee, a community activist in Milwaukee, was in his city's portal Friday afternoon and said the installation has had a

pronounced effect. Its location near two schools has driven foot traffic, and locals have put on music, spoken word and movie nights connected to the portal. "The kids are really involved," he said. "The crime volume has gone down noticeably, too."

The first portal was set up between New York and Tehran in 2014. "Initially, we thought it would be a one-off project," said Moghtader, a former journalist who worked in Tehran. "But it has developed into a network where these portals are sort of a global community center." Brunson said he and other researchers will go back and analyze the conversations when the portal is shut down at the end of June, looking for themes and patterns and, in the process, re-evaluating their own methods of collecting data.

"We've been surprised how open and willing people are to share intimate details of their lives," he said. "Maybe it has something to do with the fact that social media is a mainstay in younger people's lives. Maybe the reality TV industry helps too. As social scientists, maybe we have to catch up." — AP



'BLADE JUMPER' HOPES FOR OLYMPICS CHANCE

BERLIN: Germany's paralympic long-jump champion Markus Rehm still hopes to compete against able-bodied athletes at August's Olympics after a study published Monday said it was unclear whether his carbon-fiber prosthesis gave him an advantage. The study, published by the German sports university in Cologne, has said it is "difficult, if not impossible" to determine whether paralympic athletes get an advantage over the able-bodied when they compete with a prosthesis. The study, carried out in conjunction with institutes in Cologne, Colorado and Tokyo, found athletes with a running-specific prosthesis have a disadvantage in the run up, but gain a better technique for the long jump, leaving it open whether a false limb helps or hinders athletes. "There was no clear advantage detected through those using a prosthesis, so that makes me happy," said Rehm, who has been dubbed 'blade jumper', and says his goal is to "bring together the Olympic and Paralympic sports".



NEUSTADTER GETS RUSSIAN PASSPORT AHEAD OF EURO

MOSCOW: Twice-capped Germany international Roman Neustadter has received a Russian passport allowing the defender to play for the country at the Euro, a post on the national team's Twitter site announced yesterday. The Twitter site posted a picture of the 28-year-old Schalke player holding up his new Russian passport at Russia's Consulate in Bonn. Neustadter—who was born in the Ukrainian city of Dnipropetrovsk during the Soviet era—has played two international friendlies for the Germany, but that did not compromise his eligibility to play for Russia. Earlier this month, President Vladimir Putin decreed that Neustadter be granted Russian citizenship. Russian manager Leonid Slutsky has included Neustadter on his 23-man squad for the European Championship which gets underway in France on June 10. The squad also includes Brazilian-born goalkeeper Guilherme of Lokomotiv Moscow, who received Russian citizenship last year. Russian sports minister Vitaly Mutko said in January that the country was working to grant Neustadter a passport but that the process was not simple. —AFP

RODRIGUEZ PREPARED TO FIGHT FOR PLACE AT REAL

MADRID: Colombian international James Rodriguez sees his future at the Bernabeu stadium despite getting a lot less game time for Real Madrid in his second season. The 24-year-old attacking midfielder scored 17 goals and contributed 17 assists in 43 starts in the 2014-15 campaign after joining Real from Monaco but he made just 21 starts in all competitions in his second year. Reports in Spain have linked Rodriguez with Manchester United and Paris St Germain. "In football you never know but I want to continue here and my idea is to have many more years with the club," he told Marca. "I am happy here. All the people close to me are happy too. It's the ideal club and I want to be here." Rodriguez watched Saturday's Champions League final triumph over Atletico Madrid from the bench and admitted the season had been "a bit strange." "I would have liked to play but I did contribute to the team's success," he said. "When you have bad times you also learn from them and each day I learn more." Rodriguez, who is under contract with Real until 2020, was the leading scorer in the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. He will captain Colombia in next month's Copa America. — Reuters



MLB results/standings

Boston 5, Toronto 3 (11 innings); Baltimore 6, Cleveland 4; NY Yankees 2, Tampa Bay 1; Washington 10, St. Louis 2; Milwaukee 5, Cincinnati 4; Kansas City 5, Chicago White Sox 4; Chicago Cubs 7, Philadelphia 2; Texas 6, Pittsburgh 2; Houston 8, LA Angels 6 (13 innings); Oakland 4, Detroit 2; Minnesota 5, Seattle 4; Arizona 6, San Diego 3; San Francisco 8, Colorado 3; Miami 7, Atlanta 3; LA Dodgers 4, NY Mets 2.

American League

Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	30	20	.600	-
Baltimore	28	20	.583	1
Toronto	26	26	.500	5
NY Yankees	24	25	.490	5.5
Tampa Bay	22	26	.458	7

Central Division

Kansas City	27	22	.551	-
Cleveland	26	22	.542	0.5
Chicago White Sox	27	24	.529	1
Detroit	24	25	.490	3
Minnesota	15	34	.306	12

Western Division

Texas	29	21	.580	-
Seattle	28	21	.571	0.5
LA Angels	22	28	.440	7
Houston	22	29	.431	7.5
Oakland	22	29	.431	7.5

National League

Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Washington	30	21	.588	-
NY Mets	28	21	.571	1
Miami	26	24	.520	3.5
Philadelphia	26	24	.520	3.5
Atlanta	14	35	.286	15

Central Division

Chicago Cubs	34	14	.708	-
Pittsburgh	28	21	.571	6.5
St. Louis	26	25	.510	9.5
Milwaukee	23	27	.460	12
Cincinnati	16	34	.320	19

Western Division

San Francisco	32	20	.615	-
LA Dodgers	27	24	.529	4.5
Colorado	23	26	.469	7.5
Arizona	23	29	.442	9
San Diego	20	31	.392	11.5



ST PETERSBURG: New York Yankees' Carlos Beltran, right, shakes hands with third base coach Joe Espada after his home run off Tampa Bay Rays starting pitcher Matt Moore during the fourth inning of a baseball game. — AP

CASTRO'S 2-RUN HOMER ONLY HIT FOR YANKS IN 2-1 WIN

ST PETERSBURG: Starlin Castro's two-run, seventh-inning homer off Jake Odorizzi was the Yankees' only hit of the game, enough to give New York a 2-1 victory over the Tampa Bay Rays on Sunday. According to Baseball Reference data going back to 1913, the Yankees' only other one-hit win was when Charlie Mullen had an RBI single to beat Cleveland in six innings in a doubleheader nightcap on July 10, 1914. Nathan Eovaldi (6-2) gave up one run and six hits in six innings to win his career-best fifth consecutive start and beat Odorizzi (2-3). Dellin Betances, Andrew Miller and Aroldis Chapman each pitched a perfect inning and combined for seven strikeouts. Chapman got his seventh save.

DODGERS 4, METS 2

Adrian Gonzalez snapped a ninth-inning tie with a two-run single off suddenly struggling closer Jeurys Familia, and Los Angeles beat New York. Curtis Granderson hit a tying triple for the Mets immediately after Clayton Kershaw was lifted with two outs in the eighth. But the Dodgers quickly regrouped for their sixth victory in seven games since losing four straight. Kershaw struck out 10, walked none and capped a magnificent May with another sublime performance. Adam Liberatore (1-0) got the win. Kenley Jansen pitched a perfect ninth for his 15th save. Familia (2-1) allowed two runs on two hits and two walks.

RED SOX 5, BLUE JAYS 3

Dustin Pedroia hit an RBI double off Drew Storen in the 11th as Boston avoided a three-game sweep. Blake Swihart drew a one-out walk against Gavin Floyd (2-4) to start the rally. Clay Buchholz (3-5) pitched one inning in his first relief appearance since Aug. 17, 2008. Koji Uehara finished for his first save as Boston became the first AL team to reach 30 wins

ORIOLES 6, INDIANS 4

Hyun Soo Kim's first major league home run broke a seventh-inning tie against Jeff Manship (0-1), and Nolan Reimold added a leadoff homer in the ninth. Chris Tillman (7-1) allowed three homers and four runs in six innings but improved to 6-0 in his last seven starts. Darren O'Day worked out of bases-loaded, one-out trouble in the eighth, and Zach Britton got out of a jam in the ninth for his 14th save. Mark Trumbo hit a three-run double in the first.

NATIONALS 10, CARDINALS 2

Stephen Strasburg (9-0) won his 12th consecutive decision dating to last season, pitching six innings of one-run ball as Washington salvaged a four-game split. Strasburg improved to 12-0 in 15 starts since losing to the Mets on Sept. 9, and the Nationals have won all 15 of those games. The 12 consecutive winning decisions is a franchise record for a starter, breaking a mark shared by Livan Hernandez (2005) and Dennis Martinez (1989). Jayson Werth connected for a pinch-hit grand slam. Wilson Ramos had three hits, including a two-run homer, and drove in four runs. Bryce Harper hit an RBI single during a three-run fourth off Michael Wacha (2-6), who lost his sixth straight decision.

MARLINS 7, BRAVES 3

Derek Dietrich hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer and drove in four runs before getting hurt on a foul ball hit into Miami's dugout. Dietrich's homer landed deep in the lower section of the right-field seats in the sixth, giving Miami a 3-1 lead. A former Georgia Tech star, Dietrich added a two-run double off Eric O'Flaherty in the seventh inning, then was hit by a foul ball off the bat of Christian Yelich in the ninth. The team said X-rays were negative and Dietrich was to remain in Atlanta on

Sunday night for further evaluations. Tom Koehler (3-5) allowed three runs - two earned - three hits and five walks in seven-plus innings. Julio Teheran (1-5) gave up three runs, five hits and three walks in 5 1/3 innings.

BREWERS 5, REDS 4

Jonathan Lucroy drove in three runs, giving him nine RBIs in the series and sending Cincinnati to its 12th loss in 13 games. Jonathan Villar scored three runs and drove in another and Milwaukee won for the fifth time in six games. Jimmy Nelson (5-3) allowed two runs and six hits in 7 1/3 innings.

Jay Bruce homered for Cincinnati, which is 4-19 away from home. Blaine Boyer threw a called third strike past pinch-hitter Jordan Pacheco for his first save since May 30 last year. Brandon Finnegan (1-4) lost his fourth straight decision, allowing four runs, six hits and four walks in 6 1/3 innings.

ROYALS 5, WHITE SOX 4

Cheslor Cuthbert drove in the go-ahead run with an infield hit in a three-run eighth. Chicago wasted a 4-2 lead after failing to protect a 5-2 seventh-inning advantage on Friday and a 7-1 ninth-inning margin on Saturday. White Sox relievers allowed 17 runs, 15 hits and eight walks over 6 1/3 innings in the three-game series, and Chicago has lost 14 of its last 18 games after a 23-10 start. Seeking to become the major leagues' first 10-game winner, Chris Sale left with a 4-2 lead after seven innings. Lorenzo Cain homered with one out off Nate Jones (2-1) to start the go-ahead rally. Chris Young (2-5) pitched a 1-2-3 eighth, and Wade Davis threw a perfect ninth for his 14th save.

CUBS 7, PHILLIES 2

Ben Zobrist hit a three-run homer off Vince Velasquez (5-2) for a 5-0 lead in the

third as Chicago completed a three-game sweep and won its fifth straight. John Lackey (5-2) gave up one run and four hits in seven innings, sending Philadelphia to its seventh loss in nine games. Velasquez allowed seven runs and nine hits in 4 2/3 innings as they Phillies were swept at Wrigley Field for the first time since 1995.

RANGERS 6, PIRATES 2

Struggling sluggers Prince Fielder and Mitch Moreland homered during a four-run fourth inning. Martin Perez (3-4) gave up two runs in six innings and finished May with a 2.23 ERA. Fielder ended a 34-game homer drought with his third of the season leading off the fourth. Moreland, who stopped a 1-for-27 skid with a homer Saturday, hit a three-run shot. Pittsburgh lefty Francisco Liriano (4-4) had yet to give up a homer to a left-handed hitter this season.

TWINS 5, MARINERS 4

Joe Mauer and Miguel Sano homered for his fourth straight game and Joe Mauer for his third as Minnesota completed a three-game sweep. Mauer and Sano hit back-to-back home runs off Taijuan Walker (2-5) into the bullpens behind left field for a 3-2 lead in the fourth. Ricky Nolasco (2-3) allowed two runs and three hits in six innings, and Kevin Jepsen got his sixth save despite allowing two runs.

ATHLETICS 4, TIGERS 2

Pinch-hitter Billy Butler had a two-run single in the sixth as Oakland rallied. A's starter Rich Hill, who left the game with an apparent left shoulder injury, went 6 1/3 innings to win his fifth straight start. Hill (8-3) gave up two runs and five hits. Mike Pelfrey (0-5) allowed three unearned runs and six hits in 5 2/3 innings.

DIAMONDBACKS 6, PADRES 3

Archie Bradley (4-5) struck out a

career-high nine in 7 1/3 innings and Arizona had its second straight five-run second inning. Recalled from Triple-A, Bradley (2-0) allowed three runs, four hits and a walk. His innings total was his big league high. Paul Goldschmidt had two hits and two RBIs. He is hitting .348 (14 for 46) in his last 13 games. Drew Pomeranz (4-5) gave up a season-high six runs, five hits and four walks in five innings with nine strikeouts. His ERA, which had been second to the Dodgers' Clayton Kershaw among qualifying pitchers, rose from 1.70 to 2.48. Brad Ziegler pitched a hitless ninth for his ninth save. San Diego has lost six of seven and 10 of 13.

GIANTS 8, ROCKIES 3

Hunter Pence had three of a record-tying eight doubles for San Francisco. Pence's double in the eighth helped equal a mark accomplished four times since the Giants moved to San Francisco after the 1957 season. Denard Span hit his first homer since April 4 as part of a 17-hit attack. Johnny Cueto (8-1) allowed two runs - one earned - and six hits to become the first Giants pitcher to win at least eight of his first 11 starts since Shawn Estes in 1997. Chris Rusin (1-3) gave up six runs and 11 hits in five innings.

ASTROS 8, ANGELS 6

Pinch-hitter Carlos Correa had a three-run homer off Mike Morin (1-1) in the 13th inning. Correa got a run-scoring hit in the 13th inning for the second time in six games, following up his game-ending single against Baltimore on Tuesday. Albert Pujols had three hits for the Angels, who blew an eighth-inning lead and stranded 14 runners while losing for the fourth time in five games. Michael Feliz (3-1) pitched the 12th for Houston. — AP

FIVE THINGS WE LEARNED FROM THE IPL

BANGALORE: Five things we learned from the ninth edition of the Indian Premier League, after Sunrisers Hyderabad beat Royal Challengers Bangalore in Sunday's final:

Warner comes of age

Australia's David Warner showed a maturity belying his controversy-fueled past to captain Sunrisers Hyderabad to their maiden IPL title, suggesting he is coming of age as a cricketer. Off-field exploits, including a bar-room punch on England's Joe Root in 2013, have often captured the headlines but Warner took this season's IPL by storm with 848 runs. The 29-year-old opener's leadership skills were praised by Virat Kohli, the captain of losing finalists Royal Challengers Bangalore, who said Warner "has come a long way as a leader in this tournament".

Kohli ready to step up

Indian Test captain Virat Kohli proved he's also ready to add the job of limited-overs skipper to his international responsibilities. The Royal Challengers Bangalore captain rewrote the record books, scoring 973 runs in 16 matches, as he guided his side to the IPL final. Kohli, 27, relishes the added pressure that comes with being captain, stirring speculation about when he might succeed Mahendra Singh Dhoni as India's T20 and ODI skipper. Dhoni's leadership skills also appear to be on the wane-his Rising Pune Supergiants side finished second bottom of the IPL table.

It's still a batsman's game

If more proof was needed that T20 cricket was a batsman's game then the

ninth edition of the IPL provided it. Records tumbled and sixes rained. Virat Kohli smashed the record for the most runs in a single season by more than 200, finishing on 973, while David Warner blitzed 848. With four centuries and seven fifties, Kohli also became the all-time leading run-scorer in IPL. Kohli also topped the all-time sixes chart in a single season with 38 hits over the fence. He and AB de Villiers recorded the highest ever T20 partnership with 229.

Never write off Gayle

The big-hitting West Indian bounced back from being dropped and yet another sexism controversy to prove that he's still one of short-form cricket's most destructive batsmen. Gayle warmed the Royal Challengers Bangalore bench for a couple of fixtures after scores of one, nought and seven. He was dropped a second time after scoring only five, and was embroiled in controversy when he told a female journalist he had "a very, very big bat". He came good at the business end of the season though, notching two half-centuries including a blazing 76 in the final.

'The Fizz' bubbles to the top

Bangladesh's left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman is tipped to be the next big thing in world cricket. Hailing from a small village, the 20-year-old sealed a lucrative IPL contract with Sunrisers Hyderabad. Nicknamed "The Fizz", Mustafizur grabbed the opportunity with both hands to be declared the emerging player of the tournament with 17 scalps for his title-winning side. Few expect this young star to go flat in coming years. —AFP

WARNER LAUDS HYDERABAD AFTER MAIDEN IPL VICTORY

BANGALORE: Captain David Warner hailed Sunrisers Hyderabad for staying cool in the heat of an Indian Premier League final to claim their maiden title at the home of opponents Royal Challengers Bangalore. Hyderabad, defending 208 to win at M Chinnaswamy stadium, survived a deadly opening blitz from big-hitting West Indian Chris Gayle to eke out an eight-run victory late on Sunday.

Australian Warner led by example after winning the toss and electing to bat, hitting a sparkling half-century-his ninth of the IPL season-as Hyderabad posted a massive 208. But Gayle came out with all guns blazing, hitting four fours and eight sixes in a 38-ball 76. He put together a 114-run opening stand with Virat Kohli (54) to give Bangalore hope, but Hyderabad's bowlers stayed focused.

"A guy like Chris Gayle, he is always going to keep going. The hardest thing is to try and maintain our composure while he is going and playing like this," Warner told reporters. "So for us it was about staying composed and having belief and that's what the players showed when we were out there," he added.

Hyderabad got the breakthrough they needed in the 11th over when Gayle was caught by Bipul Sharma off Ben Cutting. Kohli, who topped the season's batting chart with 973 runs from 16 matches, then tried to pilot the chase but was cleaned up by Barinder Sran. South African batsman AB de Villiers also departed soon after and the wheels started to come off for Bangalore in the face of a resilient Hyderabad attack, with man-of-the-match

Cutting finishing with 2-35.

Earlier Warner's 38-ball 69, which was laced with eight fours and three sixes, laid a solid foundation for Hyderabad before Cutting swelled the total with an unbeaten 39 off 15 balls. The left-handed Warner, who accumulated 848 runs in 17 matches, was the driving force behind Hyderabad's title-winning season but he singled out a number of his team-mates for praise.

'Phenomenal' Kohli

"It takes a team to win a tournament," he said. "The plus that I had was I had two international captains (Kane Williamson and Eoin Morgan) with me. I would also credit Bhuvneshwar Kumar and rising Bangladesh star Mustafizur Rahman for their contributions," the skipper added.

Kumar finished as the tournament's leading wicket-taker with 23, while Daniel Vettori heaped praise on Indian star Kohli, who re-wrote the record books this IPL season but still ended up on the losing side. Kohli surpassed Gujarat Lions captain Suresh Raina to become the all-time leading scorer in the cash-rich league. He also recorded the highest partnership (229) in Twenty20 cricket history with De Villiers against Gujarat. "He has been phenomenal and probably the main reason why we were in the final," former New Zealand skipper Vettori told reporters. "If a guy particularly top of the order takes that much of role and his performance is that great, it allows everything to flow from there. That's what a great captain does and Virat has been exceptional," Vettori added. —AFP



BANGALORE: Rajeev Shukla (L), chairman of the Indian Premier League, presents an award to Sunrisers Hyderabad captain David Warner (2R) at the presentation ceremony after the final Twenty20 cricket match of the 2016 Indian Premier League (IPL) between Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium.—AFP

2016 IPL CORRUPTION FREE, SAYS CHAIRMAN

BANGALORE: Indian Premier League chairman Rajeev Shukla told AFP that this year's edition of the cash-rich extravaganza had been free of corruption thanks to a multi-pronged approach to tackling fixing. In an interview shortly before Sunday's final, Shukla said organizers engaged the anti-graft unit of the International Cricket Council (ICC), local police and the expertise of a former top cop.

The IPL is the most popular domestic league in the world but has been plagued by controversies since its inception in 2008, with corruption and match-fixing cases often taking centre-stage. A spot-fixing scandal in 2013 led to two teams-Chennai

Super Kings and Rajasthan Royals-being suspended last year for two seasons. Shukla said an aggressive approach to tackling fixing meant there had been no signs of corruption at the ninth edition of the IPL, which featured 60 matches in 57 days across 11 venues.

"All precautions were taken in order to curb corruption and we have been successful in that," Shukla told AFP in Bangalore, before Sunrisers Hyderabad's eight-run victory over Royal Challengers Bangalore. "We engaged the International Cricket Council's anti-corruption unit. We also relied on the expertise of our board's anti-corruption unit led by Mr. Neeraj Kumar. —AFP



CHESTER LE STREET: England's Alastair Cook stands in middle after reaching 10,000 test runs during the match against Sri Lanka on day four of the second cricket Test match at the Emirates Riverside.—AFP

RECORD-BREAKER COOK LEADS ENGLAND TO SERIES VICTORY

CHESTER-LE-STREET: Alastair Cook became the first England batsman to score 10,000 Test runs as his side sealed a series win over Sri Lanka at the Riverside yesterday. England won the second Test by nine wickets with more than a day to spare to go an unassailable 2-0 up in the three-match series.

Set 79 for victory after making Sri Lanka follow-on, England finished on 80 for one. Left-handed opener Cook was 47 not out and Nick Compton, who hit the winning runs 22 not out. His innings saw Cook score the five he needed to become just the 12th player of all time to make 10,000 Test runs.

Fellow opener Alex Hales was 10 not out. Cook reached the landmark when he clipped Nuwan Pradeep for four through mid-wicket, having got off the mark with an edged single against left-arm spinner Rangana Herath. At 31 years and 157 days he was the youngest player ever to achieve the feat, beating the previous record of India great Sachin Tendulkar (31 years and 326 days).

Chandimal century

Earlier, Dinesh Chandimal's excellent hundred kept England waiting as Sri Lanka made 475 in their second innings. Chandimal's 126

was his sixth hundred in 27 Tests but first outside Asia. He received excellent support from Rangana Herath (61) in seventh-wicket stand of 116. Sri Lanka resumed on 309 for five, 88 runs adrift of England's 498 for nine declared built around Moeen Ali's Test-best 155 not out. Chandimal was 54 not out overnight and Milinda Siriwardana unbeaten on 35 after Sri Lanka captain Angelo Mathews (80) and Kaushal Silva (60) initially kept England at bay. Play began yesterday under a heavily grey sky. The cloud cover promised ideal conditions for England pacemen James Anderson and Stuart Broad, who were just four overs into a spell with the new ball.

Siriwardana had not added a run to his overnight score when he edged Anderson straight to Alex Hales at gully to end a stand worth 92. Chandimal, however, cover-drove Broad for four and late-cut Anderson behind point for another boundary. But he was lucky on 69 when he got an inside edge off Anderson only for diving wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow to spill the catch despite getting both gloves to the ball.

Chandimal went into the 90s when he hooked fast bowler Steven Finn to the fine leg boundary. An edged boundary off Woakes to

third man saw the 26-year-old Chandimal to a 172-ball hundred including 11 fours.

Chandimal ended the session in style by cover-driving Woakes for four off the last ball before lunch. Herath, dropped in the deep by James Vince off Anderson on 46, completed an 87-ball fifty with six fours. The 38-year-old, who earlier in this match took his 300th Test wicket, eventually fell when Anderson, taking the fielders out of the equation, had him lbw from round the wicket to claim his 450th scalp in the five-day game.

Anderson, already England's all-time leading Test wicket-taker, then bowled Shaminda Eranga. His return of five for 58 was the 21st time Anderson had taken five or more wickets in an innings his 115 Test-career. Chandimal's more than five-hour innings ended when he was bowled driving at Stuart Broad. But Sri Lanka's batsmen had at least restored some pride. Their first innings 101 all out meant they became the first side since New Zealand in England back in 1958 to be bowled out for under 120 in three successive Test innings. Sri Lanka managed meager totals of 91 and 119 during an innings and 88-run defeat in the series opener at Headingley. The third and final Test starts at Lord's on June 9. —AFP

A LOOK AT JUSTIN GATLIN'S STRANGE ALTER EGO 'J GAT'

OREGON: Justin Gatlin swears he's not as bad as he's made out to be. He calls his alter ego "J Gat." And that's someone you don't want to mess with. Before a race, the mild-mannered American sprinter says he transforms himself into the feisty guy named "J Gat," a nickname he's given to a version of himself that wants to take over the world from archrival Usain Bolt. Their rivalry heading into the Rio de Janeiro Olympics has sometimes been portrayed as "Good vs. Evil" given Gatlin's doping history.

"I don't accept myself being the bad guy," Gatlin said. "I'm a winner. I'm a competitor. I'm a brave person. I'm a good person. I know this about myself and I have to act like that." "J Gat" to the rescue. He runs with fury and looks "mean and intimidating" when caught on camera after races. That's not the real Justin Gatlin.

"Justin has only gotten as far as starting line. After the gun goes off, it's never Justin. It's always 'J Gat,'" Gatlin said. "I'm a whole different person away from track." To illustrate that, Gatlin is making a documentary. The 34-year-old will have a film crew trailing him around at the Prefontaine Classic this weekend in Eugene, Oregon, to record his every move. One caveat: Stay out of the way of "J Gat." You wouldn't like him when he's angry. (Case in point: gesturing toward a heckler who was bothering his mother in the stands during the awards ceremony at worlds last summer).

"A lot of athletes get consumed by the Hollywood lights," said Gatlin, who will face a 100-meter field at Pre that includes Americans Tyson Gay and Mike Rodgers, along with Asafa Powell of Jamaica. "I'm like, 'We can make this story, but I have to still do my job. We have to coexist together. I can't give you my undivided attention and go off and start losing races.'"

Excessive testosterone

There's no working title yet for the film or date when it will air. And no subject is out of bounds, including his doping past. The 2004 Olympic 100-meter gold medalist tested positive for excessive testosterone in 2006, was reinstated from his ban on July 24, 2010, and returned to capture bronze at the London Games two years later.

He's been one of Bolt's biggest threats ever since. "The theme of (the movie) is basically my journey," Gatlin said. Gatlin recently showed the roughly 90-second trailer to his 6-year-old son, whose first words were: "Play it again, dad." "That was the cutest thing ever," Gatlin said. "He's like, 'I have to be faster than a cheetah to keep up with

you, dad.' That makes me proud." The trailer shows flashes of Gatlin stretching, lifting weights and sprinting. In one scene, he said: "If I could do this forever, I would. I love the pain I get from training. I know that it's a pain of growth. Inside, I'm infinity." Gatlin said he'll race at least through the 2020 Tokyo Olympics so his son could be there. "I'd like to give that to him as a gift," Gatlin said. "Even if I don't win in 2020, just to be able to be on the team." Gatlin's times in the 100 have been slower this season, running 9.94 seconds so far compared with 9.74 this time a year ago. All by design. He's treating the early season races more like rounds so he can work on his form. Gatlin believes he has the speed to keep up with Bolt, but needs to execute his style of race.

That didn't happen in Beijing at the world championships last summer. Gatlin was a slight

favorite in the 100 meters given that Bolt wasn't exactly race sharp. Gatlin was neck-and-neck with the Jamaican, but over-strided with about 15 meters left. Gatlin went into his lean too early, paving the way for Bolt to capture gold yet again. "It's all a process," Gatlin said. "Sometimes, processes are rewarding and sometimes processes are painful."

Before a 100-meter showdown with Bolt can occur in Rio de Janeiro, Gatlin has to make Team USA at the Olympic Trials in July. It's not an easy task with sprinters such as Gay, Rodgers, Trayvon Bromell and Gatlin contending for three spots. Gatlin also will try to earn a place in the 200 meters. To assist him, he will summon "J Gat." "Very rarely will you find an athlete that calls me Justin," Gatlin said. "It's always 'J Gat.' Justin has never run a race." —AP



EUGENE: Justin Gatlin, right, wins the men's 100 meters ahead of, from left, Tyson Gay and Asafa Powell at the Prefontaine Classic track and field meet Saturday.—AP



FORT WORTH: Jordan Spieth and club members pose with the trophy after winning the DEAN & DELUCA Invitational at Colonial Country Club. — AFP

SPIETH BIRDIES LAST THREE TO WIN PGA TITLE AT COLONIAL

WASHINGTON: Shaking off a Masters meltdown as he prepares to defend his US Open crown, world number two Jordan Spieth birdied the last three holes Sunday to win the Dean and DeLuca Invitational. The 22-year-old Texan won his first home-state US PGA title in astonishing fashion, firing a five-under par 65 final round at Colonial to finish on 17-under 263 for a three-stroke victory.

Spieth led last month's Masters with nine holes remaining and appeared set for a second consecutive wire-to-wire victory at Augusta National, only to collapse on the back nine and hand England's Danny Willett the green jacket, literally doing so at the award

ceremony with a grim facial expression. "I knew it was going to be tough to put the Masters behind me," Spieth said. "I don't wish that on anybody. It's no fun out there when you hear people yelling, 'Remember the Masters.' To get over that hurdle in our third tournament back says a lot about our character out there."

Since his major stumble, Spieth has battled back in May, missing the cut at the Players Championship and falling out of the hunt with a last-day fade at last week's Byron Nelson Championship only to save his best for last at Fort Worth. "As much as you play it off, that's a tough hump to get over, after Augusta," Spieth

said. Spieth, who defends his US Open title next month at Oakmont, curled in a 20-foot birdie putt at the par-3 16th Sunday to seize the lead for good, pumping his right fist with excitement. At 17, Spieth found the rough on his first two shots but chipped his third into the cup, a stunning 42-foot pitch that brought a shocked smile to his face.

To complete his closing hat trick, Spieth dropped a 34-foot birdie putt at 18 and raised in arms in celebration. "It was difficult to stay patient but that's the thing we told ourselves to do," Spieth said. Harris English fired a 66 to finish second on 266 with Ryan Palmer and Webb Simpson on 267 and Kyle Reifers fifth on

268. The only non-US player in the top 10 was India's Anirban Lahiri, who shared sixth on 271 after a 68.

'Big step'

Next week will see Spieth face top-ranked Jason Day of Australia and third-ranked Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland at the Jack Nicklaus-hosted Memorial tournament. All three have built confidence with recent wins. "This is a big step for me to make a move on Jason's number one reign," Spieth said. "He has still got some space there but we're going to try to get closer." Spieth opened with nine pars, making a 32-foot par putt at the par-3

eight for his most amazing rescue, then began the back nine with three birdies in a row to seize the lead. "I didn't deserve par on eight by any means," Spieth said. "Poor first shot. I made a great putt there." Spieth sank a 20-foot putt at 10 and short ones on the next two holes, but a bogey at the par-3 13th after finding a greenside bunker dropped him into a share of the lead with English.

At 14, Spieth found a fairway bunker and had to make a testy 13-foot putt to save par, setting the stage for his sizzling finish. Spieth had not broken 70 in the last round since February and had been under par only once in the last round in his past five tries. —AFP



TURIN: Italy's Vincenzo Nibali of team Astana rides during the 21th stage of the 99th Giro d'Italia, Tour of Italy, from Cuneo to Turin. — AFP

RUTHLESS NIBALI LEAVES MARK ON INTENSE GIRO D'ITALIA WIN

TURIN: Some will call Vincenzo Nibali's dramatic Giro d'Italia victory on Sunday lucky, but it served as a reminder that 'The Shark' is dangerous when in deep water. Three years after the Italian sealed a maiden pink jersey with an epic ride through the snowy Dolomites mountains, a second Giro triumph looked out of reach when Dutchman Steven Kruijswijk opened up a huge lead in the final week of a thrilling 99th edition.

Over two intense days in the mountains, pre-race favorite Nibali went from trailing the ginger-haired Dutchman by 41secs to seemingly out of contention at 4min 43sec. But 'Lo Squalo' (The Shark) has a habit of biting back at his rivals. And when Kruijswijk crashed into a snow bank early on the descent of the Colle d'Agnello climb bordering France and Italy on Friday, the race for pink was suddenly back on two days before the finish.

On stage 19, Nibali forged ahead to victory on the summit finish at Risoul in France, where he also won on his road to Tour de France triumph in 2014. Like a great white patiently circling his prey, Nibali was unforgiving when he went in for the kill. "Steven Kruijswijk had a good advantage after the Dolomites but I knew the highest mountains were yet to come," said Nibali.

"Riding above 2000 meters isn't easy for anyone but I felt comfortable. Kruijswijk crashed... but towards the summit of the Colle d'Agnello I noticed he was breathing heavily so I put pressure on him climbing and then descending. "Had I not, probably nothing would have happened and (Esteban) Chaves would have had an easy ride as well."

Little Orica team climber Chaves took the race lead with a 44sec lead over Nibali on Friday, but trailed in behind the Italian the next day on the climb to Sant'Anna di Vinadio when Nibali pulled on the pink jersey. On Sunday, Nibali revealed he had been suffering from a

stomach bug, news of which he kept to himself. "I had a stomach bug during the Giro but it's better not to tell everything sometimes," he said.

Stunning performance

It is not the first time the Sicilian has fought back from adversity to triumph in one of the world's biggest bike races. He upset pre-race predictions to win the Tour de France in 2014, becoming the first Italian to do so since deceased climbing ace Marco Pantani in 1998. And when he was excluded from the 2015 Tour of Spain for illicitly hanging on to the back of a team car following a crash, he blew away his shame with a stunning performance to win the Tour of Lombardy one-day classic weeks later. Shy off the bike, the Sicilian becomes a fierce competitor on it—although he is known for his sensible side, too.

After fighting his way back into victory contention in Risoul, Nibali wept tears of relief and joy as he hung his arms over the handlebars. Nibali, 31, left his native Sicily for Tuscany on an ambitious 16-year-old to follow his dream, and has become one of the most formidable, and feared stage racers in the world.

A strong climber with descending skills that have left more than one rival fearing for his safety, Nibali copes well in tough weather conditions. He secured his maiden pink jersey on the penultimate stage in 2013 when he emerged through a snow blizzard to triumph atop Trois Cimes de Lavaredo in the Dolomites. After Kruijswijk flew over the handlebars head-first into the snow on Friday, Nibali remarked: "Descents are just as much a part of racing as climbing." Next up is the Tour de France, where he is sure to meet tougher opposition in Spaniard Alberto Contador and Britain's Chris Froome, both former yellow jersey champions. Nibali will then focus on Olympic gold in Rio this August. — AFP

ROSSI STRETCHES FINAL DROPS OF GAS TO WIN THE INDY 500

INDIANAPOLIS: Alexander Rossi spent the biggest weekend in auto racing last year in Monaco, looking for a television that was broadcasting the Indianapolis 500. Back then, American was still hoping he could land a full-time ride in Formula One. He eventually ran out of time.

On Sunday, in the biggest race of his life and as a rookie driver to boot, Rossi almost ran out of gas. Almost. Instead, the 24-year-old Rossi outlasted his faster rivals and his fuel tank for a stunning victory in the historic 100th running of the Indianapolis 500, landing him atop the biggest podium in motorsports after his car ran out of gas on the victory lap. This was a win no one - not even Rossi - could have predicted when he decided to return the United States and give IndyCar a chance. "He had no idea. He honestly had no idea," said team co-owner Michael Andretti. "He was 100 percent Europe, the way he was training and everything. He never even saw an oval except for Phoenix before this." Indeed, Rossi decided at age 10 he wanted to be an F1 driver. He left California for Europe six years later and spent a frustrating time bouncing around as a test driver.

Cold options

But his options had grown cold, and when Bryan Herta needed a miracle to remain in IndyCar, he signed Rossi and merged his team with Andretti Autosport. That partnership gave Rossi four teammates to work with at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and the 24-year-old California native needed help from all of them to make Sunday's win possible at the centennial edition of "The Greatest Spectacle In Racing." "We've had our struggles. It's been a new experience for me," said Rossi. "We've worked very hard every day to try to improve and get things better. It's just a huge testament to the great people I have around me."

Rossi's win allowed the long-suffering Andretti family to celebrate in the biggest race of their storied careers and it left the top drivers in the field fuming over Rossi's good fortune. Rossi, a 66-to-1 long shot, stretched his final tank of gas 90 miles to cycle into the lead as others had to duck into the pits for a splash of fuel in the waning laps. He was sputtering on the final lap, working his clutch and getting screamed at by Herta to conserve fuel. He made it - barely. His victory celebration came only after his Honda was towed in so he could climb out to take that sweet sip of milk. "I have no idea how we pulled that off," he declared. "The only actual site of an oval that I'd ever been to was Phoenix in February, I'm definitely a rookie on ovals," he said. "Obviously street courses I have an understanding about. But IndyCar is a whole different can of worms than anything I've been a part of. It's incredibly competitive and incredibly close. You have to be perfect all three days, everyone around you, drivers and teams."

Rossi didn't have the speed of Carlos Munoz, who was charging hard over the



INDIANAPOLIS: Indianapolis 500 champion Alexander Rossi poses during the traditional winners photo on the start/finish line at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. — AP

final 50 miles. But Munoz also had to stop for gas and didn't have a chance to race his teammate for the victory, even though Rossi was running on fumes and completed the final lap at a snail's pace of 179.784 mph.

The Colombian settled for second in a 1-2 finish for Andretti Autosport and for Honda. Munoz seemed devastated after his second runner-up finish in four years. "I was really disappointed when it comes with fuel and you lose the race because of that," he said. "Half a lap short. What can I say?" Rossi became just the ninth rookie to win the Indy 500 and the first since Helio Castroneves in 2001.

Relief driver

Although he's a relief driver for Manor Racing in F1, Rossi has no scheduled F1 races and he described his role as a reserve driver: "I sit around and pretend to look important. There is no driving involved. I drive to the track in a rental car." He was important Sunday, particularly for an organization that was hoping Marco Andretti would give them their first Indy 500 title since patriarch Mario Andretti won in 1969.

Instead, Marco Andretti never contended on a day at least three of his teammates were among the best in the field. Ryan Hunter-Reay and Townsend Bell combined to lead 64 of the first 119 laps, but the Americans were knocked from contention when Bell clipped Castroneves as he left pit

road. The contact caused Bell to crash into Hunter-Reay. Herta decided to gamble with Rossi on fuel strategy, and it's the only thing that made him a late contender.

As the laps wound down, American Josef Newgarden and Munoz repeatedly swapped the lead. Both had to stop for gas, Rossi moved into the lead and it was all his from there. Michael Andretti earlier this month was voted by the 27 living winners as the best driver never to win the race, but he has now won the 500 four times as a car owner.

Newgarden finished third and was followed by Tony Kanaan, Charlie Kimball and JR Hildebrand as Chevrolet drivers took spots three through six. Newgarden, along with Hunter-Reay, Bell, Kanaan and James Hinchcliffe, had the strongest cars most of the race. Hinchcliffe, the pole winner who missed the race last year after a near-fatal accident in a practice session, faded to seventh. "If I was in Alex's position, I'd be the happiest person in the world right now, I wouldn't care how we won the damn race," Newgarden said. "Everyone was on different strategies, and they played that strategy. Those guys, to put it politely, weren't as strong as us. They didn't have as strong a chance to win, so they had to mix it up. It worked out at the end for them." And now Rossi knows IndyCar is his top commitment. "I have no doubt it's going to change my life," he said. — AP



KUWAIT DISABLED SPORTS CLUB MEMBER WINS 2 GOLD MEDALS

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Disabled Sports Club has said Kuwait Disabled Athletics National Team member Ahmad Naqa Al-Mutairi won the Swiss Disabled

Athletics tournament in Switzerland in the 100 meter and 400 meter wheel chair running in the T33 category, winning two gold medals.

Club President Shafi Al-Hajiri said the win is considered a continuation of

the players outstanding achievements, who won three gold medals and set a new world record in the Grand Prix competition that was held in Switzerland earlier this year. Naqa is the winner of the world cup that was

held in Qatar last December.

Al-Hajiri lauded the distinguished performance of Al-Mutairi in the two tournaments and said that the victories will be a good preparation for the paralympics next September in Brazil.

Al-Hajiri appreciated the generous support of Kuwaiti businessman Bader Al-Otaibi for supporting players Ahmad Naqa Al-Mutairi and Hamad Al-Adwani by paying \$10,000 for each player.

DJOKOVIC ON VERGE OF \$100M BREAKTHROUGH

PARIS: World number one Novak Djokovic is poised to become the first man to win \$100 million in prize money when he targets a place in the French Open quarter-finals for the 10th time. Djokovic, chasing a first Roland Garros title to complete a career Grand Slam, tackles Spain's 14th seed Roberto Bautista Agut.

The top seeded Serb has a 4-0 career lead over the 28-year-old Bautista Agut including a victory on clay in Madrid this season where the Spaniard won just three games. Djokovic is also bidding to reach the quarter-finals for the 28th straight Grand Slam and take sole occupancy of second place ahead of Jimmy Connors for the most consecutive last-eight appearances at the majors.

With \$99,673,404 banked in prize money at the start of Roland Garros, the 29-year-old Djokovic can cross the \$100 million barrier by making the last-eight. A place in the quarter-finals is worth 294,000 Euros (\$326,722) and that will

just take the Serb into the \$100,000,000 bracket. Roger Federer is Djokovic's closest rival in the prize money stakes on \$98,011,727 but the Swiss is sitting out Roland Garros through injury.

"I know that the top four guys (himself, Federer, Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray) that have been dominating the tour and winning most of the major titles in the last ten years or so will not stay there forever," cautioned Djokovic. "New generations are coming up, and you can see already guys like Dominic Thiem, Borna Coric, Nick Kyrgios establishing themselves in the very top of the men's game."

"Can definitely expect to see those faces more in the future. How quick they can actually get to the top four of the world, it's a process. It's not like that's going to happen overnight or over two, three months. "They need to play very well and consistently well and stay healthy throughout the entire year in order to challenge the top spots. Let's see if they can do that." — AFP



PARIS: A person stands under an umbrella in the empty stands of the Philippe Chatrier court as play is suspended due to rain at the Roland Garros 2016 French Tennis Open. —AFP

TEARFUL CINDERELLA SHELBY EYES FRENCH OPEN SEMIS

PARIS: Shelby Rogers, the tearful Cinderella of Roland Garros and the first American woman not called Williams to make the French Open last-eight since 2005, is determined that sudden fame will not be her undoing. Rogers takes on Spanish fourth seed Garbine Muguruza for a semi-final place Tuesday having defied her modest world ranking of 108 to see off a series of big hitters.

First up in her firing line was Czech 17th seed Karolina Pliskova, then experienced Russian Elena Vesnina, followed by two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova, the 10th seed. On Sunday, the 23-year-old from Charleston became just the ninth woman outside the top 100 to make the quarter-finals since 1983 when she beat Romania's 25th seed Irina-Camelia Begu in straight sets.

It was a victory greeted with tears on Suzanne Lenglen court where she quickly had to borrow a handkerchief from TV interviewer and ex-Wimbledon champion Marion Bartoli. "100% tears all the time. Sad, happy, hungry, reading a book, watching a movie. They flow very easily," said Rogers. "Those little puppy commercials, adopt a puppy. No, change the channel. Can't do it."

Rogers, who had never made it past the third round at a major before coming to Paris, is regarded as one of the nicest players on the tour. "Who I am is what got me here, and I can't change it. It's who I am, so... I hope everyone likes it," she said. Her fellow players are on board.

"You're such a gem @Shelby_Rogers_!! There's not a single person that deserves this more! #proud," tweeted fellow US player Sloane Stephens after Sunday's win. Rogers is already guaranteed a leap in the rankings to around 59 which would be a career high. She will also pocket over \$300,000 for making the last eight.

Feisty and confident

That's five times what she has made this year and a stark contrast to the \$390 she earned when losing second round at a low-key event in Florida in January. It's a staggering turnaround for a player who hadn't won a main draw match on the WTA Tour since March. That modest record meant that she struggled to make the main draw in Paris, just squeezing in as the last direct acceptance when the cut-off fell.

Lindsay Davenport, 11 years ago, was the last American woman outside of Serena and Venus Williams to get this far in Paris. Since that time, the pressure on young American players to prove their credentials as standard-bearers once the Williams' era ends has proved to be too much of a burden. Melanie Oudin was hailed as a future star when she reached the US Open quarter-finals in 2009. These days, Oudin is ranked 336 and eking out a meager living. In March, she picked up a cheque for just \$68 when she fell in qualifying in an ITF claycourt event in Florida. Rogers and Oudin are close friends. "It was a time we needed an American player to grab on to. She was so awesome, so feisty, and just really confident," said Rogers as she remembered her friend's US Open breakthrough. "I hope that I can inspire some people too because that's really one of the biggest reasons why I play is for the kids growing up, for the people from Charleston. I want to be a good role model. Hopefully I am."

Muguruza will be playing in her third successive French Open quarter-final having also finished runner-up to Serena Williams at Wimbledon last year. "I think the one thing that I have really improved is not just one type of shot. It's me, generally speaking," said the Venezuelan-born player. "It's the way I prepare matches. I think I have more experience. When I win I analyze why. When I lose I analyze why." — AFP



PARIS: US player Shelby Rogers celebrates after beating Romania's Irina Begu at the end of their women's fourth round match at the Roland Garros 2016 French Tennis Open. — AFP

'ROOF ESSENTIAL' AS FRENCH OPEN SUFFERS 1ST WASHOUT IN 16 YEARS

PARIS: The French Open suffered its first rain washout in 16 years yesterday, leaving tournament chiefs venting their frustration at Roland Garros's isolation as the only Grand Slam without a covered stadium. There could be more problems on Tuesday with further heavy rain forecast throughout the day in Paris before conditions brighten on Wednesday.

Yesterday's washout left the French tennis federation having to refund around 30,000 ticket holders. It also prompted tournament director Guy Forget, a former player and Davis Cup winner, to warn that France is getting left further behind the sport's three other majors-Wimbledon, the Australian and US Opens.

All three tournaments have stadiums with roofs. But Roland Garros will not see a roof built over its showpiece Philippe Chatrier Court until 2020 at the earliest. "It is very frustrating but it is proof that the roof is a necessity and that we have to do it," said Forget. "We cannot be like this for many more years. We hope to have the roof by 2020. People have to realise that nobody can stop the process."

"The world is moving fast—we were talking about the roof 15 years ago." Eight last-16

matches planned for Monday plus two more which had been held over from Sunday will now be played today. Two quarter-finals are also due to take place Tuesday-Andy Murray against Richard Gasquet and defending champion Stan Wawrinka facing Albert Ramos-Vinolas. The last washout in 2000 also happened on May 30. "Tuesday looks better so I am fairly positive," added Forget, who explained that play will start at 0900 (1100GMT) rather than the traditional 1400 (1200GMT) on the second Tuesday.

Several delays

This year's Roland Garros was hit by rain delays on the opening Sunday when just 10 of the scheduled 32 ties were completed in a little over four hours of play. The second day was then hit by another two and a half hour delay. That in turn pushed 12 of the scheduled 66 matches back to the first Tuesday.

There was a two and a half hour stoppage on Saturday followed by another hour on Sunday which meant that the planned last-16 program remained unfinished. Under the original schedule, all of the fourth round was to be completed on Monday, leaving Tuesday and Wednesday for

the quarter-finals. If there are further delays Tuesday, world number one Novak Djokovic, who is chasing a first French Open to complete the career Grand Slam, could end up playing his last-16 tie Wednesday, quarter-final on Thursday and semi-final Friday.

Djokovic has suffered at the hands of the weather in Paris in the past. In the 2012 final against Rafael Nadal, he had fought back from two sets to love down to take the third set and lead in the fourth when play was halted. The final was suspended until Monday when Nadal raced to victory in just a further 50 minutes.

Djokovic will be poised to become the first man to win \$100 million in prize money if he makes the quarter-finals for the 10th time. Top seed Djokovic tackles Spain's 14th seed Roberto Bautista Agut in Tuesday's opening match. Also in last-16 action will be women's top seed and defending champion Serena Williams who will continue her bid for a record-equalling Open era 22nd Grand Slam title. The 34-year-old takes on Ukraine's Elina Svitolina who is being advised in Paris by Justine Henin, one of Williams' former great rivals on the tour and a four-time French Open champion. — AFP

HOME HOPE GASQUET AWAITS MURRAY IN QUARTER FINALS

PARIS: Britain's Andy Murray knows he'll be fighting both Richard Gasquet and the crowd when the second seed targets a fourth appearance in the French Open semi-finals today. Murray struggled through the early rounds at Roland Garros, squeezing past Radek Stepanek and French wildcard Mathias Bourgue in back-to-back five-setters, but the world number two has looked far more at ease since. Murray swept past Ivo Karlovic in three sets before seeing off another big server in American John Isner to set up a quarter-final clash with ninth-seeded Frenchman Gasquet. "I'm pumped to be in the quarters of a slam. Obviously the atmosphere will be tough, but I don't mind that," said Murray, who has won his last five meetings with Gasquet. "I played a number of times against French players here in difficult atmospheres and I managed okay. So I'm sure I'll be fine." Twice Murray and Gasquet have faced off at Roland Garros, with the Briton prevailing both times, including in the 2010 first round when he recovered from two sets to love down. It was 13th time lucky for Gasquet who reached the last eight in Paris for the first time on Sunday after downing Japanese fifth seed Kei Nishikori in four sets.

Formidable challenge

But the former French Open boys champion acknowledged Murray represents a formidable challenge in his bid to become the first Frenchman to win a Grand Slam since Yannick Noah in 1983. "He's a huge fighter. He runs all over the place. You never get a free point. He has the best physical condition on the tour with (Novak) Djokovic," said Gasquet. "He's a big competitor. And he always hangs in there and wins these matches. Makes very few mistakes, is very good at defence, too. "He's confident. He had a

surprisingly difficult start to this tournament. But he played very well in Rome and Madrid. He's the No. 2 player, and for good reason. Because he's a great player. "I need to play very offensive, because if not, it will be difficult for me to win. Of course he will be the favourite, but I have nothing to lose."

Defending champion Stan Wawrinka faces unheralded 28-year-old Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas for a place in the last four. The 55th-ranked Spaniard, who hadn't won a match at Roland Garros since 2011, stunned Milos Raonic 6-2, 6-4, 6-4 in the fourth round to continue his shock run. Wawrinka will fancy his chances against an opponent he's beaten in all six of their previous encounters, but the Swiss third

seed remained cautious despite thrashing Ramos-Vinolas 6-1, 6-1 in Geneva earlier this month. "It was a really easy match, but before there were always some tough matches," said Wawrinka, who claimed his third title of the season in Geneva. "He's a really dangerous player. He's a player that maybe from my side, yeah, you don't think he's going to be that tough, but when you play against him he's a tough player to play." Ramos-Vinolas had never reached the third round of a major tournament before his breakout performance in Paris, with the left-hander's confidence seemingly undimmed by the heavy defeat inflicted by Wawrinka a fortnight ago. "This is another tournament. It's another opportunity for me to fight." — AFP



PARIS: Britain's Andy Murray returns the ball to US player John Isner during their men's fourth round match at the Roland Garros 2016 French Tennis Open. — AFP

PHOENIX CLUB WIMBLEDON REACH ENGLISH THIRD TIER

LONDON: AFC Wimbledon continued their fairytale rise up the English league system after beating Plymouth Argyle 2-0 in yesterday's League Two play-off final at Wembley to reach the third tier. The south London club was formed by supporters in 2002 after the old Wimbledon relocated to Milton Keynes, 56 miles to the north, and was re-branded as Milton Keynes Dons.

AFC Wimbledon will now meet the MK Dons in League One next season after a 78th-minute goal from top scorer Lyle Taylor and a stoppage-time Adebayo Akinfenwa penalty secured victory over Plymouth. "It's wonderful," AFC Wimbledon manager and former Wimbledon midfielder Neal Ardley told Sky Sports in an on-pitch interview. "The occasion for our fans was going to be enough in the first place, from where we've come from. But that second half, there was only one team going to win it. We were outstanding. They (the fans) deserve it. They had their club taken

away from them 14 years ago. Now look at them." It was the club's sixth promotion in their 14-year history and came with Lawrie Sanchez and Dave Beasant, heroes of the original Wimbledon's 1988 FA Cup triumph over Liverpool, watching from the stands. Hulking striker Akinfenwa, known as 'The Beast', compared his team's achievement to Leicester City's historic Premier League title triumph.

"It's what dreams are made of. Scoring, winning. It's a beautiful feeling," he said. "We were the underdogs. It isn't only Leicester who can do it—we can do it too." After dominating much of the game, Wimbledon took the lead when Callum Kennedy's cross from the left was deftly converted by Taylor. Akinfenwa made it 2-0 in added time after fellow substitute Adebayo Azeze was fouled in the area by Jordon Forster, demanding the ball and finishing confidently to complete Wimbledon's moment of history. —AFP

FA HIT WOLFSBURG WITH RECORD FINE

BERLIN: The German FA (DFB) yesterday fined VfL Wolfsburg a club record 90,000 Euros (\$100,210; £68,494) after a flare fired by one of their fans hit the Hanover bench during a Bundesliga match in March. The firework was one of several fired by visiting Wolfsburg fans from the away section at Hanover's HDI Arena on March 1 when the visitors romped to a 4-0 victory.

Just before kick-off, one of the flares hit the roof of the Hanover bench and exploded, forcing the home substitutes to scatter. The DFB say 40,000 Euros of the total fine must be used by Wolfsburg to improve the club's security arrangements, infrastructure and anti-violence measures. The German FA has also threatened to ban home supporters from parts of Wolfsburg's ground for home matches should there be any repeat and the club are on probation until

June 2017. The club have accepted the fine and said they will not appeal. "Such a high penalty has never been previously imposed on Wolfsburg," said one of the club's directors, Thomas Roettgermann. "We were able to demonstrate conclusively to the DFB that there had not been such a blatant misconduct of our fans to date and there shouldn't be in the future."

The March incident was not the first time the use of pyrotechnics marred a Bundesliga match between the north German neighbors. In December 2014, Wolfsburg fans fired four flares and set off a smoke bomb in the away section of Hanover's stadium and both clubs were fined 6,000 Euros at the time. Hanover were relegated at the end of the season just ended after finishing bottom of Germany's top flight. —AFP

'I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SIGN', MESSI TELLS JUDGE IN FRAUD CASE: REPORT

BARCELONA: Argentina star Lionel Messi, who is due to go on trial in Barcelona for alleged tax fraud, told a judge that he never looks at the contracts he signs, the El Periodico daily said yesterday. The newspaper got access to Messi's September 2013 statement to a judge and published extracts just a day before the five-time World Player of the Year and his father stand trial. "I signed things, but I never look at the contracts. I don't know what I sign," he allegedly said.

Messi and his father, Jorge Horacio Messi, are accused of using a chain of fake companies in Belize and Uruguay to avoid paying taxes on 4.16 million Euros (\$4.7 million) of Messi's income earned through the sale of his image rights from 2007-09.

They have been charged with three counts of tax fraud.

According to the alleged statement published by the Barcelona daily, the judge showed him several sponsorship contracts that he signed, but he did not remember them. "This is something that my dad manages. And I trust him. I devote myself to playing football," he reportedly said. "I do what he tells me to."

Spanish prosecutors are seeking a jail sentence of 22-and-a-half months for Messi and his father if they are found guilty, plus fines equivalent to the amount that was allegedly defrauded. But any such sentence would likely be suspended as is common in Spain for first offences carrying a sentence of less than two years. —AFP

BALE WANTS MORE EUROPEAN GLORY

MADRID: Wales winger Gareth Bale has set his sights on next month's Euro 2016 in France after playing an integral role in helping Spanish side Real Madrid claim their 11th European Cup on Saturday. Zinedine Zidane's men overcame local rivals Atletico Madrid 5-3 on penalties after the tense Champions League final finished 1-1 at the San Siro in Milan.

Bale has been pivotal for Wales, scoring seven goals during the European qualifiers, and led the country to their first international tournament finals since 1958. The 26-year-old suffered from cramp during Real's

victory but he reassured Wales he would be fit when the 24-team tournament kicks off on June 10. "My confidence is high especially after winning so I am looking forward to going to the Euros," Bale told British media. "There's four or five days between each game so it's normal. We play every two or three days with our club teams. "I'm confident everyone will be fit enough and firing and hopefully we can... You never know... Two trophies in a matter of months!" Wales face Russia, England and Slovakia, their first opponents, in Group B of the European Championship in France. —Reuters



MADRID: Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo acknowledges supporters during Real celebrations for their 11th UEFA Champions Cup at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium. — AFP

RONALDO RESTS TO SHOW THE 'JEALOUS' WHO'S BEST

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo will not play in Portugal's pre-European Championship friendly against England on Thursday as he rests from his third Champions League triumph but he insists those who doubt his talents are "jealous".

The 31-year-old, who looked jaded in Real Madrid's win over Atletico Madrid on Saturday even though he scored the winning penalty in the shoot-out, believes he is still "number one" and has nothing to prove.

After a sixth straight season with more than 50 goals, Ronaldo has been given extra time off and will miss Portugal's game at Wembley on Thursday. "Come on, let me rest my legs. Now is the time to rest and enjoy this moment. I have six days to be prepared to play a good competition," Ronaldo told reporters after Saturday's triumph in Milan.

Portugal coach Fernando Santos said Ronaldo's performance in the Champions League final was not a concern for his campaign. The star forward has struggled with fitness prob-

lems in recent weeks but should be ready to play Estonia in a final friendly on June 8, two days before the tournament starts. "I am not worried. What interests me is that he will be with us next weekend and he really wants to help us and to win," Santos said after Portugal's 3-0 friendly win against Norway on Sunday.

Feeling proud

Ronaldo said he was also not worried and that he had every reason to feel proud and happy after helping Real win their 11th European Cup. "Only the jealous don't feel that," he said. "But I don't care about that. I always keep the people who love me. So this Champions League is for them, the guys who support me all the time, my fans in Portugal and around the world."

Ronaldo highlighted that he was the Champions League's top scorer for the fifth time with 16 goals while also reaching 50 goals altogether for the campaign once again. "But I am asking more," he declared. "I am always in the top

level. I just want to maintain. I still feel good, I still feel fresh... and I want to carry on like that.

"I feel good and I love to play for Real Madrid. I want to carry on. I have more than 4,000 minutes (playing time this season). I was the number one in the team, again, for most minutes. That means a lot to me. "It means I am still good, I still feel good physically, mentally." However, Ronaldo did acknowledge feeling fatigued at the end of a long season.

"I have a lot of minutes in the legs. But I am still there. I am always there. I showed the team I am there for the good moments and bad moments. This is what makes me feel proud. "My performance (in the final) was maybe not the best one but who played unbelievable? No one." Ronaldo's performance in Madrid's celebrations, however, was firmly in the limelight. The Portuguese took centre stage at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium on Sunday night. "I am so proud to wear this white shirt, it suits me and I am very happy," he told the crowd. —AFP

TERRY BACKS MOURINHO TO SUCCEED AT UNITED

LONDON: Chelsea captain John Terry expects Jose Mourinho to be a success at Manchester United, saying the Portuguese is the right manager to lead the 13-time Premier League champions back into contention for major honors.

Mourinho, who was named as Louis van Gaal's successor on Friday, will hope to usher in a return to the glory days the club's fans took for granted until Alex Ferguson ended his trophy-laden 26-year tenure with his retirement in 2013. Terry won eight trophies under Mourinho during the 53-year-old coach's two spells at Stamford Bridge.

"It's fantastic news for Manchester United," Terry said at a charity event on Sunday. "I'm sure that United's fans and players will be delighted with that because, as I've said many times before, he's the best manager I've worked under... He'll be great for Manchester United, I'm sure." With a host of highly coveted managers, including Pep Guardiola at Manchester City and Antonio Conte at Chelsea, set to ply their trade in England's top-flight next season, Terry expects exciting times ahead.

"I think it's great for English football... Jose and Pep Guardiola up in Manchester, Conte coming to Chelsea," the defender added. "There's real fight amongst the managers who'll be eager to start well so I think it will be interesting times." United midfielder Michael Carrick has urged Mourinho to prioritize results over an attractive style of play despite British media reporting Van Gaal lost his job because of his side's poor quality of football during his two-year reign.

"There is going to be change, without doubt. He is coming in and he is his own man, he's got an unbelievable track record. I know there is a lot of talk about styles, but it is about winning," Carrick told British media. "You have to be number one, you have to be winning trophies, and if you can do that with a bit of style and a bit of flair then obviously that's the perfect match but, first and foremost, it is about winning and getting back on top."

United missed out on Champions League qualification for the second time in the last three seasons after they finished fifth in the table. However, they did win the FA Cup in Van Gaal's final game in charge, a 2-1 victory over Crystal Palace. —Reuters



MANCHESTER: Scarves featuring the image of Manchester United's new Portuguese manager Jose Mourinho are displayed for sale outside the club's Old Trafford football stadium. — AFP

WOLFF PRAISES 'SUPERB DRIVE' FOR HAMILTON, 'GENTLEMAN' ROSBERG

MONTE CARLO: Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff yesterday praised Lewis Hamilton's "superb drive" for exploiting an aggressive strategy in Sunday's Monaco Grand Prix and making their team relationship stronger than ever.

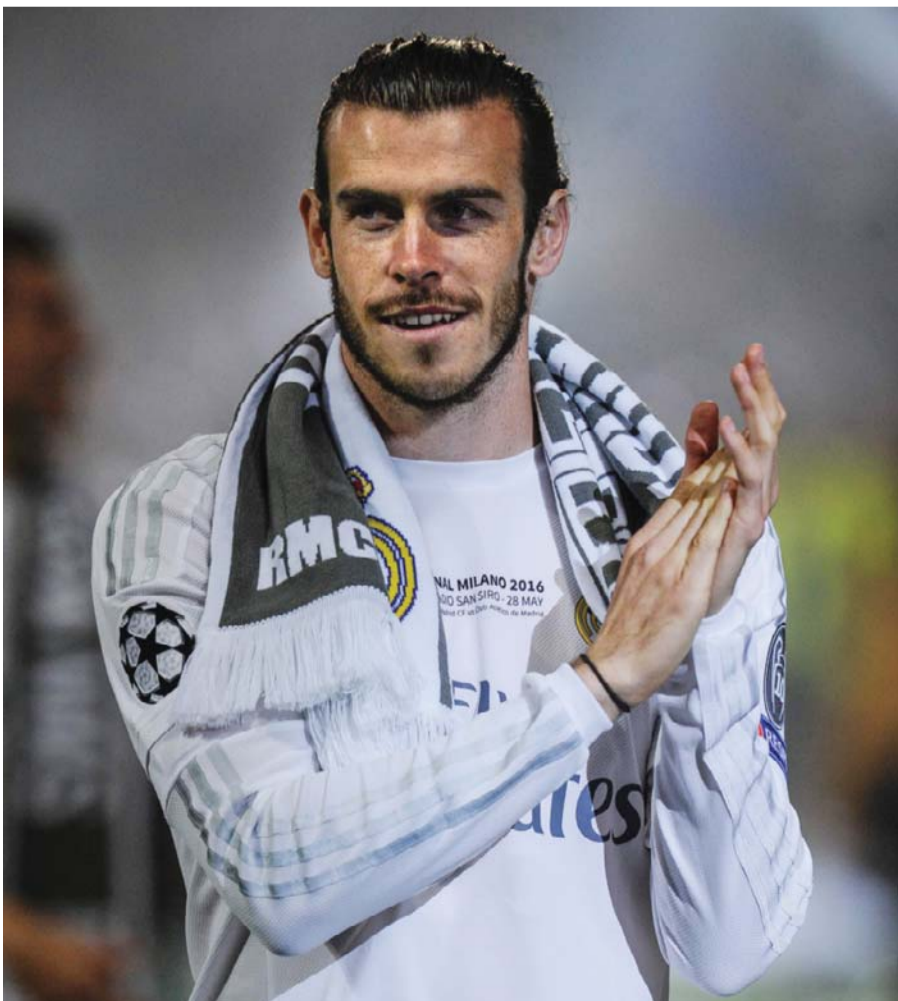
Wolff said Hamilton's flawless driving in the wet-and-dry conditions throughout 78 laps of the unforgiving barrier-lined Mediterranean street circuit was "just what the doctor ordered." Hamilton, who demonstrated supreme tyre-management and race-craft, said it was his "best ever" win and the one that made him feel "in my heart, that I earned."

The win ended a run of eight races without a win, littered with accidents and mechanical and technical failures, over seven months since he clinched his third world title in Texas last October. That barren spell had culminated in a fractious first lap collision with championship-leading team-mate Nico Rosberg at the Spanish Grand Prix.

"These last couple of weeks have strengthened him and strengthened our relationship," said Wolff. "That's how I perceive it. "If you go through really bad times together, it can build the relationship and give it even more strength. "We had many discussions, and difficult moments, but in the end, this is

just what the doctor ordered. "We needed that win and that's why we put Nathan [Divey] on the podium, his number one mechanic."

Hamilton's win, together with championship-leading team-mate Nico Rosberg's disappointing drive to seventh, enabled him to cut the German's lead from 43 points to 24 after six races. The team asked Rosberg, struggling while running second in the early stages, to let Hamilton pass him, a request that he complied with. "I said 'thanks for being a gentleman,'" said Hamilton. "Although I feel, with Nico, it wasn't going well for him, it is a big relief that we were able to score that win with Lewis after such a terrible streak of bad luck," said Wolff. The Austrian also praised Hamilton's skill in support of their decision to keep him out on full wet tyres until lap 31 when he pitted for ultra-softs, without stopping for intermediates. "We had a really aggressive strategy, which we discussed for a long time," he said. "We had time to eat up - we gambled. "The gamble worked and then the mishap of the Red Bull boys-and Lewis' superb drive-gave us the win. It's just what we needed." He said the decision not to go for intermediates was a joint decision involving Hamilton and his engineers. —AFP

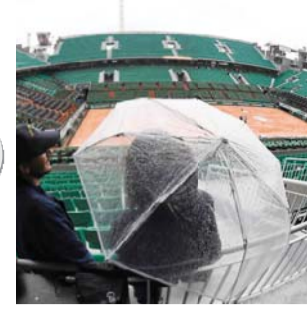


MADRID: Real Madrid's Welsh forward Gareth Bale applauds as he takes part in celebrations for their 11th UEFA Champions Cup at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium. — AFP

Sports

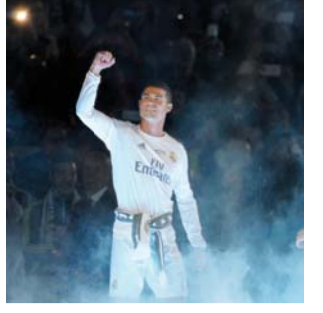
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RECORD-BREAKER COOK LEADS ENGLAND TO SERIES VICTORY Page 16



TA' QALI, Malta: Italy's Leonardo Bonucci (R) clears the ball next to Scotland's Steven Naismith during the International friendly football match Italy vs Scotland at the National Stadium. — AFP

PELLE STRIKES AS PALE AZZURRI BEAT SCOTS

TA' QALI, Malta: Southampton striker Graziano Pelle hit a second-half winner as an injury-depleted Italy beat Scotland 1-0 in a disjointed Euro 2016 friendly in Malta on Sunday. With his midfield decimated through injuries to Claudio Marchisio and Marco Verratti, and Thiago Motta and Riccardo Montolivo resting due to calf problems, Italy coach Antonio Conte gave Roma's Daniele De Rossi a chance to impress before announcing his 23-man Euro 2016 squad today.

Inter Milan striker Eder was in a similar position, having failed to spark for the Nerazzurri following his move from Sampdoria. Thankfully for both, Eder and De Rossi were involved when Pelle pounced to beat David Marshall in the 57th minute with a clinical strike from the edge of the area. But before then, the Azzurri flat-

tered to deceive in a largely messy first half punctuated by three near misses from enterprising Bologna midfielder Emanuele Giaccherini.

After complaining about the state of the "poor" pitch, Conte told Rai: "We put a lot into the match, but the pitch didn't help. We're still in construction mode and we're doing it little by little. There's positives but we know there's a lot of work to do." Giaccherini is expected to travel to France this summer where he could fill in at central midfield, but he said: "We have a lot of great wingers so the coach sees me more in the middle, but I'll play where he asks me to."

He added: "I think we played well, but this won't be enough for us at Euro 2016. We have quite a few things to iron out but I think we're on the right road. We have

to be positive. If we get to France thinking negatively, we'll get nowhere."

Scotland's sole victory over Italy came in 1965 and this was the sides' first meeting since a Euro 2008 qualifier. Almost immediately, Gordon Strachan's men were under threat, Marshall producing saves to stop Antonio Candreva's fierce free-kick and Giaccherini's follow-up.

Deploying his preferred 3-5-2, Conte saw Italy create chances but he will be disappointed with the lack of return. Yet he added: "I couldn't fault the lads' commitment and we didn't concede, or give Scotland any real chances." Giaccherini was wasteful twice more, ballooning over from 12 yards from Candreva's assist and, after the Lazio man's volley flew wide, spinning a great chance beyond post and bar having sprinted behind the defence

to meet De Rossi's smart delivery. Candreva and Roma's Alessandro Florenzi, whose shot fizzed just off target, came close again but it was a frustrating half for the Azzurri. An early return to the pitch three minutes before kick-off was a sign of Italy's intentions and the hosts visibly moved up a gear before breaking the deadlock.

De Rossi threaded a great ball through for Eder, who did well to hold off his markers and push the ball into the path of Pelle, whose powerful strike gave Marshall no chance. Conte made a series of changes which likely left Conte with more questions than answers as Italy failed to build on their opener. Norwich striker Steven Naismith's tame shot went just wide of the upright and although the visitors pushed for a late equaliser, Italy were firmly in command and happy to sit on the win. — AFP

'GABIGOL' OFF MARK AS BRAZIL DOWN PANAMA

LOS ANGELES: Rising teenage star Gabriel scored on his international debut as Brazil warmed up for the Copa America Centenario on Sunday with a 2-0 victory over Panama. Gabriel affectionately known as "Gabigol" underscored his precocious talent by calmly finishing Brazil's second goal on 73 minutes soon after replacing veteran striker Jonas as a second-half substitute.

Santos forward Gabriel, 19, is regarded as the natural heir to Neymar, who also played his club

football for the iconic Brazilian side before his transfer to Barcelona in 2013. The teenager, who has scored 19 goals in 74 appearances for Santos since 2013, had been called up to Brazil's senior squad in March but was an unused substitute.

However he wasted no time in making his mark after being introduced by manager Dunga for his first senior appearance at Denver's Dick's Sporting Goods Park on Sunday. The teenager pounced on a loose ball in the area,

took one touch to control and then drilled a low finish past Panama goalkeeper Jaime Penedo before racing to the Brazil dugout to hug manager Dunga.

Earlier, Benfica striker Jonas had given Brazil the lead after only two minutes to continue his rich vein of form from the European club season. Jonas, recalled to the Brazil squad in March after four years in the wilderness following his last cap in 2012, swept home a low cross from Atletico Mineiro's Douglas Santos to make it 1-0.

The 32-year-old forward who finished this season with one of the best goalscoring records in Europe with 34 in all competitions was a late addition to Brazil's Copa America squad after an injury to Ricardo Oliveira earlier this month. But aside from Jonas and Gabriel's goals it was a frustrating evening for Brazil, who were unable to convert long periods of dominance into goals. Penedo denied Barcelona fullback Dani Alves midway through the first half, tipping over the defender's venomous free-kick from 25 yards. Chelsea midfielder Willian also threatened the Panamanian goal, linking up with Jonas only to see his shot blocked with a desperate covering lunge by Felipe Baloy on 27 minutes.

Renato Augusto also went close with a header that hit the side netting while second half substitute Hulk should have done better with a header from point-blank range that Penedo parried away. Brazil open their Copa America campaign against Ecuador at the Pasadena Rose Bowl on Saturday, before games against Haiti and Peru in Group B. Panama face Argentina, Chile and Bolivia in Group D of the special edition Copa America, which is being held in the United States for the first time to celebrate the competition's 100th anniversary. — AFP

RASHFORD SIGNS NEW MAN UNITED CONTRACT

LONDON: Teenage breakthrough star Marcus Rashford has signed a new contract committing him to Manchester United until 2020 with an option for a further year, the club announced yesterday. In the first major squad announcement since Jose Mourinho was appointed manager last week, Rashford and fellow academy graduate Cameron Borthwick-Jackson have both committed their futures to the club.

Rashford, 18, has scored eight goals in 18 appearances for United since breaking onto the scene in February and is now in contention for a place in England's Euro 2016 squad. "I am delighted to have signed a new contract," Rashford said in a press release. "I have always been a Manchester United fan so to be playing in the first team really is a dream come true. I am grateful for having the chance to prove myself. To be able to play football at the biggest club in the world means everything to me and my family."

Rashford scored within three minutes of kick-off on his England debut in Friday's 2-1 win over Australia, enhancing his claim to a place in manager Roy Hodgson's final 23-man squad. "Marcus is a naturally talented footballer with great potential," said United executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward. "He has taken his chances well and has integrated into the first team very quickly."

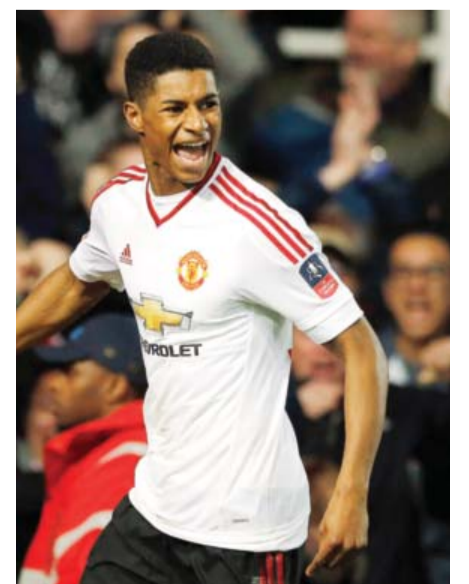
"I am delighted that Marcus has signed a new contract. He is at the right club to continue his development. He is still very young and we need to be patient, but he is developing in the right way and we believe

he has a great future ahead of him." Like Rashford, Borthwick-Jackson has signed a four-year contract with an option for a further year.

The 19-year-old left-back made his United debut last November and went on to make 14 appearances. "Last season was an incredible experience to make my first-team debut and a dream come true for myself and my family," he said. "I feel it stands me in good stead for continuing my development as a Manchester United player." — AFP



COLARADO: Team Brazil fans celebrate their team's goal against Panama during an international friendly match at Dick's Sporting Goods Park in Commerce City. — AFP



Marcus Rashford

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PARIS: (L-R) French junior Minister for Transport, Maritime Economy and Fishery Alain Vidalies, Minister of Finance and Public Accounts Michel Sapin, Prime Minister Manuel Valls, Labour Minister Myriam El-Khomri and Culture Minister Audrey Azoulay attend a government meeting on the fight against undeclared work yesterday at the hotel Matignon in Paris. — AFP

FRENCH TRANSPORT TO BE HIT AHEAD OF EURO 2016

UNIONS STICKING TO THEIR GUNS TO SCARP CONTESTED LABOR REFORMS

PARIS: Looming air and train strikes are threatening to bring chaos to France less than two weeks before Euro 2016 kicks off, with unions standing firm yesterday in demanding contested labor reforms be scrapped. As the head of France's bosses' federation accused unions of behaving like "terrorists," the fresh industrial unrest was set to hit transport just days before fans begin arriving for the start of the football championships on June 10.

And Paris tourism chiefs voiced fears that the strikes and rallies that have frequently descended into violence were putting off visitors to one of the world's top tourist destinations. "The scenes of guerilla-type action in the middle of Paris, beamed around the world, reinforce the feeling of fear and misunderstanding" among potential visitors still anxious after the November 2015 terror attacks which killed 130 people in Paris, the tourist board said. President Francois Hollande and the Socialist government are refusing to buckle to the headline CGT union's demand that it withdraw the planned reforms.

After attempting to paralyse the country with blockades of refineries and fuel depots last week, the union has responded by calling for strikes on the national rail network beginning Tuesday and on the Paris Metro from Thursday. Air travellers are also set to face more cancellations and delays.

'A good sign'

After weeks of trading insults, CGT leader Philippe Martinez revealed he had received a phone call from Prime Minister Manuel Valls to discuss the bitter standoff. Martinez refused to reveal what they had discussed in Saturday's call but told BFMTV: "The fact that he deigns to call the spokesman of France's biggest union rather than denigrate him is a good sign."

But Pierre Gattaz, head of the MEDEF employers' federation, didn't mince his words about what was needed. "To have the rule of law respected, you have to ensure that minorities who behave a bit like hooligans, like terrorists, do

not block the whole country," he told the daily Le Monde yesterday. On the ground, six of France's eight oil refineries were still halted or running at reduced capacity due to union action. Workers at the oil terminal in the northern port of Le Havre—which supplies kerosene to Paris's two main airports—voted yesterday to extend their blockade until Wednesday. Despite parts of western France still suffering from severe shortages, supplies were gradually returning to petrol stations after police cleared blockades on Friday. Aviation unions have called for stoppages next weekend and Air France pilots voted Monday to go on strike for at least six days in June in a separate dispute over productivity targets, which could spark added chaos for visitors to Euro 2016.

Unions furious

The measures at the heart of the dispute are aimed at injecting more flexibility into France's famously-rigid labor market by making it easier to hire and fire employees.

Companies would also be able to negotiate terms and conditions with their workers rather than be bound by industry-wide agreements. But the unions say the moves will erode job security and fail to bring down unemployment which is stuck at just under 10 percent. Unions are also furious that the government rammed the reforms through the lower house of parliament without a vote.

They have called for another national day of rallies and strikes on June 14, the day that the Senate begins examining the law. Despite the disruption caused to their daily lives, nearly half of French people still support the union's call, a poll showed. Forty-six percent want the government to scrap the reforms, according to the poll in the Journal du Dimanche newspaper on Sunday, while 46 percent think they should be changed.

The conflict comes a year before presidential elections in which Hollande is considering seeking a second term despite popularity ratings that are among the lowest for a post-war French leader. — AFP

BOURSES FALL IN BROAD SELL-OFF

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Shares in the Gulf fell in a broad sell-off yesterday as investors booked profits after a dip in oil prices. Egypt was lower as foreign funds exited positions. Saudi Arabia's index lost 1.1 percent, its lowest close since April 11, before the kingdom announced plans to diversify away from hydrocarbon dollars. Eighty-eight percent of the shares closed down.

Petrochemical shares were the main drag with Saudi Basic Industries, the largest listed producer, dropping 1.8 percent, taking its losses to 3.0 percent since Brent prices fell back below \$50 a barrel.

Banking shares failed to hold onto earlier gains, with the sub-index edging down 0.4 percent. Banque Saudi Fransi fell 2.5 percent, its sixth session of losses out of the last seven. Elsewhere, Dubai's index fell 1.6 percent, ending five sessions of gains as investors lacked impetus to build further positions.

Emaar Properties lost 2.2 percent and Dubai Islamic Bank, which was a top gainer on Sunday, slumped 4.1 percent. Abu Dhabi's index erased earlier gains and dropped 0.9 percent in the heaviest volumes in seven weeks. Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank and First Gulf Bank, whose combined market value is a fifth of the total market, fell 1.1 and 2.0 percent respectively.

Qatar's index dropped 1.3 percent to close at a 3 1/2-month low. Oil-linked shares Gulf International Services and Qatar Gas Transport fell 3.4 and 1.9 percent. In Egypt, the main index edged down 0.4 percent, as foreigners exited positions, stock exchange data showed. Last week, international investors were net buyers of Egyptian shares. Real-estate development stocks were the main drag, with Amer Group Holding and Porto Group Holding slumping 5.9 and 3.5 percent.

But investment firm Pioneers Holding added 0.8 percent after the company reported a 46.9 percent rise in first-quarter profit of 354.5 million Egyptian pounds (\$39.92 million). — Reuters

STRONGER ECONOMY LETS ECB KICK BACK, LET STIMULUS WORK

FRANKFURT: Europe's economy is finally showing signs of increasing strength, after years of sluggishness and false starts. And that means the European Central Bank likely won't have to step up its ongoing 1.74 trillion-euro (\$1.93 trillion) stimulus program when it meets this week.

Fear not - the chief monetary authority for the countries that use the euro will go on pumping newly printed money into the European economy in an effort to raise inflation. But that's only due to measures that were decided at previous meetings, and which are either still running or just now being implemented. So analysts don't expect any new stimulus jolts to be announced at Thursday's meeting of the bank's 25-member governing council in Vienna. There's little sign that President Mario Draghi and Co. are ready to drop more stimulus news. Some economists are saying don't expect anything more for the rest of this year, if at all.

The ECB is holding steady just as the US Federal Reserve seems to be moving close to a rate increase at its June meeting. It hiked its key rate in December from near zero to a range between 0.25 percent and 0.5 percent, but then held off any more increases amid unsettling swings in stock markets. Global jitters seem to have eased since then. The US recovery is more advanced, so Fed chief Janet Yellen can contemplate withdrawing some stimulus.

Inflation is still way too low, at minus 0.2 percent, and unemployment is painfully high at 10.2 percent. But there are two big factors that should let the ECB kick back for a few months at least.

First, the economy in the 19 countries that share the euro currency is finally showing signs of a somewhat more robust and lasting recovery after a miserable six years in which it was battered by global and local crises. The eurozone grew 0.5 percent in the first quarter from the quarter before. It finally regained the level of output it had in the first quarter of 2008, before the global financial crisis associated with the collapse of US investment bank Lehman Brothers, and before a crisis over high debt in some countries that almost broke up the currency union. Figures published Monday showed that business and consumer optimism rose to a four-month high in May, while inflation expectations picked up across a range of businesses. Auto sales have risen for 32 straight months. Second, oil prices have crept up, edging over \$50 per barrel last week for the first time since July 2015. That should give the ECB a tiny bit of help by raising inflation. Economist Carsten Brzeski at ING-DiBa wrote in an email that "higher oil prices should lead to the first upward revision of the ECB's staff inflation forecasts since... early 2015." That was when the bank launched a major stimulus effort through bond purchases with newly printed money dubbed quantitative easing, or QE.

The last ECB projections in March foresaw only 0.1 percent inflation this year and 1.3 percent in 2017. That's well below the bank's goal of just under 2 percent, considered compatible with growth and jobs.

Meanwhile, June will see the implementation of two stimulus measures decided April 21. Those are the decision to purchase high-quality corporate

bonds and to offer banks ultra-cheap long-term loans. Both steps are aimed at increasing lending, business and consumer spending, and, in theory, higher prices as demand for goods increases.

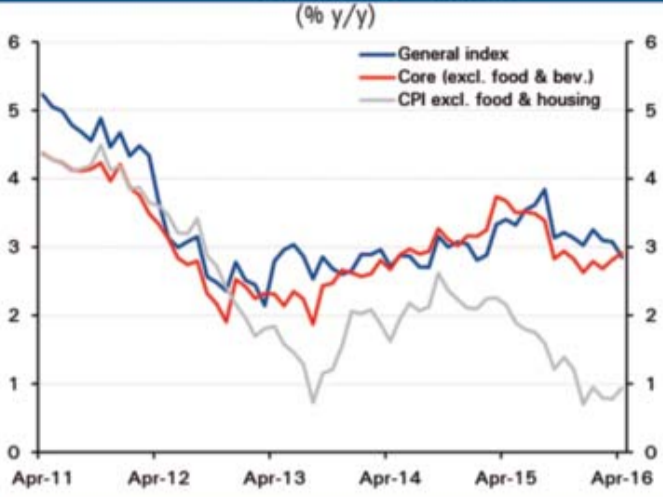
The ECB is already purchasing 80 billion euros (\$89 billion) in government through at least March 2017 and some private-sector bonds in a program that began in March 2015. Those purchases hand banks money that didn't exist before in return for their bonds. That's something only a central bank - the legal issuer of the currency - can do and aims to boost lending and business activity.

Additionally, the ECB has cut its benchmark interest rate to zero. Banks that deposit funds for safety at the ECB are even charged a negative interest rate of 0.4 percent, a step aimed at pushing them to lend it instead. Europe's recent upturn, of course, faces risks that could knock it off track. That's why Draghi will likely sound a bit gloomy. He doesn't want anyone to think he's about to turn off the tap.

With reason. For one, Britain votes June 23 on whether to leave the EU. A British exit, or Brexit, could shake Europe's recovery. "Of course, it remains to be seen if the May-April improvements in eurozone consumer and business confidence can be sustained or whether renewed falls occur," says Howard Archer of IHS Global Insight.

"There are certainly a number of downside risks, including still appreciable global economic uncertainties, the possibility of the U.K. voting to leave the EU, and the danger of further terrorist attacks in Europe." — AP

Consumer price inflation



Inflation in food prices



Inflation in housing services



Table 1: Consumer price inflation

	Month-on-month		Year-on-year		Annual average	
	Mar-16	Apr-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	2014	2015
Food & beverages	-0.5	-0.5	4.1	2.6	2.9	3.4
Tobacco & cigarettes	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.0	7.8	6.0
Clothing & footwear	0.0	0.3	-0.5	-0.1	2.2	-0.9
Housing services*	2.5	0.0	6.3	6.3	4.4	6.0
Furnishings & household	1.2	0.1	2.9	3.0	4.8	3.4
Healthcare	0.3	-0.1	1.2	1.3	-0.6	1.7
Transportation	-1.1	0.0	-1.4	-1.4	1.5	0.5
Communication	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.6	-0.8	0.4
Recreation & culture	0.0	0.0	-1.2	-0.4	0.9	-0.2
Education	0.1	0.0	3.5	3.5	4.7	4.4
Restaurants & hotels	-0.9	0.0	2.4	2.4	3.1	5.7
Other goods & services	0.2	0.1	0.7	0.8	-0.7	1.9
Core**	1.0	1.0	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.2
General index	0.7	0.7	3.1	2.9	2.9	3.3

Source: Central Statistical Bureau, NBK estimates

KUWAIT'S INFLATION EASES TO 2.9% AS FOOD PRICES DROP

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: Inflation in consumer prices eased to 2.9 percent year-on-year (y/y) in April, on the back of a slowdown in food inflation. Core inflation (which excludes food prices) was slightly higher at 2.9 percent y/y, as inflation in the clothing & footwear and furnishings segments continued to gather some pace in April. Inflation is projected to hold steady in the near-to-medium term, amid low global commodity prices and a stronger dinar. As a result, we foresee annual average inflation in 2016 to ease slightly to 3.0 percent compared to 3.3 percent in 2015.

Inflation in local food prices continued to trend lower in April. Food inflation eased from 4.1 percent y/y in March to an almost one-year low of 2.6 percent y/y in April, on the back of a slowdown in most of its subcomponents. Inflation in global food prices witnessed a rebound, climbing into positive territory for the first time since June 2015. According to the Commodity Research Bureau's global commodity index, inflation in international food prices logged in a reading of 2.6 percent y/y for April.

Inflation in furnishings & household maintenance saw some stabilization in April; clothing & footwear costs gained some momentum during the same peri-

od. Inflation in furnishings stabilized at around 3 percent y/y in April. Clothing & footwear prices continued to fall during the same period, but at a much lower rate of -0.1 percent y/y. The stronger dinar and more frequent and longer seasonal promotions have kept costs low in this component.

Inflation in the 'other goods & services' segment continued to edge higher in April but still remained relatively low. Inflation in this component, which is mostly comprised of imported goods such as personal care products and jewelry, has been kept in check by lower imported inflation, thanks to the ongoing strength in the local currency against all major currencies except the US dollar.

Inflation in wholesale prices decelerated sharply in the first quarter of 2016, amid weaker inflation in agriculture, livestock & fishing, mining & quarrying and in particular, manufacturing (oil related). Inflation across the major components of the wholesale price index is forecast to remain moderate in at least the near-to-medium term, on the back of a softer oil price environment and a stronger local currency. This should in turn help keep inflation in the consumer price index at a steady pace in 2016.

News

in brief

US dollar stable against KD at 0.302

KUWAIT: Exchange rate of the US dollar against the Kuwaiti dinar stabilized at KD 0.302, as well as the euro which stood at KD 0.335 compared to the exchange rates of Sunday, said a statement by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) yesterday. According to the CBK, the exchange rate of the sterling pound went up to KD 0.442. The Swiss franc stabilized at KD 0.303 while the exchange rate of the Japanese Yen remained unchanged at KD 0.002.

OPEC basket at \$44.76 pb

VIENNA: OPEC daily basket price went down 67 cents and stood at \$44.76 a barrel last Friday compared to \$45.43, said the organization yesterday. The new OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE), Meruy (Venezuela) and Minas (Indonesia).

Qatar's CBQ to hold investor meetings

DUBAI: Commercial Bank of Qatar has mandated Citi, HSBC, Morgan Stanley and National Bank of Abu Dhabi to arrange investor meetings ahead of a potential benchmark dollar bond issue, the Doha-listed lender said yesterday. The meetings will be held in Asia, the Middle East and Europe from May 30, Commercial Bank said in a bourse statement. This may lead it to issue a benchmark dollar bond as part of its \$5 billion Euro Medium Term Note (EMTN) program, it said. Benchmark-sized typically means a bond of at least \$500 million.

Turkish non-performing loans on a rising trend

ISTANBUL: Non-performing loans in Turkey's banking sector have been on a "significant" rising trade as of late, although banks have so far successfully managed their bad debts, the head of Turkey's largest listed lender, Isbank, said yesterday. Adnan Bali also told reporters that measures need to be taken to ensure the banking sector, which he said was strategic, remained healthy.

ADFG AND GFH TO LAUNCH ISLAMIC BANK IN ABU DHABI

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi Financial Group (ADFG) and Bahrain's GFH Financial Group are jointly setting up an Islamic bank in Abu Dhabi's new financial free zone with initial capital of \$100 million, ADFG's chief executive told Reuters yesterday. Privately-owned investment management firm ADFG and GFH have received preliminary approval to launch the bank at Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), the second financial free zone in the United Arab Emirates after the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC).

It will be the first new bank set up at the recently-launched ADGM, which has so far attracted Aberdeen Asset Management and Macquarie Capital to open offices. "The bank will be opening very soon, it will be run as a commercial bank accepting offshore deposits and dealing in dollars," ADFG Chief Executive Jassim Alseddiqi told Reuters in an interview.

He added ADFG plans to have its own presence in the financial free zone, declining to give further details. ADFG recently raised its stake to 11.74 percent in Islamic investment bank GFH from 10 percent, and Alseddiqi said the two firms were seeking other joint opportunities.

ADFG is best known outside the emirate for its 370 million pound (\$541

million) purchase in December 2014 of New Scotland Yard, the former headquarters of London's Metropolitan Police, as well as developing luxury flats at a plot next to Buckingham Palace in the British capital.

The firm, which has built up \$3.5 billion of assets under management since it was set up in 2010, sees this figure doubling by the end of 2016 and trebling by 2020, according to Alseddiqi, as it pursues a number of new investments. "There are several deals (real estate and financial services) in the pipeline we are working on, as when activities slow, we thrive," he said, adding, "expect the second half of 2016 to be more active."

The firm is eyeing acquisitions at home as well as abroad, including in eastern Europe where it already has investments. But it has no specific investment target in terms of value.

"We have the firepower. If we find opportunities for \$2 billion we will invest, but if we don't find (anything), it will be zero investment," he said. ADFG's capital markets arm, Integrated Capital, which acted as co-lead in the \$500 million bond issued by Etihad Partners last week, will play a similar role on an upcoming regional sukuk offering for a financial group, Alseddiqi said, declining to name the firm as it is a listed entity. — Reuters



TOKYO: People walk by an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Asian stocks rose yesterday following Wall Street's gains as investors looked ahead to economic data this week from China, Australia and Korea. —AP

OIL PRICES DROP AS IRAQ RAISES EXPORTS

LONDON: Oil prices edged lower towards \$49 a barrel yesterday as Iraq raised its crude exports target ahead of an OPEC meeting while Canadian production was set to restart after huge wildfires. Attention turned to a meeting of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Vienna on Thursday, though most analysts did not expect any changes in the group's production.

While OPEC has been unable to agree on an output freeze in an effort to support prices, Iraq was the latest Middle East producer to raise its export quota ahead of the

meeting, supplying 5 million barrels of extra crude to its partners in June. "We do not expect any (OPEC) agreement on a specific production target to be achieved," Commerzbank analysts said in a note. "Iraq plans to discuss freezing oil production, but Iran and Saudi Arabia are unlikely to be ready to take any such step."

Brent crude futures were at \$49.27 a barrel at 1222 GMT, down 5 cents, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures was down 6 cents at \$49.27. Strengthening of the dollar on higher expectations for a

near-term US interest rate rise also weighed on commodities priced in the currency. Trade was subdued because of public holidays in Britain and the United States, where Monday's Memorial Day is seen as the traditional start of US summer driving season. Vienna-based consultancy JBC Energy said that global oil demand between January and April rose by 1.5 million barrels per day from a year earlier. That was stronger than many forecasts and was driven by strong consumption in the United States, China and India. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.747
Indian Rupees	4.515
Pakistani Rupees	2.887
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.070
Nepali Rupees	2.814
Singapore Dollar	220.990
Hongkong Dollar	38.984
Bangladesh Taka	3.860
Philippine Peso	6.490
Thai Baht	8.510

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.776
Qatari Riyal	83.207
ani Riyal	786.772
Bahraini Dinar	804.440
UAE Dirham	82.471

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	32.750
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.484
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.216
Tunisian Dinar	145.900
Jordanian Dinar	426.740
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	2.159
Morocco Dirham	31.536

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	302.750
Euro	340.590

Sterling Pound	445.040
Canadian dollar	234.420
Turkish lira	103.330
Swiss Franc	307.670
Australian Dollar	220.400
US Dollar Buying	301.550

GOLD	
20 Gram	245.630
10 Gram	125.740
5 Gram	63.710

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.000
Canadian Dollar	232.835
Sterling Pound	443.675
Euro	337.825
Swiss Frank	302.415
Bahraini Dinar	801.595
UAE Dirhams	82.735
Qatari Riyals	83.950
Saudi Riyals	81.480
Jordanian Dinar	426.835
Egyptian Pound	34.024
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.063
Indian Rupees	4.514
Pakistani Rupees	2.886
Bangladesh Taka	3.855
Philippines Peso	6.486
Cyprus pound	577.120
Japanese Yen	3.740
Syrian Pound	2.375

Nepalese Rupees	3.820
Malaysian Ringgit	74.840
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.470
Thai Bhat	9.450
Turkish Lira	102.530

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.437176	0.446176
Czech Korune	0.004535	0.016535
Danish Krone	0.041522	0.046522
Euro	0.0332255	0.0340255
Norwegian Krone	0.032605	0.037805
Romanian Leu	0.086889	0.086889
Slovakia	0.009030	0.019030
Swedish Krona	0.032549	0.037549
Swiss Franc	0.297658	0.307858
Turkish Lira	0.097693	0.107993

Australasia	America	
Australian Dollar	0.209735	0.221235
New Zealand Dollar	0.197230	0.206730

Canadian Dollar	0.227551	0.236051
US Dollars	0.298800	0.303300
US Dollars Mint	0.299300	0.303300

Bangladesh Taka	0.003444	0.004018
Chinese Yuan	0.044673	0.048173

Hong Kong Dollar	0.036981	0.039731
Indian Rupee	0.004188	0.004578
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002681	0.002861
Kenyan Shilling	0.003115	0.003115
Korean Won	0.000247	0.000262
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070434	0.076434
Nepalese Rupee	0.002886	0.003056
Pakistan Rupee	0.002694	0.002974
Philippine Peso	0.006343	0.006623
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.217343	0.223343
South African Rand	0.013506	0.022006
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001698	0.002278
Taiwan	0.009184	0.009364
Thai Baht	0.008145	0.008695

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.796879	0.804879
Egyptian Pound	0.028001	0.031119
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000190	0.000250
Jordanian Dinar	0.423217	0.430717
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020848	0.044848
Nigerian Naira	0.001249	0.001884
Omani Riyal	0.780333	0.786013
Qatar Riyal	0.082488	0.083701
Saudi Riyal	0.079887	0.080837
Syrian Pound	0.001284	0.001504
Tunisian Dinar	0.142415	0.150415
Turkish Lira	0.097693	0.107993
UAE Dirhams	0.081543	0.082692
Yemeni Riyal	0.001369	0.001449

SPECIAL REPORT

DECODING FATCA

By KV Hari Prasad

Tax evasion, a predicate offence, is a crime in many countries including the United States of America (the US). Under the existing Taxation Laws of the US, Income earned by US persons both within the US and outside the US is taxable. This makes it obligatory for all the US citizens and permanent residents of the US earning income outside the US, to declare and file returns annually on income earned globally. This voluntary disclosure and filing was running all these years on 'the honor system'. However, US systems lacked the infrastructure to verify in any given year, whether all its citizens and permanent residents disclosed their income to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Given the flip side of human nature, irrespective of nationality, this lacuna in US system was much exploited by certain US citizens for decades and evaded taxes on income earned outside the US.

Collaboration

Grappled with this tax evasion issue by its citizens, the US tax authorities came up with Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) in 2010 partnering bilateral agreements with countries and in turn with the Foreign Financial Institutions (FFIs) of the respective countries for identifying and disclosing the income earned by the US citizens.

By asking the FFIs to provide the listings of all the US citizens who hold accounts in their institutions, the US government foresees to make comparison, reconcile and identify those US citizens' tax returns who still evade tax. Consequently, through FATCA, the US tax authorities are collating information that should have already self-reported by their citizens through their annual tax return filing.

With an objective of improving the International Tax compliance, the Governments of Kuwait (Ministry of Finance - MoF) and the US (Secretary of Treasury) have signed IGA on April 29, 2015 setting out primarily (1) The obligations to obtain and exchange information with respect to US reportable accounts (2) Time and manner of exchange of information (3) Application of FATCA to Kuwait Financial Institutions (4) Collaboration on Compliance and Enforcement. Further to this, MoF, State of Kuwait, in its Resolution No. 48 dated Sept 15, 2015 has set out procedural aspect and timelines for implementation of the IGA.

Compliance

Compliance of FATCA has two sides to deal with. At the tax payer level and at the FFI level. Let us comprehend both. At the tax payers' level, US tax

payers shall file Form 8938 along with their individual federal tax return (Form 1040) to IRS, declaring the foreign financial assets that exceed certain threshold.

This form is filed if (a) Tax payers are filing a return other than a joint return and the total value of their specified foreign assets is more than \$200,000 on the last day of the tax year or more than \$300,000 at any time during the year; or (b) Tax payers are filing a joint return and the value of their specified foreign asset is more than \$400,000 on the last day of the tax year or more than \$600,000 at any time during the year. It would be ideal for US tax payers to consult local / US tax practitioners and take help in computing and filing US tax returns to IRS annually.

At the Compliance level of FFIs, Institutions, both Banks and other Financial Institutions in Kuwait and GCC that are subjected to FATCA must designate an employee to be responsible for ensuring the implementation of all the requirements of FATCA.

FFIs have no role in US persons tax computations and individual tax filing procedures. Accordingly, this becomes more a compliance profile at the Institution to ensure that FATCA is implemented in their entity which helps them in (a) identifying the US persons in their system (b) procedures developed internally to identify and report (c) actual reporting mechanism to the MoF and/or IRS about the reporting transactions of US persons, and (c) timeliness and reporting mechanism that is being followed. FFIs are responsible for the accuracy, completeness and correctness of the content of its reportable data.

Article (3) of the Ministerial (MoF) Resolution No. (48) of 2015, stipulates timelines for achieving certain tasks in the implementation of FATCA. The latest being June 30, 2016. Reportable Financial Institutions have to complete the following requirements and comply with its reporting having (a) Current Accounts of companies/entities that have one account or more than one account at the Institution with a value totaling more than \$250,000 or its equivalent in other currencies as on June 30, 2014 (b) All current accounts of individuals who have one account or more than one account with a value totaling between \$50,000 and \$1 million or its equivalent in other currencies as on June 30, 2014. — K V Hari Prasad, Partner, Risk Consulting, Russell Bedford - Bader Abdul Jader & Partners in Kuwait.

Note: Views expressed above are author's personal views on the subject and need not necessarily be the firm's views.



BERLIN: Farmers' boots are seen in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin during a protest action of milk farmers association yesterday. German government meets today with representatives of the milk and retailing branches to discuss the milk prices among other items. — AFP

AIR TRAVEL SLOWS AS AIRLINES CONFRONT FRAGILE ECONOMIES

IATA ANNUAL MEETING AND TRANSPORT SUMMIT JUNE 1-3

BERLIN: Air passenger demand in April rose at its slowest rate since January 2015, weighed by the March attacks on Brussels airport and highlighting safety as one of the main challenges facing top airline executives meeting this week. While airlines are enjoying a boost from lower oil prices, weakening economies and falling ticket prices are also posing problems for a sector which operates on thin profit margins. The International Air Transport Association's (IATA) latest air passenger figures, released on Monday, showed demand rose by 4.6 percent in April, following the suicide bomb attacks in Brussels that killed 16 people at the end of March.

How to improve security following other attacks on popular travel destinations is likely to feature high on the agenda at the annual IATA meeting from June 1 to June 3 in Dublin.

Airlines are also under pressure to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and CEOs will discuss proposals by UN agency ICAO for a global market-based measure to offset emissions.

The industry favours a global scheme, rather than a patchwork across the world, IATA Director General Tony Tyler told journalists ahead of the meeting. A possible British exit from the European Union and the US elections are also areas of concern, with European carriers already warning a "Brexit" could dampen travel demand.

While airlines' cost bases benefited from the lower price of fuel, oil has been creeping back up to under \$50 per barrel and the low oil price is hurting economies in Latin America, the Middle East and Russia, and oil firms cutting back on corporate travel has led to lower demand for seats in premium cabins. "It's still set reasonably fair for the airlines' financial performance, but the bigger worry is the fragility of the global economy," IATA chief economist Brian Pearce said yesterday.

Air fares fell around 4 percent in early 2016 and are expected to decline further, says IATA, which represents around 260 airlines accounting for 83 percent of global air traffic. "There's quite a

lot of capacity growth despite the weaker pricing environment, especially from the European legacy carriers, and I would have expected to see more discipline on that," aviation consultant John Strickland said. Delta Air Lines, British Airways owner IAG and Lufthansa are among major carriers to have trimmed growth plans to protect prices. Tyler, attending his last meeting as director general before handing over to Alexandre de Juniac, the outgoing CEO of Air France-KLM, will give an industry profit outlook on Thursday.

IATA has previously forecast net profits will reach record levels of \$36.3 billion in 2016, for a net profit margin of 5.1 percent, with North American carriers accounting for over half of the total. Jonathan Wober, chief financial analyst at CAPA-Centre for Aviation, still expects industry margins to rise this year thanks to the low price of oil. "Demand is still broadly healthy, but there is also growing uncertainty at the macro level with cuts to world GDP forecasts and geopolitical tensions," he said. — Reuters

FOR MANY CHINESE MIGRANTS, THE LURE OF THE CITY IS FADING

WENZHOU, China/HONG KONG: After two decades trying to make a life in China's entrepreneurial city of Wenzhou, Ji Shouquan and his brother Shoufang are ready to head home.

They say they have no hope of stepping onto the city's housing ladder and it is getting more difficult to earn a decent wage. China is relying on millions of internal migrants taking up jobs in cities to boost the urban population and consumption. It hopes this will fuel more sustainable long-term economic growth and reduce the country's reliance on big industry and exports that powered the country's rise in the last three decades.

But migration is slowing down and workers are more reluctant to travel across the country to find jobs, trends that could undermine these efforts. "It's really tough to make money," said Shouquan, who earns about 5,000 yuan (\$767) a month as a sound technician in a karaoke lounge. "Of the six or seven friends who used to work at the KTV, only two of us are still holding on. Most have gone home." His taxi-driver brother, Shoufang, said that's what they'll probably end up doing too. Both have scrimped enough to buy property in their home town of Fuyang in the largely agricultural province of Anhui in eastern China, where home prices are about a fifth of the cost of Wenzhou, which is in the neighbouring province of Zhejiang.

"It's unrealistic for migrant workers like us to buy in Wenzhou, unless you've got your own business," Shoufang said. Government data shows that the number of migrant workers in 2015 reached close to 169 million. But that was up just 0.4 percent from 2014 - the weakest rise since the global financial crisis in 2009. The number of migrants searching for jobs outside of their home province dropped 1.5 percent - the first decline in six years. The government wants 60 percent of its population of almost 1.4 billion to be urban residents by 2020, up from 56.1 percent in 2015. Analysts say China's massive stock of unsold homes is evidence that the urbanisation drive is faltering as migrants struggle to build a future away from their villages or towns. Despite some signs that house prices are recovering from a downturn, official data shows that the inventory of unsold homes in China rose in the year to April by 4.5 percent to 450 million sq metres. The National Development and Reform Commission, the state planning agency, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Housing built in many third-and fourth-tier cities was initially designed to absorb demand from the government's urbanisation drive. But a lack of job prospects and access to social services has meant migrants continue to take their chances in China's biggest and most expensive urban centres - or head back home.

"Urbanisation should be based around human beings, and not just driven by man-made cities," said Wang Jun, a senior economist at China Centre for International Economic Exchanges, a Beijing-based think-tank. However, some industry watchers said the main impediment to migrants buying homes and settling in other cities is a lack of access to local services, such as free schooling for their children and healthcare.

Under China's system of internal passports, or hukou, migrants in search of better jobs in urban areas leave behind the public services they are entitled to as residents of their home towns and villages. — Reuters

CHINA FIXES YUAN AT OVER 5-YEAR LOW AGAINST DOLLAR

SHANGHAI: China's central bank yesterday set the value of the yuan currency at a more than five-year low against the US dollar, according to the national foreign exchange market, in a pattern of weakness in anticipation of higher US interest rates. The People's Bank of China (PBOC) put the yuan-also known as the renminbi (RMB) — at 6.5784 to \$1.0, down 0.45 percent from its fix on Friday, according to data from the China Foreign Exchange Trade System.

The level was the lowest since February 2011. China only allows the yuan to rise or fall two percent on either side of the daily fix, one of the ways it maintains control over the currency.

At 4:30 pm (0830 GMT) yesterday, the yuan stood at 6.5825 to \$1.0, down 0.35 percent from Friday's close. "The yuan will depreciate gradually," Song Yu, China economist for Goldman Sachs/Gao Hua Securities, told Bloomberg News. "The main driver for the decline would be a stronger dollar on the back of the expectation that the Fed will raise interest rates."

US Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen last week implied that interest rates could be lifted soon. Yellen, speaking at Harvard University on Friday, said a US rate hike "probably" would be justified "in the coming months" if economic data continued to strengthen. China rattled global investors with a surprise devaluation last August,

when it guided the normally stable yuan down nearly five percent over a week. In a sign that people are less willing to hold the Chinese currency, the yuan fell to sixth place from fifth as a global payments currency in April, trailing the Canadian dollar, according to SWIFT, the global provider of financial messaging services.



China's central bank on Friday denied a media report that it was retreating from allowing the yuan to trade in a more market-oriented way. The bank also dismissed another report that said financial authorities were pressing the United States to reveal the timing of a potential Fed rate hike, according to a statement on its microblog. "The People's Bank of China always adheres to market-oriented reform," it said, adding the yuan would remain "basically stable". — AFP

FORMER ZURICH INSURANCE BOSS SENN KILLS HIMSELF

ZURICH: Former Zurich Insurance boss Martin Senn has committed suicide six months after leaving the company under a cloud, a tragedy that comes less than three years after Zurich's finance chief took his own life. Senn, 59, shot himself at his family's Alpine resort home in Klosters, Swiss newspaper Blick reported. He had quit as chief executive of Zurich in December following a series of profit warnings and a botched takeover of British rival RSA.

"Martin Senn's family has informed us that Martin committed suicide last Friday," the company said in a statement on Monday, adding it was "stunned and deeply shaken".

His death follows the suicide of Zurich's finance chief Pierre Wauthier in August 2013, which brought into sharp focus the pressures facing senior corporate executives in Switzerland and elsewhere. Wauthier, 53, killed himself after writing a suicide note addressed "To whom it may concern" in which he described becoming demoralised by what he called a new, more aggressive tone at Zurich under then-Chairman Josef

Ackermann. Ackermann, a former head of Deutsche Bank, denied any wrongdoing but quit soon after Wauthier's death. Weeks before Wauthier's death, Swisscom Chief Executive Carsten Schloter had taken his own life.

Senn had been CEO since 2010 at Zurich, which he joined after stints with Swiss banks in Asia. He was married to a Korean musician and had two grown children.

Acquaintances, who asked not to be named given the sensitivity of the situation, described him as withdrawn and reclusive following his departure from the company, which Zurich said at the time was by mutual agreement.

"He wasn't doing so well," a former colleague said, but added that Senn had not given the impression of being suicidal. One person close to Senn said he had taken Wauthier's death hard. The rate of suicide has been falling in most countries in Europe since 2000, according to Ulrich Hegerl of the German Depression Foundation, a charity to prevent suicide. — Reuters

GREECE CAN'T IMPLEMENT SOME EXTRA DEMANDS

ATHENS: Greece has told its European and International Monetary Fund creditors it cannot implement some of the extra changes sought in exchange for fresh bailout loans, three sources close to the talks said yesterday.

The disagreement could further delay the disbursement of the bailout funds which Athens badly needs to pay off IMF loans in June, bonds of the European Central Bank maturing in July and increasing state arrears. Last week, after months of negotiations, Greece and its lenders concluded a key bailout review, opening the way for debt relief that Greece has long desired.

The lenders also gave the green light for the disbursement of 10.3 billion euros in tranches, on condition that Athens amends some recent laws concerning pensions, privatisations and freeing up the sale of bad loans. But in a letter sent to the lenders last week, Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said some of the additional demands could not be fulfilled, the sources said.

The finance ministry had no immediate comment and it was not immediately clear whether the release of the funds was at risk. According to one of the sources, some of them were related to bad loans and to pension reforms. "We cannot make any substantial changes. But we will proceed with the technical amendments discussed. Some of them are in the right direction," a government official told Reuters.

Greek newspaper Ta Nea said the letter had been sent to EU Commissioner Pierre Moscovici, the ECB's Benoît Coeure and the IMF's Poul Thomsen. In Brussels, an EU official confirmed that the two sides were still "working to finalise the measures" required after Athens raised its latest concerns.

The Ta Nea newspaper said specific areas of disagreement also included the privatisation of the country's grid operator ADMIE and freezing the wages of essential services such as the coastguard and police. During a parliamentary debate last week, the government replaced the relevant reference on the essential services with a sentence saying it had until the end of year to find alternatives measures. Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said a wage freeze "would have been a great injustice for men and women in the army, police and coastguard who work 24/7 helping a country that is struggling with an unprecedented refugee crisis to stand on its feet".

To qualify for the rescue funds, Greece has so far approved pension reforms, tax hikes, the establishment of a privatisation fund and a contingency mechanism for spending cuts to be activated if it seems set to miss fiscal targets. The measures have tested the left-led coalition government, which has a narrow parliamentary majority with 153 of the 300 lawmakers. One lawmaker has resigned from Tsipras's Syriza party in protest over the measures. — Reuters



GENEVA: Brazilian Roberto Azevedo, Director General of the World Trade Organization WTO, speaks to the media after the Trade Dialogues Business Event during a press conference at the World Trade Organization headquarters in Geneva yesterday. — AP

EUROPEAN SHARES RISE, DOLLAR FIRMS ON YELLEN'S HINT

LONDON: European shares hit one-month highs yesterday, while the dollar index rose to a two-month peak after Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen suggested that an interest rate hike in the United States may be around the corner.

The Fed should raise rates "in the coming months" if growth picks up and the labour market continues to improve, Yellen said on Friday.

St Louis Fed President James Bullard chimed in, saying on Monday, global markets appear to be "well-prepared" for a summer rate hike, although he did not specify a date for the policy move. The probability of a rate increase at the Federal Open Market Committee's June 14-15 meeting rose to around 34 percent from 26 percent on Thursday, according to CME's Fedwatch pro-

gram. Bets on an increase at the July 26-27 policy meeting edged up to 60 percent, more than double the level of a month ago.

Against a basket of currencies, the dollar was up 0.4 percent at 95.879, while the euro struggled near 2-1/2 month lows of \$1.1097 hit in the Asian session. The eurozone's blue-chip Euro STOXX 50 index was 0.1 percent

higher, while Germany's DAX was up 0.3 percent, hitting a one-month high. Trading volumes are expected to be thin as the London and New York markets are closed for a public holiday.

While higher US interest rates would sap global liquidity, Wall Street and European investors took Yellen's comments in their stride, as they suggested the world's largest economy was strong enough to weather another rate hike, following from the December hike. "The return to US rate hike expectations have reopened the possibility of short-term outperformance for European stocks," said Didier Duret, global chief investment officer at ABN-AMRO Private Banking, adding investors were keeping an eye on the dollar for it to break recent ranges.

The rise in European markets came after Japan's Nikkei stock index ended up 1.4 percent, as the yen weakened to a one-month low and expectations rose that the government would delay a sales tax hike scheduled for April next year. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he would delay the increase by 2-1/2 years, Masahiko Komura, vice president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, told reporters on Monday, echoing what a government source told Reuters on Sunday.

One uncertainty, however, is how markets would react if a postponement of

Japan's sales tax hike were to lead to a downgrade of the country's sovereign rating. "What would be scary is if there were to be a downgrade. I think equities would fall if that happens. That remains a risk," said Satoshi Okagawa, senior global markets analyst for Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation in Singapore.

EYES ON US DATA

This week investors will keep an eye on the all-important US non-farm payrolls and the Institute for Supply Management surveys. The May jobs report is due on Friday and a solid reading could heighten expectations for a June move. Economists expect US employers to have added 170,000 jobs this month, slightly more than they did in April. Hourly wages are expected to show a 0.2 percent increase from the previous month. Crude oil futures remained shy of the \$50 per barrel level after marking weekly gains, feeling some pressure from the stronger US dollar that made it more expensive for holders of other currencies.

Brent crude slipped to \$49.10 a barrel, after gaining 1 percent last week. US crude was down 0.3 percent at \$49.18 after rising about 3 percent for the week. The dollar's strength took a toll on spot gold, which dropped 0.9 percent to \$1,201 an ounce. It plumbled a low of \$1,199.60 earlier in the day, its lowest since late February. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report					
Monday 30 May 2016					
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price Index	▼ -13.93	5,378.88	5,392.81	5,396.37	5,364.95
Weighted Index	▼ -0.70	356.19	356.89	357.81	355.33
KSX 15	▼ -3.48	826.67	830.15	833.52	825.55

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	100	—	0.0
KARUS	0.0	0.0	0	0	42.0	—	0.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	330	—	0.0
NAPESCO	720	710	29,993	21,495	4	720	—
ENERGYH	51	48.0	12,012	613	10	51	—
GPI	43.5	43.0	1,746,643	75,507	46	43.5	—
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	98	—	0.0
Oil & Gas			1,788,648	97,811	60	777.84	—
KFOUC	178	178	3,000	534	2	178	—
BPCC	540	520	61,158	32,143	17	530	▲ 10.9
ALCUT	600	600	82,930	49,758	12	600	▼ -50.0
ALQURAIN	202	202	20,470	4,135	7	202	—
Basic Materials			187,568	86,570	38	944.04	▼ -17.53
KCEM	390	385	9,805	3,799	2	390	▲ 15.9
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	300	—	0.0
CABLE	400	390	84,700	33,313	25	400	▲ 10.9
SHIP	172	158	14,161	2,353	11	166	▼ -2.9
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	990	—	0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	275	—	0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	59	—	0.0
ACICO	295	285	30,055	8,896	5	295	▼ -19.0
GMC	310	310	3,490	1,082	3	310	—
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	142	—	0.0
KBMM	0.0	0.0	0	0	250	—	0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	204	—	0.0
EQUIPMENT	66	63	4,307,029	291,825	103	65	▲ 1.6
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	12.5	—	0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	102	—	0.0
SALBOOH	79	76	220,100	17,113	21	78	—
AGLTY	470	465	989,977	460,820	48	470	—
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	200	—	0.0
CLEANING	41.5	40.0	329,900	13,385	19	40.0	▼ -1.5
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	530	—	0.0
KGL	51	48.5	555,100	27,385	37	48.5	▼ -1.5
KPC	206	202	5,050	1,020	2	206	—
HUMANSOFT	1,420	1,320	8,367	8,559	5	1,380	▼ -0.0
NAFAS	166	166	50	8	1	166	▲ 10.9
SAFWAN	305	305	49,695	15,157	2	305	▲ 5.6
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	34.5	—	0.0
MAYADEEN	24.5	23.5	3,805,890	87,391	66	24.5	▲ 0.5
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	780	—	0.0
MTCC	74	70	606,256	43,687	19	74	▼ -1.8
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	680	—	0.0
ALAFCO	206	202	40,000	10,022	15	204	—
MUBARRAD	64	64	700,000	44,800	18	64	—
LOGISTICS	88	84	2,909,200	250,030	81	85	▼ -1.9
SCEM	78	78	100,000	7,800	2	78	▼ -3.9
GCEM	75	75	906	66	1	75	▼ -4.9
QIC	72	71	210,340	16,004	9	72	—
FCEM	75	73	111,500	8,254	6	75	—
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	93	—	0.0
SPEC	78	72	80,200	4,336	3	78	▲ 1.6
Industrials			15,158,771	1,356,078	504	1063.63	▼ -4.84
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	150	—	0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	64	—	0.0
PAPCO	106	106	90	10	1	106	—
CATL	156	154	30,150	4,694	6	156	—
DANAH	126	124	10,350,397	1,295,923	201	124	▲ 2.6
POULT	176	176	4,050	713	1	176	—
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	2,340	—	0.0
Consumer Goods			10,384,387	1,301,340	209	1127.23	▲ 2.87
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	200	—	0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	520	—	0.0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	208	—	0.0
Health Care			0	0	0	990.98	▲ 4.29
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	1,300	—	0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	210	—	0.0
SULTAN	60	59	53,000	3,178	5	60	▲ 2
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	25.0	—	0.0
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	385	—	0.0
FAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	200	—	0.0
OLUFAUEL	110	108	31,212	3,432	8	110	—
MUNT'AZAHAT	82	77	4,082,590	326,443	105	81	▲ 4
JAZERA	900	900	5,000	4,500	1	900	—
SOOR	110	110	1,434	153	3	110	—
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	110	—	0.0
ALRAI	136	134	14,762	1,991	4	136	▼ -2
ZIMAH	43.5	42.5	1,356,436	58,578	38	42.5	▼ -1
UFH	0.0	0.0	0	0	140	—	0.0
Mezzan	1,040	1,040	16,000	16,040	2	1,040	—
Consumer Services			5,560,434	414,521	166	948.26	▲ 5.30
ZAIN	350	345	928,146	320,495	33	345	▼ -5
OREDOO	1,120	1,100	621	685	2	1,120	▲ 20
HITSTELEC	41.0	39.0	17,021,317	679,939	227	39.0	▼ -1
VIVA	930	920	104,354	97,044	56	930	—
Telecommunications			18,054,438	1,098,163	318	603.98	▼ -0.81
NBK	640	630	515,020	324,463	40	630	—
GBK	228	226	404,675	91,469	10	226	▲ 2
CRK	430	430	749	322	1	430	▲ 5
ABK	0.0	0.0	0	0	330	—	0.0
ALMUTAHED	415	410	84,328	34,574	5	415	▼ -5
KIB	198	196	468,278	92,415	16	196	—
BURG	325	325	23,522	7,645	5	325	▼ -5
KFIN	470	465	904,452	420,716	36	465	▼ -5
BOUBAYAN	400	400	72,306	28,022	11	400	—
AUB	186	184	1,317,601	244,299	24	186	▲ 4
ITHMR	36.5	36.5	1,335,000	75,452	33	36.5	—
WARSAABANK	174	170	334,952	57,601	66	172	—
Banks			6,261,083	1,378,289	247	811.07	▲ 0.82
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	285	—	0.0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	670	—	0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	465	—	0.0
WINS	104	104	80,165	5,217	2	104	▲ 2.6
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	200	—	0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	50	—	0.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	32.0	—	0.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	355	—	0.0
Insurance			60,165	5,217	2	1614.28	▲ 2.65

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	37.0	36.0	1059026	38,587	27	36.0	▼ -0.5
KRE	56	55	54,508	2,996	3	55	▼ -1.0
UPC	89	88	21,333	1,882	2	88	▼ -1.0
NRE	90	89	170,158	15,150	5	90	—
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	360	—	
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	960	—	
AREEC	138	138	10,500	1,446	3	138	—
MASSALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	44.0	—	
AFABREC	33.0	32.0	2,067,475	68,410	53	32.0	▲ 0.5
ERESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	61	—	
MABANE	810	790	23,446	18,723	9	800	▼ -10.0
INAZZAT	77	75	140,596	10,545	6	75	▼ -5.0
INVESTORS	22.5	21.5	5,228,200	114,684	65	22.0	▲ 0.5
IRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	32.5	—	
ALTIARIA	76	76	184,926	14,055	4	76	▼ -1.0
SANAN	32.5	32.5	4,500	146	1	32.5	▼ -0.5
AYANRE	63	62	125,750	7,802	5	63	—
AGAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	60	—	
ALAGARIA	23.0	22.0	103,395	2,305	6	22.5	▲ 0.5
MAZAYA	120	120	283,100	33,972	4	120	▼ -2.0
ADNC	14.5	14.0	2,962,202	40,651			

M&AS ON THE RISE: OPPORTUNISTIC OR DESPERATION!

By Hayder Tawfik

Why the sudden pickup in the merger and acquisition activities, happening nearly across all business sectors? The financial environment has been quite encouraging for such business activities for a while but why suddenly corporate actions have taken off. Mergers and acquisitions in times of strong economic growth and rising corporate profitability are what I term opportunistic. Most of those that take place end up with disastrous consequences. Compared with other Mergers & Acquisitions booms, this year feels almost obligatory, rather than euphoric. And while some causes of the surge may give investors reason for concern, it's premature to declare a market top.



Big global multinationals have been reporting drop in the topline revenues growth and decline in earnings. Record corporate bond issuance and cheap financing have encouraged more opportunistic takeovers than the past few years. But are they really investment opportunities or more than corporate desperation to survive in this tough

global economic environment. Global economic growth is way below historical trend and it is getting even weaker. There is no price pressure so are not in strong position to increase prices. The most worrying thing for investors is that that past M&A peaks have tended to occur at the top of stock market cycles, not long before steep downward slides. But a closer analysis suggests that a more nuanced view is in order.

Private equity, big multinationals with good credit ratings, even companies that their credit ratings are classified as junk bonds have flooded the markets with bonds. These bonds offering have spurred takeover activity in sectors from pharmaceuticals, chemicals, high technology, agribusiness and seeds producers and the biotech business. Every company, no matter its size, is both a potential target and a likely acquirer. This trend, too, is a symptom of a bubble. There is very noticeable consideration in today's Merger & Acquisition and that is corporate pragmatism. It's what you might call a reluctant or desperate boom. Deals are happening largely because of deflationary forces that practically demand consolidation. Industries are acclimating to a barely growing global economy and a rapidly aging customer base.

Today's cheap and plentiful money may enable the merger & acquisition activity but they don't explain it. I believe senior executives are entering

into marriages of convenience with competitors out of desperation to preserve margins or rationalize costs. Activist hedge fund managers, flush with investor cash and hungry to make their mark, are fueling some of these desperate marriages with the threat of a proxy battle. Some senior executives don't feel safe any longer and no company is too large to withstand the pressure. The attempt takeover of Syngenta by the Chinese, and the recent announcement of the takeover of Monsanto by Bayer and even the rumor of Apple buying Time Warner are emblematic of today's Merger Acquisitions situation.

Taking into account today's low interest rates, lack of global growth, weak price pressure and desperation to create shareholder value, we could argue that companies are not paying over the top when taking over companies or merging with another business. The price paid is not that dangerous. So, as I said record merger & acquisitions is more likely to happen toward the end of any bull market. If we ignore valuations and prices paid and just focus on the logic behind today's merger & acquisitions, what we see is that corporates are pairing off from a position of weakness, not strength, at prices that don't seem that confident. There are a lot of things about this M&A boom that should worry investors, but its size alone isn't one of them.

Some business offer acquirers free cash flow generation and steady defensive income growth. Those big multinationals that are sitting on huge cash pile and keep accumulating more will not be targeted for a takeover but I think they will be the acquirers, as their growth potentials are getting weaker in a tough global economic environment. Most of these companies are in the hard and software technology and the oil sector. Their only way to grow their earning is to acquire those companies that have a niche market or have business related somehow to their business activities.

There is a potential that Merger & Acquisition will run out of control and it may spill into the financial market once again. It is not easy for individual investors to target those potential companies that will be taken over but if investors target those sectors I mentioned above and look for those companies with big potential growth and free cash flow generation then they might be into some winning bets. In the technology sector it is those companies that are involved in the software and contents rather than hardware or maturing business.

The size and numbers of deals announced this year may be an indication of much bigger deals on the way. If Merger & Acquisition continues the way it started the year then 2016 could be another strong year that for sure will propel the stock market to new highs. — Rasameel

REDEEM THE VALUE OF YOUR CAR AND MORE WITH RENAULT AL-BABTAIN RAMADAN OFFER

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company, the exclusive and authorized agent of Renault vehicles in Kuwait, launched a Ramadan campaign that will last until the end of the holy month. The campaign consists of granting the purchaser 10 years warranty on the new car or 500,000 km, free maintenance service for 2 years or 40,000 km, free registration and third part insurance.

Everyone that has purchased a Renault during the month of Ramadan will enter a draw; whereas the winner redeems the full amount of money paid for the car. Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company, congratulates all of its customers on the nearing of the holy month of Ramadan and is inviting them to visit showrooms to take advantage of its exclusive offers. Renault Al Babtain reaffirms through this generous offer that with them the Holy month of Ramadan will be special for the admirers of the giant French manufacturers' models in the region.

Renault vehicles combine between the perfection of the exterior and the spacious-

ness of the interior through modern chassis that are designed according to the latest innovative technologies, as well as powerful and complete performance, also providing it with the highest strength and technological standards that ensure safe and enjoyable driving. It also represents luxury at its best and offers the best global aspects of quality and innovation, as well as security-related characteristics and safety.

Renault vehicles are generally European in style, and Japanese in quality which succeeded in positioning itself due to its ability to meet all tastes and achieve satisfaction of people in search of different options when looking for practical vehicles.

Renault Babtain has become accustomed to having the best deals which are launched periodically; also, customer satisfaction is always their main goal. Constant communication with customers is also essential, especially after-sales service. Renault also invites customers to visit the showroom in Al-Rai area to benefit from the promotion offered.



MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS OPENS SHOWROOM IN JEDDAH

153RD SHOWROOM GLOBALLY AND 10TH OUTLET IN SAUDI

JEDDAH: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one of the leading jewellery retailer with its presence in 9 countries opened one more outlet in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to fortify its presence in the region. Prince Saud Bin Abdulla bin Abdul Aziz and Yusuff Ali MA, Managing Director - Lulu Group jointly inaugurated the new showroom in Lulu Hypermarket, Event Mall, Jeddah on 29 May in the presence of Dr PA Ibrahim Haji - Co-Chairman, Malabar Group, Shamal Ahamed MP - Managing Director International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Abdul Salam KP - Group Executive Director, Malabar Group, Gaffoor Edakkuni - Regional Director, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Mohammed Wasem, other dignitaries, invited guests, personalities from media and other well-wishers.

The new outlet unveils a significantly large collection of traditional as well as contemporary designer jewelries. Like all their other outlets, this outlet also will exhibit a wide range of diverse and trendy designs in gold (18 K & 22 K), IGI certified diamonds and precious stone jewellery from Italy, Singapore, Bahrain and India.

The branded jewelry segment of Malabar Gold & Diamonds is renowned globally for their flawless craftsmanship and impeccable style. The exclusive brands available at Malabar Gold & Diamonds includes Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewelry, Era - Uncut Diamond jewelry, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Divine - Indian Heritage jewelry, Precia - Precious Gem jewelry, Solitaire One - An exclusive solitaire brand, NV - Trendy 18K Gold jewelry, Ago Bay - Pearl jewelry and Starlet - Kids jewelry.

Celebrating the launch, the outlet will offer special promotions on purchase of gold and diamond jewelry. Customers purchasing jewelry worth SAR 500 or more can get a chance to win 1/4 kg gold each in six raffle draws, which makes 11/2 kg gold. In addition, the outlet also offers zero deduction on GCC gold exchange (22K) and customers can also buy 8 gram gold coins without paying any making charges. These offers are valid until 6 August.

The group does not lag behind when it comes to serving the underprivileged as well. The group has set apart a fixed percentage of its

net profit to the benefit of needy. The aim of the CSR department at Malabar Gold & Diamonds' is to primarily focus towards five priority areas namely health, education, environment, housing and women empowerment.

Malabar Group has established its presence in the Middle East market in a surprisingly short span of time. In Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Malabar Gold & Diamonds operates in Al Khobar, Dammam, Makkah, Riyadh (Murabba, Batha and Khurais Road), Jubail and now, Jeddah (two showrooms).

Malabar Gold and Diamonds is the flagship company of Malabar Group, a leading diversified Indian business conglomerate. Established in 1993 in Indian state of Kerala, Malabar Gold & Diamonds today has a strong retail network of 146 outlets spread across 9 countries, 10 wholesale units in addition to offices, design centers and factories spread across India, Middle East and Far East. With an annual turnover of \$4 billion, the company currently ranks among the world's top five jewellery retailers in terms of annual turnover and is the largest jewellery retailer of Indian origin.

HSBC BOOSTS OVERSIGHT OF SAFETY BOXES IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG: HSBC has introduced stricter rules for the use of safety-deposit boxes in Hong Kong, which customers use to store valuables but which are at risk of being abused for money laundering and terrorism financing. Safety boxes offer clients who lease them the possibility to store items such a jewels, art or any other valuable in a private and highly secure place, for instance a bank's vault.

"The nature of a safe deposit locker means it has the potential for misuse for criminal purposes," HSBC, Hong Kong's biggest bank, said in an emailed statement yesterday.

"We have introduced several clauses to the conditions of lease for safe lockers to further strengthen our defenses against financial crime and to enable us to co-operate with law enforcement agencies when required."

HSBC, which is also Europe's biggest bank by assets, did not elaborate on the changes that it was introducing or whether the new terms were being changed elsewhere. But it said the new, stricter rules, would apply also to old-time cus-

tomers who started to lease the safety locker before December 18, 2014. A report commissioned by the federal government of Switzerland highlighted in December how in certain circumstances safety boxes can be vulnerable to financial crimes.

HSBC agreed in 2012 to pay \$1.92 billion in U.S. fines for failing to stop hundreds of millions of dollars in drug money from flowing through the bank in Mexico, and has promised to fix the problems. The bank, which has also been caught up in a tax evasion scandal at its Swiss unit, has since been carrying out a thorough exercise to upgrade its compliance and risk globally. HSBC said it was reaching out to customers asking them not to deposit any property of illegal nature such as illegal drugs, offensive weapons, stolen property or guns. Holdings which could become a nuisance, for instance explosive, were also not allowed. Earlier yesterday, the South China Morning Post reported that HSBC has been sending letters to clients mentioning the tighter rules as of last month. — Reuters

LAGARDE REMOTE CONTROL MAKES EUROPEANS DOUBT IMF ROLE IN GREEK DEAL

BRUSSELS: Another sleepless night in Brussels before another debt deal with Greece. So far, so routine in the eurozone crisis. But for once it was not high-stakes calls to Athens that kept Europe's finance ministers up into the early hours. This time they were kept waiting for IMF officials to yield after months of wrangling with Greece's euro zone creditors over the Fund's demands that the Europeans give Athens debt relief.

The wait ended when absent International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde was reached on the phone as she travelled in Asia by her representatives in the room at the European Council's headquarters in Brussels. But the signs of indecision in the IMF have prompted questions among EU officials about the Washington-based Fund's commitment to rejoining their bailout for Greece-and about whether it is worth working with it in future.

Even Finnish Finance Minister Alexander Stubb, an ally of Germany in insisting on an IMF role as a guarantor for northern European voters that the Greeks will not squander their money, wondered out loud this week whether the eurozone should keep trying to get the Fund involved again "at any price". Questions about the IMF's engagement were raised by about a dozen senior officials in private conversations with Reuters since the agreement was reached. At 2 am on Wednesday, Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem presented a "breakthrough" deal under which the euro zone agreed to criteria for granting Greece relief on what it owes them in 2018. Poul Thomsen, the IMF's director for Europe, pledged to seek IMF board approval for resuming its role in the bailout. The agreement ended almost a year of Transatlantic argument in which Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras's cash-strapped government has often been little more than a spectator.

The IMF says Athens's debt burden is unsustainable and refused to be part of a third bailout package agreed by the eurozone in August unless the Europeans-not the Fund itself- rescheduled some of their loans. Some Europeans,

led by veteran German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble, refused. Schaeuble says Athens can survive for now and may be in a better position to pay in the future, and that writing off its debts would create a "moral hazard" that could undermine confidence.

During the negotiations this week, euro zone officials said they were startled by what they saw as unusually intense and difficult conversations among Thomsen and other IMF officials, and notably by the way in which the Dane had to wait for hours to reach Lagarde before finally accepting the accord. "It seemed the IMF couldn't agree on a common position among themselves," said a senior euro zone official, who noted the Fund's top lawyer had flown in from Washington to vet the deal.

IMF officials said the delay was largely a matter of the logistics in reaching Lagarde, a former French finance minister, who was visiting Kazakhstan before going to the Group of Seven summit in Japan. Nor was it unusual to wait for her green light. Another European official said Thomsen seemed "frustrated" during a final 10-minute call he made to Lagarde from a corridor outside the meeting room. He was heard saying the Fund should not agree but seemed to lose the argument, the EU official said. IMF spokesman Gerry Rice dismissed that interpretation: "The suggestion of 'overruling' is nonsense," he said. "The parameters of our negotiation positions are, as always, discussed and agreed in advance."

A final call was "typical in such cases", Rice added: "The managing director fully backed Poul's position." Whatever the reasons for the delay, Schaeuble, who has been insistent that the IMF be involved in order for him to persuade hawkish German lawmakers to give their blessing to the bailout, made no secret of his irritation with the Fund's behavior. "It might have been helpful if the managing director had been here," he told reporters, noting that it was Berlin, not the IMF, which was the main creditor to Athens. A key

eurozone argument in seeking a less dogmatic line from the IMF on debt relief than the Fund applies in other cases is that unlike most of the IMF's debtors, Greece can count on the euro zone to avert bankruptcy. For that reason, Europeans say, the Fund should worry less about seeing IMF loans repaid or the sustainability of Athens' debt in the long term and accept the role of fiscal overseer that Berlin wants it to play.

How far the Fund has accepted that position remains a question for the Europeans. Some IMF officials have briefed reporters since the deal that it will still require conditions to be met before the board will agree to lend Greece more. Against that, several eurozone officials told Reuters that whatever the Fund's functionaries might think, the top-level political commitment given by its boss, demonstrated in the late-night call, was proof that it was on board. "She is the real power player here," one European said. Several EU officials believed the deal was essentially in the bag before the Eurogroup met on Tuesday-when Lagarde met Schaeuble, Eurogroup President Dijsselbloem and French Finance Minister Michel Sapin at a G7 meeting in Japan last weekend.

That explained why Schaeuble had been so irritated by what he saw as Thomsen's hesitation past midnight. Another euro zone official said: "I'm confident the IMF will be on board. There still needs to be an intensive discussion of possible measures later this autumn, before they join." "But that should be OK." Some Europeans also said, however, that it may be no great problem if the much sought after IMF return to the bailout falls through, and certainly even Germany may be less insistent on keeping the uncooperative Fund involved in any future bailout.

A eurozone official said: "The whole experience over the last 12 months with the IMF and Greece has diminished backing for having the IMF involved even in such traditional supporters like Germany, the Netherlands or Finland." — Reuters



SAO PAULO: The Finance Minister in Brazil's interim government, Henrique Meirelles, speaks during the Economic Forum at the Brazil-France Chamber of Commerce in Sao Paulo yesterday. — AFP

EUROZONE ECONOMIC SENTIMENT IMPROVES FOR SECOND MONTH

BRUSSELS: Economic confidence is up in the 19 European countries that use the euro, a survey showed yesterday, thanks in particular to greater optimism among consumers that has led to a pickup in inflation expectations. The Economic Sentiment Indicator, a monthly survey by the European Union's executive Commission, rose to a four-month high of 104.7 points in May from 104.0 in April. Consumers expressed greater confidence over the general future of the eurozone economy, the prospects for employment as well as savings. Industry managers also sounded more upbeat, in particular about a rise in orders.

Among the eurozone's biggest countries, France saw the strongest rise in confidence, with Germany enjoying a smaller uptick. The industry and retail sectors expressed a greater interest in hiring, a potential boon to a region still blighted by unemployment of around 10 percent.

In a sign of confidence in consumer demand, companies were expecting to raise their selling prices, particularly in industry and services but also, to a lesser extent, in the retail and construction sectors. That will be encouraging news for the European Central Bank, which has unleashed a series of monetary stimulus programs to raise consumer price inflation. At last measure, inflation was minus 0.2 percent annually, far below the ECB's 2 percent target. Low inflation is a sign of a weak economy and can become ingrained, weighing on growth for years.—AP

Ford recreates historic march to Aqaba

Marching in seven SUVs and trucks to Aqaba



Recreating historic march to Aqaba with global truck and SUV lineup.

DEAD SEA/AQABA, Jordan: Ford is recreating one of the most daring and memorable military campaigns in history, employing its built Ford tough truck and unstoppable SUV lineup to follow the footsteps of Lawrence of Arabia across the desert.

One hundred years ago in today's Jordan, T E Lawrence led a grueling, two-month march through a desert many believed to be impassable to capture the Red Sea city of Aqaba. Even then, Ford vehicles navigated the desert terrain - archive footage shows Lawrence driving a Ford Model T throughout the region. Ford provided 40,000 Model T's, used as ambulances, tanks and transporters, to the WWI effort.

Fast forward one century, and customers in Middle East and Africa, and indeed around the world, continue to appreciate the capability and utility of Ford's legendary trucks and SUVs, whether in the desert or on the daily commute. Built Ford Tough is more than a slogan, it's the DNA of Ford's truck and unstoppable SUV lineup, and it informs the capability, comfort and innovation Ford customers expect.

In the next few years, Ford will bring four new all-new SUV to its global lineup, complete with smart technologies, enhanced safety features, and superior comfort that empower Ford SUV owners to go anywhere - anytime. William Dalrymple, famed author and historian, is an expert on T E Lawrence and is part of the program.

"The conquest of the Aqaba Fort via the desert was one of the most strategic and creative military victories of our time," said Dalrymple. "It was part of a series of events in World War I that created today's Middle East, and that continues to resonate to this day. Lawrence took great pride in his ability to endure the harshest of conditions for which the Bedouin are famous. I'm thrilled to join Ford in recreating this incredible event and even more so to be experiencing it from the comfort and style of a Ford SUV instead of by camelback."

Tough trucks and unstoppable SUVs

From the legendary F-series and Ranger pickup trucks, to the full-size Expedition and Explorer SUVs; and from the mid-size, chic Escape and the compact, muscular EcoSport SUV, Ford is showing the strength and breadth of its global truck and utility portfolio.

F-150

Ford F-150 continues to set the standard for the future of trucks. The all-new F-150 delivers an impressive combination of power, capability and efficiency - from advanced materials that improve durability and inhibit corrosion, to faster processors that enhance driving performance, to breakthrough cargo management and towing solutions. In designing the backbone of the F-150, Ford engineers improved the truck's signature fully boxed ladder frame. It is all-new with more high-strength steel than ever - making it stronger and lighter. High-strength, military-grade, aluminum alloys - already used in aerospace, commercial transportation, energy and many other rugged industries - are used throughout the F-150 body for the first time, improving dent and ding resistance and also saving weight. Overall, up to 700 pounds of weight have been saved, helping the F-150 tow more, haul more, accelerate quicker and stop shorter, and contributing to efficiency.

Ranger

The new Ford Ranger pickup brings a new level of comfort and refinement to its segment without compromising on the rugged capability that customers demand. The Ranger is a tough and capable mid-size pickup, with 3.2 and 2.2 Duratorq diesel engine options, and is available in several body options, from single and double cab to the striking Wildtrak version. The Ranger remains one of the top selling vehicles in South Africa. The new Ranger sold in Europe, Middle East and Africa is produced at Ford's Silverton Assembly Plant in Pretoria and exported to 148 markets.

Edge

The all new Ford Edge is the newest SUV taking part in the march to Aqaba. The Edge- the original crossover sport utility vehicle - demonstrates what happens when a proven leader gets even better. Loaded with more technology, higher levels of craftsmanship, and greatly improved vehicle dynamics, the latest Edge is a better vehicle by every measure.

Explorer

The Explorer is Ford's signature full-size SUV. It is the centerpiece of Ford's global utility vehicle lineup because it delivers an ideal combination of form and function. Introduced in 1990 as a 1991 model, Explorer featured generous interior space customers

were looking for, and was engineered specifically for people seeking adventure for their families and a way to express their individuality. The new Explorer offers more innovations and driver assist technologies. Explorer has been the most popular SUV in America for the past 25 years and is the best-selling three-row SUV in the world. The new 2016 Explorer, including the new Platinum model, was introduced in the Middle East at the end of 2015.



Expedition

Ford's biggest SUV, the Ford Expedition, joins the convoy as one of the best-selling SUVs in the Middle East. The new model is the most powerful, fuel-efficient Expedition to date, with a 3.5 liter EcoBoost V6 engine delivering 370PS and best-in-class torque. Customers appreciate the space, performance, comfort and capability the Expedition delivers for up to eight passengers and as much water and supplies as any small army would need to cross the Wadi Rum desert.

Escape

Escape is the second best-selling vehicle in the Ford lineup, only behind the Ford F-150. Ford Escape's popularity is born of its reputation for great fuel economy, versatility and technology aimed at helping customers - all in a sleek design. This is a competitive segment, and Escape offers features and amenities that make it irresistible to customers. Escape's signature technology is its available hands-free liftgate that allows fast and easy access to the cargo area with a gentle kicking motion. Along with versatility, great fuel economy is another reason Escape is popular with customers. The 1.6-liter EcoBoost(r) four-cylinder engine is now standard on the SE series. Customers can also select the 2.0-liter EcoBoost or the 2.5-liter iVCT I-4.

EcoSport

The Ford EcoSport is Ford's compact SUV, featuring bold lines, contemporary shape and sophisticated interior, all reflecting its credentials as a capable, flexible and practical urban SUV. The EcoSport provides roomy space for five, a high driving position with outstanding visibility, a refined cabin environment engineered for quiet operation, carefully selected and matched materials, and a modern design ethos. It all adds up to make the Ford EcoSport a compelling alternative to the run-of-the-mill compact car.



Ford is retracing the steps of the march of Aqaba with seven of the strongest SUVs and trucks in its stable: The F-150, Ranger, Edge, Expedition, Explorer, Escape and EcoSport. The seven-nameplate convoy will converge on the Seven Pillars Mountain in the otherworldly Wadi Rum desert, for which Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom" is named. "At Ford we are incredibly proud of that we make the best trucks and SUVs in the world and what better way to demonstrate the capability and performance of Ford's trucks and utility vehicles, than recreating the historic march to Aqaba," said Jim Benintende, president of Ford Middle East and Africa. "T E Lawrence and the Arab army rode two months through the desert to take Aqaba by surprise. We're doing it in only a few hours, with ten-fold more horsepower, off road capability, comfortable seating and storage for all passengers, individual climate controls and a host of other great technologies that make driving enjoyable and easy. Jordan is an incredibly picturesque, safe and historic backdrop in which to showcase our SUV and truck fleet."

Ford has a long history of truck and SUV leadership. Last year, Ford sold more than 1.5 million SUVs globally and more than 1.1 million F-series and Ranger trucks. More than 33 million F-Series trucks have been sold since its inception in 1948, making it America's best-selling vehicle for the past 39 consecutive years. The Ford Ranger is the best-selling truck in Europe and the second best-selling truck on the African continent.

Ford helped create the SUV segment with the Explorer more than twenty five years ago. Since then it has sold more than 7 million globally, or one every 2 minutes.

The famous seven pillars in the Wadi Rum desert.



Edge at the seven pillars in the Wadi Rum desert.



BEIJING TRACKS THE ELDERLY AS THEY TAKE BUSES, GO SHOPPING

BEIJING: These days, when people over 80 in Beijing take a bus, see a doctor or spend money, their activities are digitally tracked by the government, as part of an effort to improve services for the country's rapidly growing elderly population. The data amassed with each swipe of the multi-purpose "Beijing Connect" old person's card goes into a massive database of the elderly in the capital. City authorities hope the information will enable them to better cope with their burgeoning population of over-60s, which already stands at 3 million. Though geared toward the elderly, the program demonstrates how China more broadly is using big data to better direct the use of government resources for the country's 1.4 billion people. Beijing's strategy is to use new technology and its heavily censored Internet to innovate and propel China's transformation to a services-based economy - a strategy that Premier Li Keqiang has said "will trigger a new Industrial Revolution." In a sophisticated example, Beijing municipal government is collecting the disparate data on the elderly in order to predict what services will be needed in the future.

Budget and services

This is to make sure it has the necessary budget and services in place, by taking into account people's decreasing mobility, for example, said Bai Qiang, vice president of Beijing Community Service Association, a city government agency. "All of the data we are collecting now, including visits to parks, the use of public transport and (numbers of) shopping trips, will help us to predict whether the elderly will become disabled in the future," Bai said. The thinking is that if an elderly man is paying fewer visits to parks or taking buses less, that will show up in the data. The government can then judge what the disability rate will be in future and prepare a budget plan in advance, Bai said. Cardholders interviewed said they weren't concerned about a loss of privacy and praised the program as far more convenient than the coupons the government used to give them for the same services. "I've no worries. Elderly people don't have any secrets," said Liu Huizhen, 84, who was using her card to buy steamed bread in a small supermarket. "It's hard for elderly people to count" coin-by-coin, Liu said. "And when you take the bus you just swipe the card, it's very simple and convenient."

The State Council, China's Cabinet, issued a plan to promote big data in August, calling for the accessing and sharing of government data to improve governance. In response, the southern province of Guangdong on April 25 announced a strategy promoting the collection and use of big data in areas including the integration of air and water monitoring information with pollution forecasting, the creation of electronic medical records and the sharing of information on tourists traveling to scenic spots to better manage traffic. The Guangdong plan also called for the collection of population data on the elderly and a "comprehensive analysis" of their service needs, similar to what Beijing is now offering. While China is still behind countries such as the United States, Britain and Germany in terms of the development of big data infrastructure, it is unique in its commitment to the project and the speed with which it is progressing, said Zhang Yue, managing director of The Boston Consulting Group in China. Although China's national and local governments, ministries and departments are the owners of a large quantity of financial, residential and other data, they have yet to share the information among themselves, Zhang said. "The

government has realized that if they want to really take full advantage of (what is in) their possession they need to integrate those, otherwise the value of the data is quite limited," she added.

Attention to rapid changes

At the same time, China needs to deal with the needs of a rapidly aging population, the result of rapid economic development, longer life spans and a strict, 35-year-long family planning policy that limited births, creating a shrinking working-age population. While the elderly were traditionally looked after by their children, they are increasingly turning to oversubscribed old people's homes or fending for themselves at home, sometimes with the help of visiting caregivers. Other regional authorities are also using data-gathering to help the elderly, including in the northeastern city of Shenyang. The city is trying to use the information on the 1.6 million older residents in its database to better match them up with its more than 160 old people's homes. However, none of those efforts are as wide-ranging and integrated as Beijing's own multi-purpose card, which is slated to be expanded to cover the nearly 20 million people aged 60 and above who live in Beijing and the neighboring regions of Hebei and Tianjin city by the end of 2018. The card functions as ID and gives free access to public transport and public parks. The government also tops up the card with 100 yuan (\$15) each month, and cardholders can activate an additional function to enable them to use it as a bank card onto which money can be transferred from an account.

Zhao Fangjun, strolling along in a park where a row of elderly were sunning themselves one morning, said that in addition to the government subsidy, his mother-in-law transfers 250 yuan (\$38) onto the card each month. He said the card can be used not just in selected shops and restaurants, but also to hire a cleaner and take out a newspaper subscription. Rogier Creemers, who researches China's governance of technology at the University of Oxford, said China is a world leader in the degree to which it is integrating such functions. "What allows China to do something like this is the fact that behind everything you have a single unified network of power, which is the Chinese Communist Party," Creemers said. Some cities, like Nanjing, have social security cards with an e-payment function that can be used for public transport and medical treatment and are available to all residents, not just the elderly. Shanghai, China's most populous city, has just introduced a card for people 65 and over that distributes government subsidies, offers discounts in restaurants and free rides on public transport and can also be used as a bank card. This card doesn't collect big data, however, according to Shanghai government's social security office. Beijing's database, set up last year, aims to improve home-based care. It includes information on the numbers of elderly living alone, their incomes, and those requiring meal deliveries or simply someone to talk to. Elderly people applying for the card fill out registration forms with government offices found in every neighborhood. Bai says the data is confidential and cannot be accessed or distributed by anyone without government approval. "What we are doing is not monitoring, but collecting the data," he said. "All the data we collect aims to enable the government to provide better services to the elderly. For example, if we detected that a type of service was in great demand, we would get in touch with the relevant companies to request a discount." —AP



HARTFORD: In this November 3, 2015, file photo, Connecticut is now actively courting the television and digital media industry, working to attract and grow companies that can meet the burgeoning demand for the content used across multiple platforms. —AP

CONNECTICUT FOCUSES ON DEVELOPING TV AND DIGITAL INDUSTRY

HARTFORD: Once hoping to be known as Hollywood East, Connecticut is now actively courting the television and digital media industry, working to attract and grow companies that can meet the burgeoning demand for the content used across multiple platforms, from cable TV's TLC to the Internet's YouTube. The push comes about a decade after the state had high hopes of luring major movies, considering so many actors, directors and crew already lived in the state. Connecticut created a new tax incentive program and built up a trained crew base that attracted big-name movie directors like Steven Spielberg, Barry Levinson, Sam Mendes and others to the state.

But in recent years, the state has focused more on productions that appear on much smaller screens. "We still have films that are shooting here, but really the lion's share of the production activity in the state is split between television and digital media. It's sort of our niche. That's sort of where we hunt," said George Norfleet, director of Connecticut's Office of Film, Television and Digital Media.

Disappointed filmmakers

Some Connecticut-based filmmakers are disappointed with the change in focus. They point to the decision to stop funding the Connecticut Film Industry Training Program, which trained workers in film and TV production from 2008 to 2012. The state originally invested \$1 million in the program, hoping to help create a trained crew base. Filmmakers are also dismayed by the decision to suspend the state tax credits for feature films for two years, starting July 1, 2015. A group urged state legislators this year to exempt small productions that cost less than \$2 million from the suspension.

While the provision didn't make it into the final budget deal this year, it will likely be resurrected in the next legislative session. "The new language ensures that these smaller films will be made mainly by Connecticut residents and that will keep Connecticut's film industry growing," Wallingford film producer and director A D Calvo, owner of Goodnight Film, LLC, told state lawmakers in March. "These smaller films serve as incubators for a thriving workforce, a workforce that will attract larger budget, studio-level, film and television projects." Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Catherine Smith said the state has tried to "shift away from short-term gains" and encourage studios to be established here, making them part of "our entire economic industry base." She and Norfleet point to the growth of ESPN, World Wrestling Entertainment, NBC Sports and NBC Universal, which tapes Maury and the Jerry Springer Show at the Stamford Media Production Center, as examples of some bigger successes for Connecticut. The state is also now home to Blue Sky Studios, the digital animation studio in Greenwich.

Smaller companies

Connecticut is also working with smaller companies that produce varied programming such as television cooking shows, infomercials, video games for cell phones, audio books, online action movies and parodies, and even

3D animated science videos used by pharmaceutical and biotech companies. In April, Connecticut's film office co-sponsored the inaugural Tribeca Digital Creators Market in New York City. The event was billed as the first marketplace for digital and online content, where creators could connect with buyers, producers and agents.

At that event, Connecticut highlighted the tax credit program, which provided \$91.5 million in tax credits to 36 production companies that spent an estimated \$348 million in fiscal year 2015 in the state on qualified digital and TV productions. The credit covers up to 30 percent of what's spent in Connecticut, ranging from salaries to rental equipment. The film office has also refocused its job training efforts on digital

media production. This summer will mark the second year of The Digital Media CT, a training program the office developed with the University of Connecticut's Stamford campus. James Amann was Speaker of the House of Representatives in 2007 when the effort to grow both the film and digital media industries began. While he's happy with the state's progress made with the digital industry, he says Connecticut "fell very short" on continuing to bring movies to the state. Now a lobbyist, Amann represents about 900 small filmmakers. He said one could someday open a studio and "be the next big deal." "There was a bridge built," he said. "But unfortunately, one lane has been completed on the digital end. But the other lane is sitting dormant in mothballs." —AP



In this April 23, 2016, photo, Ilsa Johnson, Shea Moshier, and Laura Johnson, members of a 4-H team, make a presentation in the 4-H Science of Agriculture Challenge at the University. —AP

4-H PROGRAM AIMS TO GROW NEXT GENERATION OF AG SCIENTISTS

ST. PAUL, Minn: One team is developing GPS ear tags so cattle farmers can track herds from afar. Another thinks drones can protect livestock from predators. Yet another is developing a rechargeable portable warmer to prevent vaccines from freezing when dairy producers inoculate their herds in the winter. These aren't corporate or university researchers, but teenagers in Minnesota's 4-H Science of Agriculture Challenge, which aims to nurture the next generation of agricultural scientists for a country facing a critical shortage. A study last year by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Purdue University found that nearly 60,000 high-skilled agriculture-related jobs open up annually, but there are only about 35,000 college graduates available to fill them. University of Minnesota Extension is developing the challenge, which is now in its second year and already attracting interest from other 4-H programs, such as Michigan's. Extension specialist Josh Rice says his team will present a workshop for national 4-H officials in October, and recently gave a presentation to youth development officials in Bangladesh. "This program is going to have an extremely positive impact on getting young people to think about agricultural careers," Rice said.

In preparation for the finals on June 21-23, teams from across the state have spent months with coaches and mentors. Recently, judges helped them refine their presentations. The ear tags are property of the Meeker County Ag Squad. Members Abbey and Bailee Schiefelbein, 16 and 13 respectively, said their family members were in church last year when their phones started ringing - the cows were loose. But the pasture was about a four-hour drive from their home in Kimball in central Minnesota. So, the team of five girls and boys devised a system that farmers could use to track their livestock from far away, speaking with researchers who track moose with GPS radio collars. While the \$2,500 collars were "a little expensive for a cowboy," they learned about a small transmitter in a \$70 tracking collar for hunting dogs, and attached them to ear tags that cattle wear.

The South St. Louis County team from northeastern Minnesota wanted to find out whether drones could protect livestock from predators such as coyotes, wolves and bears. The three girls live in the transition area between farmland and forests, and they've all had predators threaten the animals they show for 4-H. They visited the drone program at the University of North Dakota for advice, and then developed a concept using fixed-wing drones that would fly on autopilot for long periods to detect predators. Once found, electric helicopter drones would chase the predators away. "There are some challenges we have to overcome. But we know with time and effort we can make it happen," said Ilsa Johnson, 14, of Duluth.

Commercial potential

The judges were excited by the commercial potential in the vaccine warmer, and urged the Hot Shots from Dakota County in southeastern Minnesota to protect their commercial rights. Vaccines can lose effectiveness and even become toxic if they get too cold while the milk production booster rBST thickens up, the four boys from Eagan and Northfield said. That can make shots more painful for the cow and harder for the farmer to push through the syringe, especially when giving 100 or more in quick succession. They showed off a prototype battery-powered shoulder bag with a thermal reflective layer that keeps medications at the optimal temperature. All the hardware is off-the-shelf for about \$86, and farmers get the outer bags free from a veterinary drug company. So, they said it should be possible to produce them at a price farmers will pay. The Science of Agriculture Challenge is the brainchild of Dorothy Freeman, Minnesota's 4-H director, who said it helps young people identify problems and create solutions, while developing entrepreneurship, teamwork and presentation skills. "Eventually, I believe that it will become a national program," Freeman said. "That's how 4-H tends to do it. They let one state drive it, work out the kinks, and then we start teaching other states."



BEIJING: Bai Qiang, vice president of Beijing Community Service Association, a city government agency, speaks against a data screen as he introduces the "Beijing Connect" old person's card at his office. —AP

AFTER GAMERGATE, FEMALE VIDEO GAME DEVELOPERS ON THE RISE

PHILADELPHIA: Students from an all-female arts college in Philadelphia attended a conference for video game developers last year and, without even trying, they stood out. "We were basically the only girls in the room," recalled Lindsey O'Brien, 21, a rising senior at Philadelphia's Moore College of Art & Design. The male-dominated video game industry is changing as more women develop games, play games and take jobs reviewing games. While the ongoing cyber harassment of female gamers known as "GamerGate" indicates a reluctance by some to accept the growing number of women in the industry, mainstream institutions are welcoming all to the console.

Moore's animation and gaming arts program will see its first class of game developers graduate next year. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology created its Game Lab in 2012. New York University's Tisch School began offering a video game design degree last year. "There's going to be a huge boom of women entering the industry in the next 10 years," said Stephen Wood,

Moore's gaming arts professor, who took over the fledgling program when he joined the faculty in 2014. "In the '80s and '90s, video games were seen as things boys do. But in the '90s and early 2000s, girls said, 'We're going to play, too.' Now those girls are going to college and studying video games.



PHILADELPHIA: Animation and gaming arts student Lindsey O'Brien works on her project at Moore College of Art &. —AP

We're helping close that gender gap and being part of the solution." According to a 2015 survey by the International Game Developers Association, the number of female video game developers has doubled in the past seven years, from 11 percent in 2009 to about 21 percent now. About 79 percent of the survey's 2,000 respondents agreed diversity in the industry is "very" or "somewhat" important. "Much dialogue has occurred in the past couple of years around the topic, (with) a strong majority recognizing that greater diversity on development teams creates a stronger foundation for the team to create games that may maximize their global appeal," said Kate Edwards, executive director of the association. Since joining Moore, Wood has seen the gaming arts program grow from eight students to about 40. He acknowledges he had some bias against female game creators until he saw his students' work. "They create these awesome games that are no different than what you'd see in the industry today," he said. —AP



KANCHANABURI: In this photo provided by the Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, cages are prepared for the removal of tigers at the "Tiger Temple" in Saiyok district in Kanchanaburi province, west of



A Thai wildlife official speaks with a monk before officials removed tigers from enclosures at the Wat Pha Luang Ta Bua Tiger Temple in Kanchanaburi province, western Thailand yesterday. — AFP

TUG-OF-WAR OVER THAI TEMPLE TIGERS RESUMES

KANCHANABURI: Thai officials armed with a court order yesterday resumed the removal of tigers from a controversial temple which attracts tourists as a petting zoo, but stands accused of selling off the big cats for slaughter. Yesterday one tiger was tranquilized and carried away on a stretcher, while another was lured into a cage to be relocated from the Wat Pha Luang Ta Bua temple, according to an AFP photographer at the scene. Several others were due to be moved later to a nearby

reserve, according to officials. The temple in Kanchanaburi province has long proved a hit among visitors who flock there to visit the monks and be photographed-for a fee-next to the scores of exotic feline pets.

Animals rights groups accuse the temple of complicity in the black-market animal trade, making tens of thousands of dollars by selling off older cats for use in Chinese medicine in a hugely lucrative trade. The temple has always denied those allegations. However last year

one of the temple vets turned whistleblower, handing the authorities three microchips he said were inside a trio of tigers who had disappeared. It has never been fully established what happened to those tigers. Yesterday's complex operation was hampered by the monks who run the temple.

"The temple allowed tourists to come in... and they are feeding tigers while performing shows, which means the veterinarians cannot put them to sleep before relocation," an officer

from the National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation told AFP, requesting anonymity. Moves to confront the monks and confiscate the tigers have been staggered over recent months. In early January there were thought to be at least 147 tigers inside the temple. Ten tigers were retrieved in January and February, but the seizures then stopped as the legal wrangle deepened.

In February 2015 wildlife officials also conducted a raid and discovered dozens of horn-

bills, jackals and Asian bears that were being kept at the sanctuary without the correct permits. The temple has been banned from charging tourists admission fees or money to take photos with the tigers but it goes ahead regardless. For years the government has been seemingly powerless to resolve the issue, partly for fear of being seen to confront the clergy and also because officials readily admit they have nowhere else to put such a large number of tigers. — AFP



ZIMBABWE: File photo shows a game ranger walks by a rotting elephant carcass, in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe. — AP

POACHERS IN ZIMBABWE USE CYANIDE TO KILL 5 ELEPHANTS

HARARE, Zimbabwe: Zimbabwean officials say poachers killed five elephants by poisoning them with cyanide. Rangers discovered the carcasses of the elephants with their tusks removed in a western forest last week, Violet Makoto, spokeswoman for Zimbabwe's forestry commission, said yesterday. No arrests have been made, she said. Makoto said the poison was laced on

salt licks, a method now regularly used by poachers to kill elephants in Zimbabwe. She says poachers killed four other elephants in the same area in February. The wildlife-rich southern African country has battled cyanide poisoning of wildlife by poachers for the past three years. Poachers killed 62 elephants by that method in October. — AP



KARACHI: A Pakistani health worker gives a polio vaccine to a girl during a campaign in Karachi. For the first time in Pakistan's history all the previous month's environmental samples for polio have tested negative, a sign of progress in the campaign to eradicate the virus, an official said yesterday. — AP

PAKISTAN SAYS NEW SAMPLING SHOWS PROGRESS AGAINST POLIO

ISLAMABAD: For the first time in Pakistan's history all the previous month's environmental samples for polio have tested negative - a sign of progress in the campaign to eradicate the virus, an official said yesterday. A total of 40 samples were collected from 14 cities in mid-April under the supervision of the World Health Organization and analyzed at the National Health Institute, said Dr Rana Safdar, the head of the National Emergency Operation Center. WHO officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

Last year 22 percent of environmental samples tested positive, and 9 percent tested positive in the first quarter of 2016. Safdar said the negative samples represent a "significant achievement" but that complete eradication would require more "consistent efforts."

He said new immunization campaigns have been planned in vulnerable areas

starting in July, after the end of the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan.

Past immunization campaigns have been met with resistance by Islamic extremists, who have spread conspiracy theories that the vaccines are part of a plot to sterilize children or gather intelligence for Western nations. Islamic militants have attacked vaccination centers and health workers taking part in the campaigns.

But Safdar said outreach programs supported by religious scholars have helped to combat the propaganda, bringing the refusal rate down from 1.5 percent to 0.05 percent over the last two years. Pakistan and Afghanistan are among the only countries in the world where polio is endemic.

Eleven polio cases have been reported so far this year in Pakistan, compared to 54 last year. The highly infectious virus mainly affects small children, and can cause paralysis. — AP

NEW CHALLENGES FOR US TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY

WASHINGTON: Eight years ago, when Thomas Coughlin joined a Washington clinic's small team devoted to transgender care, around 200 people came knocking at the door. This year, there were 1,200. Coughlin has witnessed a dramatic rise in the number of people coming out as transgender, bolstered as much by celebrity role models as by a shift in US public policies that now rank among the most progressive in the world-to the point of triggering the backlash seen in the standoff over access to public bathrooms.

For him, the matter hits very close to home. "I began my gender transition 16 years ago so it's been a while. It was very different back then," the 53-year-old, who was born female but identifies as male, told AFP in an interview. It was through word of mouth that Coughlin found doctors, support groups, and eventually a new profession as a mental health counselor for transgender people.

"I didn't know anybody that was trans until I reached out on the Internet to somebody and then they connected me with another person." "It was my own experience seeing and meeting folks who didn't have the privilege that I had as a white person, as an educated person, as a male... I thought I can be of service to them and I can help them find their way." A former videographer and editor in the TV production field, the New York native went back to school to become a therapist at Whitman-Walker Health, a non-profit focused on the needs of the LGBT community, whose health center in the heart of Washington has a department for transgender care.

Accessing surgery

In his 30s when he transitioned from female to male, Coughlin says the challenge was made easier by his age and the fact he wasn't financially dependent on his parents-who in any case

eventually supported his decision. His siblings showed some reluctance, unsure how to explain to their children that their aunt would become their uncle. But "16 years later, everybody is on the same page, I'm Uncle Tommy now," said Coughlin, who sports glasses and a beard and has been married to a woman, a French teacher, for two years now.

According to a study published in 2011 by The Williams Institute, an LGBT think tank, an estimated 0.3 percent of the US population is transgender. Coughlin has seen a spectacular increase in the number of patients coming to Whitman-Walker Health for hormone therapy and mental health support since he arrived in 2008. Part of that is down to a 2014 change in healthcare policy in the US capital, where residents are now guaranteed either private or public insurance coverage for hormone treatment and gender reassignment surgery.

"I think a lot of folks who are coming to the clinic now are seeking support in accessing those surgeries that are available now and which were never available. "These are expensive surgeries, it's in the thousands to tens of thousands, and so to be able to get them covered by insurance is a big deal."

'Confusion'

Since coming out a year ago, Caitlyn Jenner has ruffled more than a few feathers in the transgender community-many of whom seen the Olympian and reality TV star as a poor spokesperson on trans issues. But in Coughlin's view, the coming out of celebrities-most spectacularly Bruce Jenner's transition to Caitlyn which captured headlines the world over-undeniably raised awareness, and in doing so helped the progressive agenda. "It has tremendous impact on folks' ability to accept themselves and

for others to accept them," he said. Because acceptance isn't a given everywhere. This year Coughlin will not be visiting the in-laws in North Carolina because his wife does not want to go somewhere where he would face discrimination. In March, the state pushed back hard against moves to accommodate transgender people, with a law requiring them to use public restrooms matching the sex on their birth certificate-triggering a national outcry and a legal showdown with the White House.

A number of conservative states and cities are mulling or have passed similar legislation such as Mississippi where a law allows religious groups and private businesses to deny services to same-sex couples and transgender people. President Barack Obama's administration has thrown its weight behind the transgender community with a directive telling public schools to let youths access the restroom of their choice-which 11 states are now challenging in court. Coughlin says the so-called "bathroom" battle is a source of anxiety.

"For a lot of my clients, we have talked a lot about the emotional impact and the fear that these types of rulings have on individuals, and what that might look like for their future and their ability to move about the country freely." "There is this confusion, or conflating, of transgender folks with sexual predators and... to separate those two is going to be a very important distinction to be made." But the national debate has also brought powerfully supportive voices to the fore, including that of Attorney General Loretta Lynch who defended the rights of transgender people in a passionate speech. "For so many years I just wanted people to acknowledge my existence," Coughlin said. "To have somebody in the administration say 'Yes, we see you, we're here for you, we support you,' was just amazing." — AFP

THIRD OF CORAL 'DEAD OR DYING' IN PARTS OF BARRIER REEF

SYDNEY: At least 35 percent of corals in parts of Australia's Great Barrier Reef are dead or dying from mass bleaching caused by global warming, scientists said yesterday. The assessment was made following months of aerial and underwater surveys after the worst bleaching in recorded history first became evident in March as sea temperatures rise. Global warming was wreaking havoc on the World Heritage-listed site, said Terry Hughes, director of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at the James Cook University. "We found on average, that 35 percent of the corals are now dead or dying on 84 reefs that we surveyed along the northern and central sections of the Great Barrier Reef, between Townsville and Papua New Guinea," he said in a statement.

"This is the third time in 18 years that the Great Barrier Reef has experienced mass bleaching due to global warming, and the current event is much more extreme than we've measured before." At least a decade is needed for the coral to recover, "but it will take much longer to regain the largest and oldest corals that have died", the joint statement from three leading universities said. The reef is already under pressure from farming run-off, development, the coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish, along with the impacts of climate change. Researchers from James Cook said in April that 93 percent of the 2,300-kilometre (1,429-mile) long site-the world's biggest coral ecosystem had been affected by the mass bleaching event.

Bleaching occurs when abnormal environmental conditions, such as warmer sea temperatures, cause corals to expel tiny photosynthetic algae, draining them of their color. The impact was less severe in the southern parts of the reef as water temperatures were "closer to the normal (southern hemisphere) summer conditions", the scientists said. Although fewer corals have died in the south, the stress from bleaching is likely to temporarily slow down their reproduction and growth rates, they added.

Risk losing the reef

The phenomenon has also damaged corals off Australia's west coast, with "extensive and patchy" bleaching and mortality. "On the Kimberley coast



This February, 2016 photo released yesterday by ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies shows mature stag-horn coral bleached at Lizard Island, Great Barrier Reef off the eastern coast of northern Australia. — AP

where I work, up to 80 percent of the corals are severely bleached, and at least 15 percent have died already," the University of Western Australia's Verena Schoepf said.

The Australian Marine Conservation Society urged officials to heed calls to do more to save the reef. "The federal government must release a climate policy that makes a credible contribution to delivering a healthy future for our natural wonder," said spokeswoman Imogen Zethoven.

"The alternative is we risk losing the reef, the Aus\$6 billion (\$4.3 billion) tourism industry and the 69,000 jobs that rely on it." The government insists it is doing "more than ever before" to protect the reef, and Environment Minister Greg Hunt yesterday said it had invested Aus\$460 million in efforts

to help the reef since being elected in 2013. He said the government had worked hard to protect the reef and had been recognized by the World Heritage committee as a "global role model".

"Only a couple of years ago they were looking at declaring, under Labor and the Greens, the reef in danger," he said, ahead of national polls on July 2. Last week the environment department admitted that it pressured the United Nations to remove all references to Australia from a report on climate change and its impact of World Heritage sites, including the Barrier Reef. It claimed negative commentary impacted tourism, sparking outrage from activists who accused Canberra of "trying to pull wool over Australians' eyes about serious threats to the future of our greatest natural wonder". — AFP

GUARDING AGAINST DEADLY BLOWS TO THE CHEST IN KIDS' SPORTS

WASHINGTON: Jack Crowley was 15 when a baseball hit him in the chest and stopped his heart. The Long Island teen survived thanks to a police officer who grabbed a defibrillator and shocked his heart back into rhythm. A blow to the chest - one that hits at just the wrong spot, at just the wrong time - can trigger deadly cardiac arrest. Fortunately it's rare. But most victims are otherwise healthy kid athletes. And survival hinges on fast use of those heart-zapping defibrillators that not every athletic league or school keeps near the playing fields.

There soon may be another attempt at protection: A US organization that oversees athletic equipment has proposed the first performance standard for chest protectors to reduce the risk from those blows, a step that could lead to updated gear.

Nancy Crowley finds it hard to watch her three sports-loving sons' games since Jack's scary near-miss in a batting cage a year ago. She calls the latest move by the athletic industry overdue.

"You cannot live in a bubble," acknowledged Crowley, who helped lobby local athletic officials to improve access to defibrillators but wants more protection. "If a standard has come along that they feel is going to protect them in some way, I'm thrilled."

Cardiac arrest, when the heart abruptly stops beating, is uncommon in young people, especially athletes who presumably are in their prime. There are no good counts in kids' athletics. Whatever the number - or whatever the cause - cardiac arrest is getting more attention from parents, coaches and heart specialists who say deaths should be preventable. Indeed, NCAA guidelines recently reported in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology say defibrillators should be kept in the immediate vicinity of "high risk locations" such as weight rooms, basketball courts and ball fields. For younger students, many states have laws encouraging or requiring defibrillators in schools but few specify athletic facilities, according to the advocacy group Parent Heart Watch.

The most frequent cause of cardiac arrest in a young athlete is an underlying structural problem of the heart, such as a thickened heart muscle, the problem often behind headline-making collapses of basketball players. The chest protector standards take aim at a different problem: Every year, an estimated 10 to 20 people suffer what's called commotio cordis - cardiac arrest caused by a blow to the chest. A voluntary registry that has collected information on more than 250 cases over two decades does show survival increasing in recent years thanks to more defibrillator access. The highest risk is to boys under

15, when the chest wall is still flexible, not as sturdy as it will become by their 20s when such deaths hardly ever are reported.

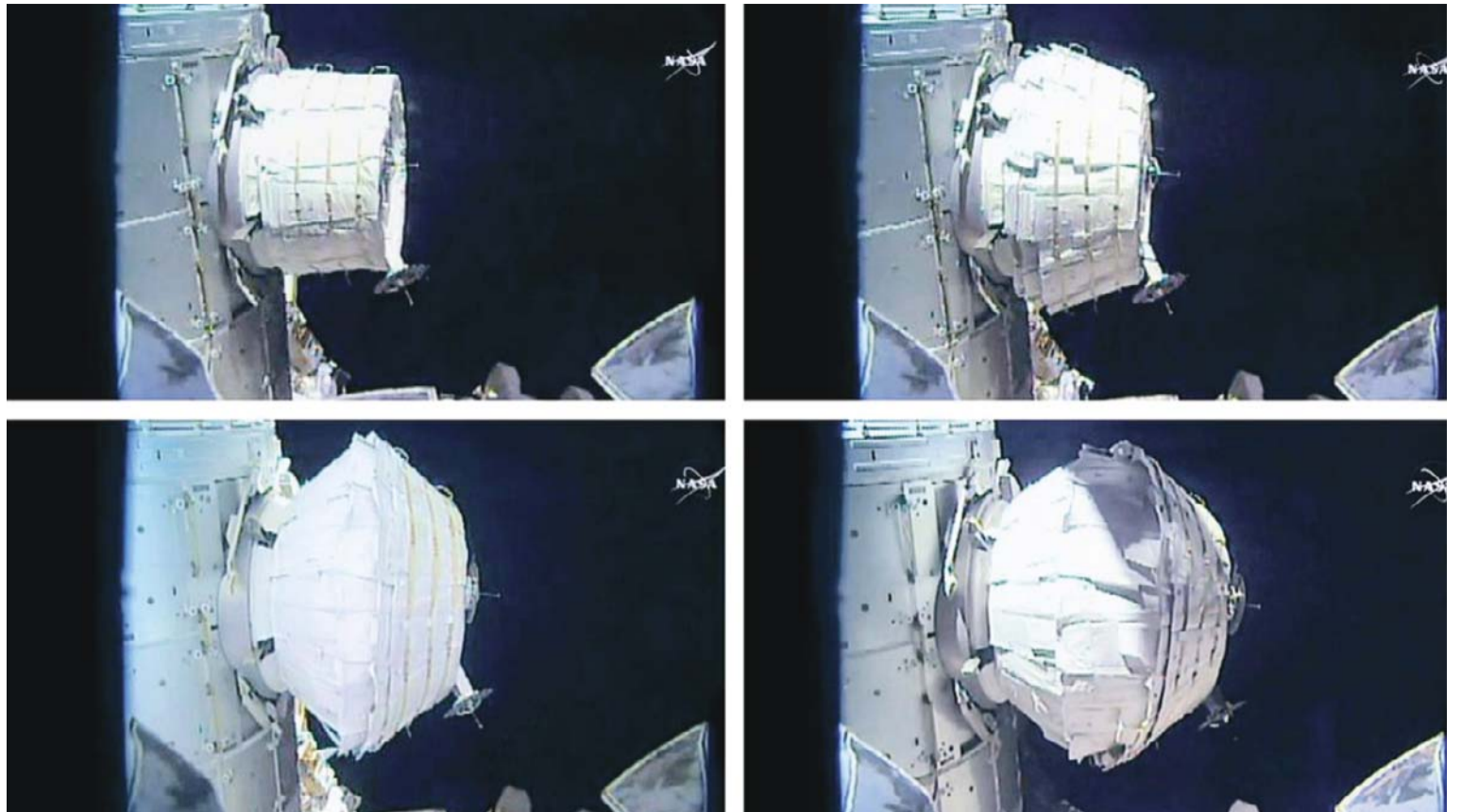
About a third of the time, victims were wearing some form of chest protector when they collapsed, showing at least some of today's equipment isn't enough, said Dr. Mark Link, a heart specialist at Tufts University Medical Center who spent more than a decade unraveling just how commotio cordis occurs. Link's tests, using young pigs as a model, revealed that killer hits are those landing directly over the heart, at about 40 miles an hour - and in the milliseconds between heartbeats. Armed with that science, the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment, or NOCSAE, funded creation of a sort of crash-test dummy to prove what gear really reduces the risk, and proposed the first standard for chest protectors used in baseball and lacrosse that aim to do so.

The idea: find materials that disperse the heart-damaging force of a blow without impeding players' movements - whether they're catchers or youngsters playing other positions who may wear shirt-like chest coverings under their uniforms. Guarding against commotio cordis may require a different design than standard foam that blocks a broken rib. Among the questions is how to integrate protection against both. The standard is expected to be completed in January; only then could manufacturers label gear certified as meeting it. NOCSAE's recommendations often are adopted by sports governing bodies. It's not clear what such gear would cost.

Already, one company that uses military-grade materials in sports equipment has developed some lightweight protection it expects to fit the bill. In March, Link's team published lab tests in the Journal of Clinical Sports Medicine suggesting a combination of foams and polymers used by Pennsylvania-based Unequal Technologies is likely to be effective. The company, which funded the research, is producing chest protectors and heart-covering shirts that it plans to test against the final NOCSAE standard.

"If we can stop a bullet, we can stop a ball," said Unequal chief executive Rob Vito. Other manufacturers are traveling to NOCSAE's lab to learn to test products. Stan Jurga Jr. of

All-Star Sporting Goods, a Massachusetts-based manufacturer, wonders if he'll need to alter equipment aimed at professionals, too, because teens sometimes wear the adult sizes. "Those are the real-world challenges," said Jurga, who also is pursuing a protective shirt. But he applauded the science, saying, "the last thing anyone wants is a false sense of security." — AP



CAPE CANAVERAL: This combination of images provided by NASA shows the inflation of a new experimental room at the International Space Station. — AP

NASA'S YEARLONG SPACEMAN STILL HAS SORE FEET, FATIGUE

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida: NASA's yearlong spaceman still is nursing sore feet, stiff legs and fatigue, even after nearly three months back on Earth. Retired astronaut Scott Kelly gave his first major address to NASA employees Wednesday, confiding that while he may have looked good upon landing in Kazakhstan at the beginning of March, he didn't feel that well after returning from the International Space Station. His 340-day mission was the longest single US space-flight ever.

"When I got out of the Soyuz ... I didn't really look too bad," Kelly told a packed auditorium at NASA headquarters in Washington. "But that was only because I'm a very good actor. I think I should be nominated for an Academy Award. My goal here was not to look great. I just had to make sure I didn't look worse than the two guys I was with. My colleagues would never let me hear the end of it," he added with a smile. Kelly was accompanied back to Earth by two Russians, one of whom shared his entire nearly yearlong flight.

Back home in Houston, Kelly said he had burning skin, rashes and flu-like symptoms. He said he felt so bad that if he hadn't just returned from space, he would have gone straight to the emergency room. "But that's why we do this," he said. "We need to learn these things if we're going to go to Mars." NASA wants to understand how the body copes with a year of weightlessness, as it gears up to send humans on much longer journeys to Mars beginning in the 2030s. Kelly, 52, who retired from NASA shortly after his mission, is now on the speaker circuit and working on a book.

He and identical twin brother Mark, a retired astronaut who took part in his brother's medical experiments as a ground subject, sometimes share center stage these days. Last week, they were honored at their elementary school in New Jersey, now named for them both.

During Wednesday's presentation, which was broadcast to NASA centers nationwide, Kelly joked that on the space station, "I changed posi-

tions so many times, you would have thought I was running for president." No longer a civil servant, "I can say that now."

Someone in the audience wanted to know if Kelly ever felt as though he had to get off the space station, at any point during his mission. "I never felt quite like I was climbing the walls," he replied, although not even halfway through, "I'm thinking this is a really, really long time."

In fact, as his Russian Soyuz capsule approached the orbiting outpost in March 2015, Kelly said to himself, "Man, this is probably a really dumb idea to be spending a year on the space station." His previous station stay, five years earlier, had lasted barely five months. "This flight was twice as long and I felt twice as bad," he said. It took Kelly about six months to recover completely from his five-month station flight. This time, he said, "I suspect it's probably going to be much longer, especially considering how sore my feet still are after 2 1/2 months. But the good news is I do feel better all the time." — AP



In this March 17, 2016 photo, Elizabeth McCalley prepares a dummy for testing the impact of a ball to a person's chest at the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment facility in Rockford, Tenn. — AP

CALIFORNIA RUSHES TO ALLOW HIV-INFECTED ORGAN TRANSPLANTS

SACRAMENTO, California: California lawmakers approved emergency legislation Friday to allow a man with HIV to receive part of his HIV-positive husband's liver before the surgery becomes too dangerous, possibly within weeks. Democratic Gov Jerry Brown promptly signed the bill, which takes effect immediately. The federal government recently authorized transplants of HIV-infected organs to patients who have the disease, but it remained illegal under California law and in more than a dozen other states, a leftover fear from the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and 1990s.

But advances in testing have since diminished concerns about donated tissue, and antiretroviral medications now allow patients to live for decades with HIV. The California legislation paves the way for any HIV-positive transplant patient to receive organs from living or deceased people with HIV. For patients willing to receive an HIV-infected organ, the wait time could be cut from many years to six months or less.

The University of California, San Francisco Medical Center is one of four US hospitals authorized to transplant HIV-infected organs. Transplant surgeon Dr Peter Stock said he hopes to quickly perform the operation on the man and his husband, whose names were not disclosed, but he will need time to do tests and preparation. There are 65 HIV-positive patients waiting for kidney or liver transplants at the hospital, including another man in particularly urgent need of a liver. That man does not have a living donor.

California has some of the nation's longest waits for organs, and increasing the supply will help everyone, whether they are HIV-positive or not, Stock said. "There are so many desperate people out there waiting for organs," the surgeon said. "The donor shortage is such a problem. Literally, we lose people every week." Stock received a grant in 1999 to transplant healthy livers and kidneys into patients with HIV. Hundreds of HIV patients have now received transplants for

HIV-negative donors, with largely similar rates of success to transplants for non-HIV people, allaying concerns about using immunosuppressant drugs to prevent organ rejection in patients with compromised immune systems, he said.

President Barack Obama signed legislation in 2013 to allow trials of HIV-infected transplants, and the Department of Health and Human Services approved safety regulations last year. Doctors at Johns Hopkins University Medical Center in March performed the first transplant in the United States of HIV-infected organs using a liver and kidney from a deceased donor. Similar operations had been conducted earlier in South Africa. Just under 121,000 Americans are currently waiting for an organ transplant, including 21,888 in California, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing, which manages the US organ transplant system. On average, 22 people die each day while waiting for a transplant. — AP

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Kuwait Times
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ACK AWARDS WINNERS OF 'SMOKING AWARENESS INITIATIVE' COMPETITION

The Australian College of Kuwait's (ACK) 'Smoking Awareness Initiative' team conducted a return visit to the International Academy of Kuwait (IAK) to award winners of its 'ACK Coloring and Drawing' competition. The competition was conducted during ACK's Smoking Awareness Initiative visit in November 2015. During the visit, the ACK Smoking Awareness committee and students from its School of Business visited IAK first grade students and show-

cased the negative effects of smoking on the human body and the environment. Towards the end of the visit, the children were invited to take part in a competition to either color in an image of a healthy cartoon character or draw a picture of a healthy person to visualize the benefits of not smoking. The selection of the winners was completed by ACK's committee. Sixteen children in total were nominated - 8 for the coloring competi-

tion and 8 for the drawing competition. The winners were awarded prizes and gifts from the College. In recognition of "World No Tobacco Day" which happens to be on the 31st of May, ACK's Advisor to the Chairman Dr Usameh Jamali commented: "Teaching children at a very early stage about the effects of smoking on humans and their environment is everybody's responsibility."



BSK HOSTS INTERNATIONAL AWARDS EVENING

The British School of Kuwait (BSK) hosted its annual Duke of Edinburgh International Award (IA) Ceremony. The 60 BSK participants in attendance had their awards presented by the first Arab to climb the highest mountains on all seven continents, Zed Al-Refai, Group Captain Finlay McClean, Defense Attache for the

British Embassy and BSK's Director, Madame Vera MBE. The evening illustrated the IA becoming further embedded within the school community and with expeditions for the Gold, Silver and Bronze Award students completed to Sri Lanka, Cyprus and the UAE respectively, the achievements accomplished were

outstanding. It was highlighted that over KD 5000 has been raised and sent to the Dhading region of Nepal to help with the damaged caused in the 2015 earthquake. BSK are even going as far as to help now with the funding for a new earthquake resistant school building. As the evening progressed, honored

guests and members of the BSK IA community were treated to an inspiring and insightful presentation from Group Captain McClean on his understanding of leadership and community. Refai (mountain climber) also provided anecdotes from his own expeditions and provided inspiration and encouragement to

the student to 'reach for the sky' with their ambitions. Combined with praise for the students and their accomplishments, this was an enjoyable end to the evening and a successful year of the IA within BSK.



Kidz Nursery organized a graduation ceremony recently at the Universal American School (UAS). Mohammad Al-Wuqayan, the nursery's Chairman of the Board, Nada Al-Thakeer, its General Manager, as well as 32 students from Kidz Nursery's Kaifan and Faiha branches along with their families attended the event.





AL-SAYER BIDS FAREWELL TO BELOVED COLLEAGUE CELEBRATING 41 YEARS OF MEMORABLE SERVICE

Al-Sayer Group Holding held a special farewell ceremony for Raju Varghese, Senior Manager Toyota Sales Administration who has been serving the Group for over four decades.

The event was attended by Al-Sayer Group Holding Board of Directors Faisal Bader Al-Sayer Chairman, Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO, Business Heads from the trading divisions and General Managers of the Group and representatives from Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer (MNSS) Toyota Division.

Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO credited Raju Varghese for his dedication and sincerity through his work tenure and appreciated his efforts towards maintaining cordial relations among his colleagues.

Raju Varghese had started his career with MNSS at the age of 28, in 1976. During the first months of the Iraq Invasion, he was in Kuwait having taken possession of all the keys to the stock, visiting the stockyards daily in the chaos, to guard over the looting and destruction which was the order of the day at that

time. However on the insistence of Mr. Mubarak, who was also present here, Raju eventually left after a long 2 months.

Appreciating the valuable efforts Johan Heislitz Senior Business Director Toyota said, "Your honesty and dedication at the workplace will always be appreciated. You have always treated your colleagues as your own family, encouraging everybody to work as one team, which I believe is a good sign of strong dedication. For over 40 years, you have demonstrated that you are a team player dedi-

ated to your job every day, every year and seeing the group progress to new heights. In Group Sales your presence will always be missed by everyone whom you have worked with." Commenting on the memorable work tenure at Al-Sayer Raju Varghese said "It has been an amazing four decades plus, that I have spent with this finest group and witness the phenomenal growth it has achieved over the years. Very few people, if at all any I am sure, would have had the good fortune to do so. For me, it is also a place that offered end-

less opportunities for growth. I am overwhelmed with the support and co-operation extended to me at all times, and the love, affection, kindness, and respect shown by everyone of you, especially by the most-respected family members."

The Chairman and CEO of Al-Sayer Group Holding presented souvenir in recognition of his valued long service as well as career achievements and wished him and his family the best on his retirement beginning from the month of July.



Ambassador of Nepal to the State of Kuwait Yagya Bahadur Hamal and his wife Rita Hamal hosted a dinner at their residence in South Surra recently for new envoys. Ambassadors of various countries, their spouses and some Kuwaiti guests attended the dinner. Ambassador Hamal informed the audience that his country is now celebrating the 8th Republic Day with various programs. He also invited everyone to visit Nepal and enjoy its beauty. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



INN AND GO LAUNCH IN KUWAIT

INN and GO Hotels and Resorts, the most dynamic and unique hotel group in Kuwait, proudly announces its launch from the State of Kuwait. INN and GO Hotels will be introduced for the first time in the hospitality sector of Kuwait and the management is confident that this is going to set a milestone for many more successful ventures. This contemporary hotel chain is all set to cater to Kuwait's fast growing business travel and family leisure market.

INN and GO Hotels understands the modern day challenges of living in the 21st century, and strongly believes that every individual is unique and has different sets of requirements. Therefore this dynamic chain of hotels delivers services tailored exclusively for its guests; whether they are time bound business travellers, aspiring entrepreneurs, newlyweds or "one big family". The management is enthusiastic about the promising future of the expected hotels; established with a strong compliance of the highest quality

standards for hotel and resort management and services, with talented qualified staff to deliver tailored services and a plethora of international and local cuisine and experience. INN and GO Hotels will enter the region and undoubtedly become one of the most distinguished hotel chain in Kuwait, the Arab region and worldwide.

Furthermore, the management of INN and GO Hotels and Resorts is envisioning a future for 2021 - with numerous hotel boutiques distributed throughout Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, the Philippines and the Maldives. The hotel facilities shall have a unique style in delivering tailored services to the guest whether it is to provide constant support to the business traveler, or providing a relaxing atmosphere to a leisure traveler, or offering an entertaining and unforgettable trip to families without "breaking their budget". The local markets welcome this initiative, which constitutes of a contemporary and elegant outlook for hospi-

tality, in addition to delivering value, quality services and state-of-the-art facilities. The

management of INN and GO Hotel and Resorts is looking forward to its management

of the first hotel in Kuwait before the end of 2016.



- 03:25 The Program
04:15 Hercules
05:00 Geronimo: An American Legend
08:55 Hoosiers
10:50 Beat Street
12:35 Empire Of The Ants
14:05 Earthbound
15:40 Big Screen
15:55 Eight Men Out
17:55 George Washington
19:25 Little Sister
21:00 The Handmaid's Tale
22:50 A Small Town In Texas
00:25 Return To Macon County
01:55 Sfw

- 16:10 Kids vs Film
16:35 Doki
17:00 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
17:50 Driving Me Crazy
18:40 You Have Been Warned
19:30 Mythbusters
20:20 How It's Made
20:45 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
21:10 Driving Me Crazy
22:00 Untamed & Uncut
23:40 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
00:30 Mythbusters
01:20 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
02:10 Driving Me Crazy



- 03:25 Gangland Killers
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 Dog TV
06:36 Call Of The Wildman
07:00 Call Of The Wildman
07:25 Bad Dog
08:15 Dog TV
09:10 Treehouse Masters
10:05 Tanked
11:00 Bad Dog
11:55 Bondi Vet
12:50 Dog TV
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Treehouse Masters
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Gangland Killers
17:25 River Monsters
18:20 Giant Pandas Go Wild
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Natural World
21:05 Treehouse Masters
22:00 Giant Pandas Go Wild
22:55 Gator Boys
23:50 River Monsters

- 03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mook
06:00 Lolorock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Gravity Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:40 Hank Zipzer
08:05 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:45 H2O: Just Add Water
10:35 I Didn't Do It
11:25 Jessie
11:50 Jessie
12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
12:45 Hank Zipzer
13:10 Austin & Ally
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:30 Liv And Maddie
14:55 Dog With A Blog
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:10 Violetta
17:00 Backstage
17:25 Austin & Ally
17:50 Jessie
18:15 Best Friends Whenever
18:40 Girl Meets World
19:05 Evermoor Chronicles
19:30 Liv And Maddie
19:55 Liv And Maddie
20:20 Backstage
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 H2O: Just Add Water
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost
00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



- 03:25 Orphan Black
04:15 Casualty
05:10 Doctor Who
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Eastenders
07:50 Casualty
08:45 Father Brown
09:35 Dickensian
10:25 Doctor Who
11:15 Casualty
12:10 Father Brown
13:00 Dickensian
13:45 Doctor Who
14:35 Casualty
15:30 Father Brown
16:15 Dickensian
17:00 Doctor Who: The Snowmen
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Doctors
19:05 Father Brown
20:00 Blackout
21:00 From Darkness
22:00 Silent Witness
22:50 Orphan Black
23:40 Doctors
00:10 Doctors
00:40 Blackout
01:30 From Darkness

- 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 Miles From Tomorrow
08:45 PJ Masks
09:10 The Lion Guard
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 Handy Manny
12:15 Jungle Junction
12:30 Special Agent Oso
12:45 The Hive
13:00 Sofia The First
13:25 Miles From Tomorrow
13:50 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
14:15 The Lion Guard
14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:10 Doc McStuffins
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



- 03:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
04:00 Gangsters: America's Most Evil
05:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
06:00 The FBI Files
07:00 Beyond Scared Straight
08:00 The FBI Files
09:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
10:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
11:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
12:00 I Dated A Psycho
13:00 Homicide Hunter
14:00 The First 48
15:00 Beyond Scared Straight
16:00 The FBI Files
17:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
18:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
19:00 Homicide Hunter
20:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
21:00 The First 48
22:00 They Took Our Child, We Got Her Back
23:00 My Crazy Ex
00:00 Killers: Behind The Myth

- 03:00 Game Of Thrones
04:00 Silicon Valley
04:30 How To Make It In America
05:00 Point Of Origin
07:00 Southern Rites
09:00 Mistral
11:00 Disappearing Acts
13:00 The Cheshire Murders
15:00 Hysterical Blindness
17:00 Disappearing Acts
19:00 HBO Comedy Half-Hour
19:30 Def Poetry Jam
20:00 Big Love
21:00 True Blood
22:00 Code Black
23:00 Entourage
23:30 Entourage
00:00 HBO Comedy Half-Hour
00:30 Def Poetry Jam
01:00 Big Love
02:00 True Blood



- 03:40 Lost And Sold
04:05 Storage Wars Canada
04:30 Property Wars
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 Carfellas
06:00 Yukon Men
06:30 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 Lost And Sold
08:55 Storage Wars Canada
09:20 Property Wars
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Carfellas
10:35 Gold Rush (Season 6 Specials)
11:25 Rebel Gold
12:15 Outback Truckers
13:05 Lost And Sold
13:30 Storage Wars Canada
13:55 Property Wars
14:20 Yukon Men
15:10 Wheeler Dealers: On The Road
16:50 Carfellas
17:15 How Do They Do It?
17:40 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
18:30 Rival Survival
19:20 The Island With Bear Grylls: Women
20:10 Storage Wars Canada
20:35 Property Wars
21:00 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
21:50 Deadliest Job Interview
22:40 Dive Wars Australia
23:30 Fast N' Loud
00:20 Wheeler Dealers: On The Road
01:10 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
02:00 Deadliest Job Interview
02:50 Dive Wars Australia

- 06:00 Boyster
06:10 Super Matrak
06:35 Super Matrak
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 K.C. Undercover
07:50 Supa Strikas
08:15 Supa Strikas
08:40 Lab Rats
09:10 Kirby Buckets
09:35 Pokemon Series Xy: Kalos Quest
10:00 Rocket Monkeys
10:25 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister
10:50 Marvel Avengers Assemble
11:20 Guardians Of The Galaxy
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 Lab Rats
13:30 Phineas And Ferb
13:55 Phineas And Ferb
14:20 Kickin' It
14:45 Kickin' It
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Rocket Monkeys
15:40 Guardians Of The Galaxy
16:05 Mighty Med
16:30 Kirby Buckets
16:55 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 Supa Strikas
18:15 Lab Rats
18:40 K.C. Undercover
19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:10 Annedroids
19:35 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister
20:00 Mighty Med

- 20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
20:55 Doki
20:55 K.C. Undercover
21:20 Driving Me Crazy
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Mythbusters
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



- 03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:00 Man Fire Food
05:00 Chopped
06:00 Guy's Grocery Games
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:30 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 Anna Olson: Fresh
11:30 Anna Olson: Fresh
12:00 Chopped
13:00 Guy's Big Bite
13:30 Guy's Big Bite
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Man Fire Food
15:30 Man Fire Food
16:00 Chopped
17:00 The Kitchen
18:00 Anna Olson: Fresh
18:30 Anna Olson: Fresh
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Iron Chef America
21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:00 Man v Food
22:30 Man v Food
23:00 Iron Chef America
23:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:00 Man v Food
02:30 Man v Food



- 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
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 My Name Is Earl
12:30 Living With Fran
13:00 Better With You
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 The Muppets
18:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
19:30 Angie Tribeca
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Life In Pieces
21:30 The Carmichael Show
23:00 Married
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
00:30 Life In Pieces
01:00 The Carmichael Show
02:30 Married



- 03:00 Game Of Thrones
04:00 Silicon Valley
04:30 How To Make It In America
05:00 Point Of Origin
07:00 Southern Rites
09:00 Mistral
11:00 Disappearing Acts
13:00 The Cheshire Murders
15:00 Hysterical Blindness
17:00 Disappearing Acts
19:00 HBO Comedy Half-Hour
19:30 Def Poetry Jam
20:00 Big Love
21:00 True Blood
22:00 Code Black
23:00 Entourage
23:30 Entourage
00:00 HBO Comedy Half-Hour
00:30 Def Poetry Jam
01:00 Big Love
02:00 True Blood



- 03:00 Dominion
04:00 Good Morning America
06:00 Recovery Road
07:00 C.S.I.
08:00 Prison Break
09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
10:00 Stitches
11:00 C.S.I.
12:00 Prison Break
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 Recovery Road
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 Prison Break
19:00 Royal Pains

- 20:00 Complications
21:00 Castle
22:00 Lucifer
23:00 The Player
00:00 Tyrant
01:00 Castle
02:00 Lucifer



- ACTION
03:45 Big Ass Spider!
05:30 Flightplan
07:30 Transformers: Age Of Extinction
10:30 Hours
12:30 Flightplan
14:30 Snow White And The Huntsman
16:45 Transformers: Age Of Extinction
19:45 The Expendables 3
22:00 In The Name Of The King: The Last Mission
08:00 Chopped
00:00 The Watermen
02:00 Snow White And The Huntsman



- COMEDY
04:00 What About Bob?
06:00 Dunston Checks In
08:00 Down To Earth
10:00 Rush Hour 2
12:00 What About Bob?
14:00 Encino Man
15:45 Blended
18:00 Romy And Michelle's High School Reunion
20:00 Wild Hogs
22:00 Role Models
00:00 Lost In The Cloud
02:00 Romy And Michelle's High School Reunion



- DRAMA+2
03:00 Grand Central
05:00 Rosewater
07:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost
09:00 1911
11:00 Late Bloomers
13:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost
15:00 Young Ones
17:00 Escape
19:00 Late Bloomers
21:00 The Kings Of Summer
23:00 Begin Again
01:00 The Mule



- FAMILY
03:00 College Road Trip
05:00 Finding Nemo
07:00 The Country Bears
09:00 The Pacifier
11:00 Postman Pat: The Movie
13:00 Dolphin Tale 2
15:00 Dinosaur Island
17:00 Toy Story 3
19:00 The Kid
21:00 My Favorite Martian
23:00 Dinosaur Island
01:00 The Kid



- FESTIVAL
04:00 Get On Up
06:30 Powder
08:30 Manny
10:00 A Passage To India
13:00 Powder
15:00 Get On Up
17:30 Hitting The Apex
20:00 We Gotta Get Out Of This Place
21:00 Clouds Of Sils Maria
00:30 25th Hour



- 03:00 Divergent
05:30 Le Weekend
07:15 About Alex
09:00 Divergent
11:15 The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
13:15 A Madea Christmas
15:00 Big Game
16:45 Insurgent
19:00 Hot Pursuit
21:00 Burying The Ex
23:00 Gone Girl
01:45 The Zero Theorem



- KIDS
04:30 The Heart Of The Oak
06:00 Blue Elephant 2
08:00 Hatching
09:45 Space Warriors
11:30 Moomins And The Comet Chase
13:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
14:30 Worms
15:00 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
16:00 Space Warriors
20:00 Memory Loss
22:00 Worms

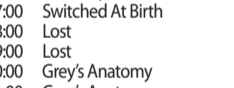


TRANSFORMERS- AGE OF EXTINCTION ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 23:30 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
01:45 Hatching
02:45 Memory Loss



- 04:00 Next Goal Wins
06:00 Song For Marion
08:30 The Theory Of Everything
10:15 Shaolin
12:30 Ant-Man
14:30 Rage
16:15 The Theory Of Everything
18:30 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2
20:15 Kingsman: The Secret Service
22:30 Horrible Bosses 2
00:30 Disconnect
02:30 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2



- 03:00 Grey's Anatomy
04:00 Grey's Anatomy
05:00 Melissa & Joey
05:30 Melissa & Joey
06:00 The Simpsons
06:30 The Simpsons
07:00 Switched At Birth
08:00 Lost
09:00 Lost
10:00 Grey's Anatomy
11:00 Grey's Anatomy
12:00 Grey's Anatomy
13:00 Melissa & Joey
13:30 Melissa & Joey
14:00 The Simpsons
14:30 The Simpsons
15:00 Switched At Birth
16:00 Lost
17:00 Lost
18:00 Bones
19:00 Bones



- 03:30 The Myth Of The American Sleepover
05:15 Lia's Dice
07:00 Fable Of The Fish
08:30 Amreeka
10:10 Children Of Invention
11:40 Manila
13:10 Rounders
15:10 Standby
16:35 Fable Of The Fish
18:05 In Conversation With Hopscotch
18:35 Amreeka
20:20 Amreeka
22:00 The Paranoids
23:50 Standby
01:15 Smoke



- 03:30 World's Worst Mum
04:20 Little People Big World: Holiday Surprise
05:10 Cake Boss
05:35 Something Borrowed, Something New
06:00 Say Yes To The Dress: Æ
06:25 The Undateables
07:10 Toddlers & Tiaras



- 03:45 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet
04:40 Africa's Wild Kingdom Reborn
05:35 Speed Kills
06:30 Going Wild
07:25 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet
08:20 Africa's Wild Kingdom Reborn
09:15 America The Wild



- 03:50 Dirty Rotten Survival
04:45 Planet Carnivore
05:40 Python Hunters
06:35 1000 Days For The Planet
07:30 Street Genius
07:55 Planet Manhunt
08:25 Desperate Hours
10:15 Desperate Hours
10:40 The Border Wars Compilation
11:10 Locked Up Abroad
12:05 Man V. Viral
13:00 Monsters Manhunt
14:00 Man V. Viral
15:00 Seconds From Disaster
16:00 Desperate Hours
16:30 Desperate Hours
17:00 Locked Up Abroad
18:00 Locked Up Abroad



- 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 Sanjay And Craig
05:48 Sanjay And Craig
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:24 Sanjay And Craig
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Breadwinners
09:00 Get Blake
09:24 Rabbits 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 Rabbits Invasion
14:36 100 Things To Do Before High School
15:00 Game Shakers
15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
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



PAUL BLART- MALL COP 2 ON OSN MOVIES PREMIER HD

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TUESDAY, MAY 31, 2016

Kuwait Times



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

Time	Programme	Time	Programme
11:30 AM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	9:45 PM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE
1:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER	12:15 AM	Hepta
3:45 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND		Hepta
5:45 PM	MONEY MONSTER	11:30 AM	AVENUES-1
8:00 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	2:00 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND
10:15 PM	MONEY MONSTER	4:30 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND
12:15 AM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	7:00 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND
		9:30 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND
		12:05 AM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND
11:45 AM	WARCRAFT		
2:15 PM	WARCRAFT	11:30 AM	AVENUES-3
4:45 PM	WARCRAFT	1:45 PM	MONEY MONSTER
7:15 PM	WARCRAFT	4:00 PM	MONEY MONSTER
9:45 PM	WARCRAFT	6:15 PM	MONEY MONSTER
12:30 AM	WARCRAFT	8:15 PM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE
		10:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER
		12:45 AM	MONEY MONSTER
12:00 PM	Hepta		
2:30 PM	Hepta	12:00 PM	WARCRAFT 3D
5:00 PM	Hepta	2:30 PM	WARCRAFT
7:30 PM	Hepta	5:00 PM	WARCRAFT 3D
10:00 PM	Hepta	7:30 PM	WARCRAFT
12:45 AM	Hepta	10:00 PM	WARCRAFT
		12:30 AM	WARCRAFT
11:45 AM	MUHALAB-1		
2:15 PM	Hepta	1:15 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND
4:45 PM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	2:00 PM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE
6:45 PM	Hepta	4:15 PM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE
9:15 PM	Hepta	6:30 PM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE
11:45 PM	Hepta	8:45 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse
		11:45 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse
12:45 PM	MUHALAB-2		
3:00 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	11:30 AM	MARINA-1
5:00 PM	MONEY MONSTER	1:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER
5:00 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	3:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER
5:15 PM	SARBJIT (Hindi)	5:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER
8:00 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	8:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER
10:15 PM	MONEY MONSTER	10:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER
12:15 AM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	12:30 AM	X-MEN: Apocalypse
11:30 AM	MUHALAB-3		
2:00 PM	WARCRAFT	11:30 AM	AL-KOUT.1
4:30 PM	WARCRAFT	2:00 PM	WARCRAFT
7:00 PM	WARCRAFT	4:30 PM	WARCRAFT
9:30 PM	WARCRAFT	7:00 PM	WARCRAFT
12:05 AM	WARCRAFT	9:30 PM	WARCRAFT
		12:05 AM	WARCRAFT
1:15 PM	FANAR-1		
1:30 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND	12:45 PM	AL-KOUT.2
3:30 PM	MONEY MONSTER	3:15 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND
5:30 PM	PELE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND		
7:45 PM	MONEY MONSTER		

FOR RENT

A compound consist of 22 flats, each one with 3 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms and big living room.

The compound is near the sea. Preferably VIP foreigners.

Tel: **25736466**
94976434

CHANGE OF NAME

This is to certify that Ms. Vivian Aquino Villancio and Ms. Vivian Villancio Mowrey a Filipino national, of legal age, and holder of Philippine Passport No. EC7537682 issued on 27 Apr 2016 at the Phil Embassy Kuwait refers to one and the same person. Phil address: Purok 14 Poblacion Magsaysay DVO Del Sur. (C 5173)

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation available for couple, bachelors, or working ladies in Salmiya, Amman street, C-AC flat new building with all facilities. Contact: 98760182. (C 5174) 30-5-2016



BUSINESS IN OMAN

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PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	03:16
Shorook	04:49
Duhr:	11:46
Asr:	15:20
Maghrib:	18:42
Isha:	20:13



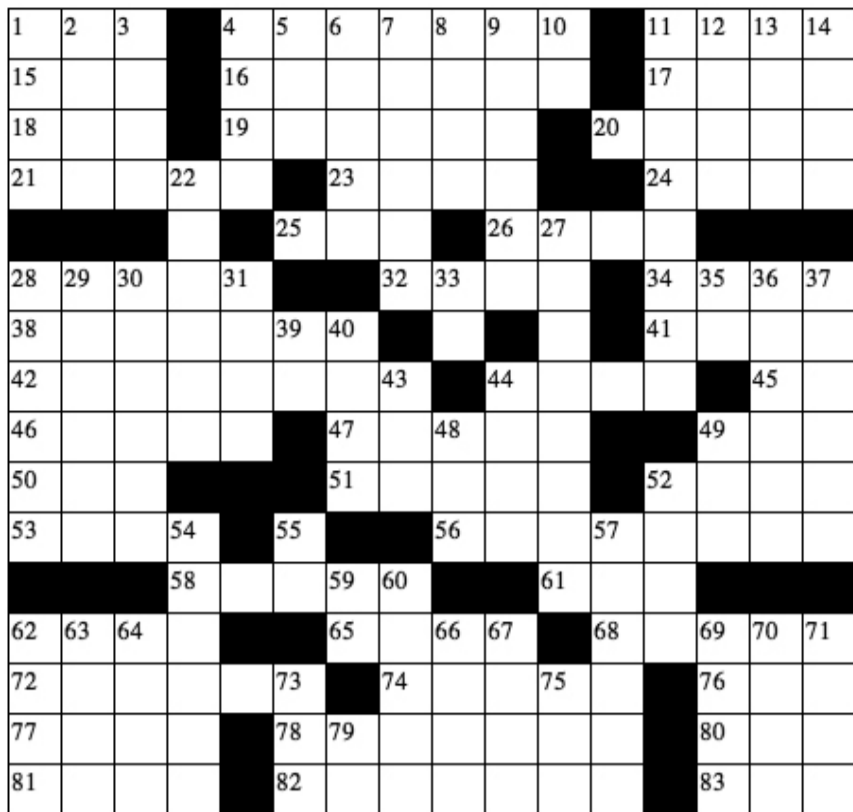
In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 31/5/2016				Departure Flights on Tuesday 31/5/2016			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00
JZR	239	Amman	00:20	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	JAI	573	Mumbai	15:10
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	MSR	615	Cairo	15:10
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	FDB	072	Dubai	15:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	KLM	411	Amsterdam	15:15
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	MSC	416	Sohag	15:30
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	THY	773	Istanbul	16:10
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	DLH	635	Frankfurt	16:15
KAC	418	Manila	02:15	THY	765	Istanbul	16:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	16:20
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	PGT	859	Istanbul	16:30
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15	KAC	783	Jeddah	16:50
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	UAE	854	Muscat	16:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	OMA	644	Muscat	17:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	FDB	068	Dubai	17:15
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	17:30
JZR	555	Alexandria	04:15	MSR	613	Cairo	17:45
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05	QTR	1077	Doha	17:50
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	560	Sohag	17:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	RJA	643	Amman	18:20
JZR	529	Asyut	06:00	QTR	1087	Doha	18:30
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	18:35
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30	THY	771	Istanbul	18:35
QTR	8121	Doha	06:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	18:35
BAW	157	London	06:40	FDB	070	Dubai	18:50
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	JZR	164	Dubai	18:55
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	FDB	5062	Dubai	18:55
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35	BAW	156	London	19:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	QTR	8121	LGG	19:05
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	FDB	054	Dubai	19:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	171	Frankfurt	19:10
KAC	354	BLR	08:00	KAC	513	Tehran	19:10
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	JZR	534	Cairo	19:10
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	KAC	787	Jeddah	19:15
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	KAC	619	Doha	19:35
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	671	Dubai	19:45
KAC	784	Jeddah	08:50	JZR	482	Istanbul	19:50
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	ABY	126	Sharjah	20:05
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	UAE	856	Dubai	20:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	101	London/New York	20:15
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	20:20
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	QTR	1071	Doha	20:25
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	FDB	056	Dubai	20:30
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	IRA	674	Lar	20:35
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	501	Beirut	20:55
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	KAC	699	Amman	21:05
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	KAC	561	Amman	21:15
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	KAC	679	Muscat	21:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50	KAC	165	Rome/Paris	21:25
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20	GFA	214	Bahrain	21:35
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	MEA	405	Beirut	21:50
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	KAC	541	Cairo	22:00
SAW	701	Damascus	12:35	UAE	874	Dubai	22:10
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	RBG	554	Alexandria	22:15
KAC	620	Doha	13:10	JZR	776	Jeddah	22:25
IRC	6507	Shiraz	13:35	ZJR	324	Al Najaf	22:35
KAC	514	Tehran	13:45	KAC	785	Jeddah	22:50
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:50	JZR	176	Dubai	22:55
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	FDB	076	Dubai	22:55
KAC	672	Dubai	14:10	NIA	152	Cairo	23:10
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:15	MSC	402	Alexandria	23:20
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:15	SAW	702	Damascus	23:30
				MSR	611	Cairo	23:30
				IRC	6508	Shiraz	23:35
				PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	23:45

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1270



ACROSS

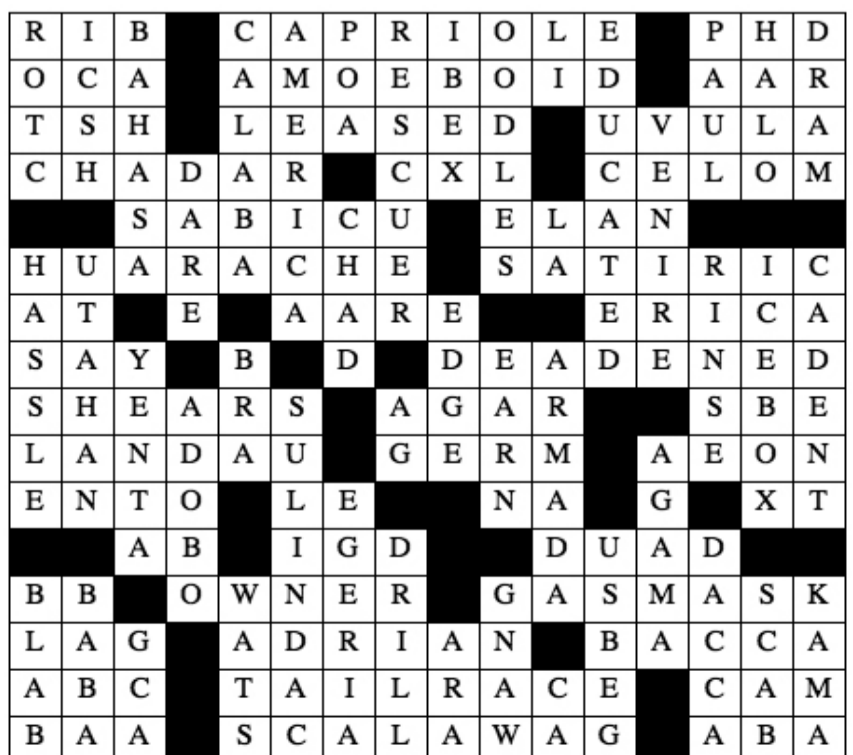
1. Any of various trees of the genus *Ulmus*.
4. A small flat triangular bone in front of the knee that protects the knee joint.
11. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology, a doctor's degree in education.
16. Of or relating to Iran or its people or language or culture.
17. Informal terms for a mother.
18. A barrier constructed to contain the flow of water or to keep out the sea.
19. An oral cephalosporin (trade names Keflex and Keflin and Keftab) commonly prescribe for mild to moderately severe infections of the skin or ears or throat or lungs or urinary tract.
20. The principal evil jinni in Islamic mythology.
21. Jordan's port.
23. (informal terms) "gave me a cockamamie reason for not going".
24. A genus of Mustelidae.
25. Athletic facility equipped for sports or physical training.
26. An ancient Assyrian city on the River Tigris and traditional capital of Assyria.
28. A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
32. Used as a Hindi courtesy title.
34. A large mass of ice floating at sea.
38. Island country in the Atlantic east of Florida and Cuba.
41. Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits.
42. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
45. A public promotion of some product or service.
46. A red fluorescent dye resulting from the action of bromine on fluorescein.
47. A mountain peak in the Andes in Argentina (21,654 feet high).
50. The compass point that is midway between north and northeast.
51. A rechargeable battery with a nickel cathode and a cadmium anode.
53. A three-tone Chadic language.
56. Often cultivated for the decorative foliage.
58. Someone whose business is advertising.
61. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
62. Sound recording consisting of a disc with continuous grooves.
65. A speech defect that involves pronouncing s like voiceless th and z like voiced th.
68. (folklore) A corpse that rises at night to drink the blood of the living.
72. The Creator.
74. An Indian tree of the family Combretaceae that is a source of timber and gum.
76. Someone who engages in arbitrage (who purchases securities in one market for immediate resale in another in the hope of profiting from the price differential).
77. A recognizable kind.
78. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
80. Extremely pleasing.
81. A natural protective covering of the body.
82. The shape of a bell.
83. Used of a single unit or thing.

4. Small short-eared burrowing mammal of rocky uplands of Asia and western North America.
5. A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
6. Chewy candy of sugar or syrup boiled until thick and pulled until glossy.
7. Place in a grave or tomb.
8. The dynasty that ruled much of Manchuria and northeastern China from 947 to 1125.
9. 1 species.
10. An associate degree in nursing.
11. Herbs of Mediterranean to central Asia cultivated for their flowers.
12. Surrealist Spanish painter (1904-1989).
13. An independent ruler or chieftain (especially in Africa or Arabia).
14. An independent group of closely related Chadic languages spoken in the area between the Biu-Mandara and East Chadic languages.
22. The Indic language spoken in Bihar (and by some people in Pakistan and Bangladesh).
27. A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade name Clinoril).
29. United States gangster who terrorized Chicago during Prohibition until arrested for tax evasion (1899-1947).
30. A person who is pursuing and trying to overtake or capture.
31. A sign of something about to happen.
33. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
35. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
36. 40th President of the United States (1911-).
37. A member of an agricultural people in south-eastern India.
39. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
40. Used of the language of the deaf.
43. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
44. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
48. A digital display that uses liquid crystal cells that change reflectivity in an applied electric field.
49. (informal) Of the highest quality.
52. A island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
54. A city in western Germany near the Dutch and Belgian borders.
55. Modulation of the frequency of the (radio) carrier wave.
57. West Indian tree having racemes of fragrant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice.
59. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
60. Mild form of diabetes mellitus that develops gradually in adults.
63. A republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
64. British writer of short stories (1870-1916).
66. A vessel that carries passengers or freight v 1.
67. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
69. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
70. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
71. A French abbot.
73. A drug combination found in some over-the-counter headache remedies (Aspirin and Phenacetin and Caffeine).
75. Artists or writers whose ideas are ahead of their time.
79. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.

DOWN

1. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
2. An accidental hole that allows something (fluid or light etc.) to enter or escape.
3. Designer drug designed to have the effects of amphetamines (it floods the brain with serotonin) but to avoid the drug laws.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A new person in your life is serving as a sort of beacon for you. Their visionary ideas and bold suggestions might not be your style, but there is wisdom in following their actions and doing as they do. It's not about mimicking or copying someone -- it's about being smart enough to let someone else be the guinea pig when it comes to a new trend or taking a risk on a high stakes gamble. This person is used to taking big chances, while you're just getting started. But the appeal of a big payoff is undeniable.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

It's time to celebrate the fact that you are feeling more grounded than ever in your personal life -- the people you are spending time with totally get who you are, accept you who you are, and love who you are! A group outing is a great way to celebrate the harmony that you all create together. If you can, try to organize a weekend road trip. Or maybe just regress to your childhood by having a fun sleep-over! Your friends are up for anything you want to do.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You might be having a hard time getting along with someone you usually adore today. But it's not going to last very long, so don't worry. There is a lot of tension between the two of you through no fault of your own, and there is nothing you can do to mitigate it. Just wait this out. If you need to get some distance from each other, that doesn't mean that you'll never speak again! Trust that your relationship can withstand the ups and downs that normal life brings you.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are always great at not letting problems at work bleed over into your personal life, but not everyone in your life is quite so good at it. Be on the lookout for moodiness and grumpiness to blossom with one of the most important people in your life. They might bite your head off for no reason, but it's probably because things are not going so great in their career life. Try not to get defensive. Do not turn this into a big thing between the two of you.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are going to get some good news today. In fact, it sends you over the moon! You need to be careful not to let your enthusiasm distract you too much from the business at hand, but when you get the chance you should spread the great news to the people in your life who love to celebrate with you. Send out some emails and let everyone know why you're so happy right now -- you will make them happy, too. They won't think you are bragging, they'll think you're sharing. NEW! Your Daily Video Horoscope



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

A person from your past may make a surprise appearance today, and you have no reason not to welcome them with open arms. No matter how weird things got between the two of you, right now this person is on your side and eager to help you get stuff done. Their ideas could push your already healthy ambition to a new level of robustness. You are ready for action and they have a plan -- so listen to it! This might be harder than it sounds, so take your time and move cautiously.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

The next time you speak with an older relative, ask them a few questions about the family's past. They have an awful lot to teach you about history, perseverance and maintaining hope when there may not be much of a reason to do so. Learning something new about your past is a great way to feel more positive about your future. It will also readjust your attitude toward the people you call family. There is always more to the story, and it's a great experience to learn the details.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

There are some amazing new people in your life right now -- and you should set aside some time to get to know them a lot better. They will welcome your increased attention and reward your curiosity with juicy gossip and tips on how to get ahead. You are entering a phase where your ambition is going to take a back seat to your desire to understand the people in your life who challenge you and make you feel like you're only scratching the surface of what is possible.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Music will bring you a lot of joy today, so put one of your favorite CDs in the stereo and give it a listen while you are getting ready in the morning. Take it with you during your day if you can and groove to the tunes while you're running errands, cooking, cleaning, or doing some other type of semi-mindless activity. And singing at the top of your lungs is not only advised, it might just be required to keep a smile on your face -- and on the faces of onlookers!



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your recent dreams have been vivid and rather entertaining, but do they hold valuable insight into how you can find happiness? No. They're just ideas your subconscious is playing with, and nothing more. Be careful not to read too much into the numbers that keep popping up. You can play them in the lottery, but don't expect a big win. Your prosperity is much more likely to come as a result of your hard work right now. Money still has to be earned.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You'll receive an inexpensive but impressive gift today -- and you should show your gratitude accordingly. Thank the person or thank the universe -- whichever is responsible. It could be the gift of an idea, or an inspiration that will spark a great change in your life. Enjoy the "eureka!" moment that is sure to come, which won't be hard to do. It's nice to be reminded that life is still full of surprises and that you are still capable of surprising other people once in a while.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Daydreaming can help you visualize a better future for yourself, so today going off to fantasy land could be a very effective use of your free time. Focusing only on your day to day routine offers no stimulation whatsoever, no matter how interesting your days have been lately. Your mind needs to escape to a worry-free place where anything is possible and the world can be whatever you want it to be. You will find that escape through your vivid imagination.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

60's Songs 2 - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

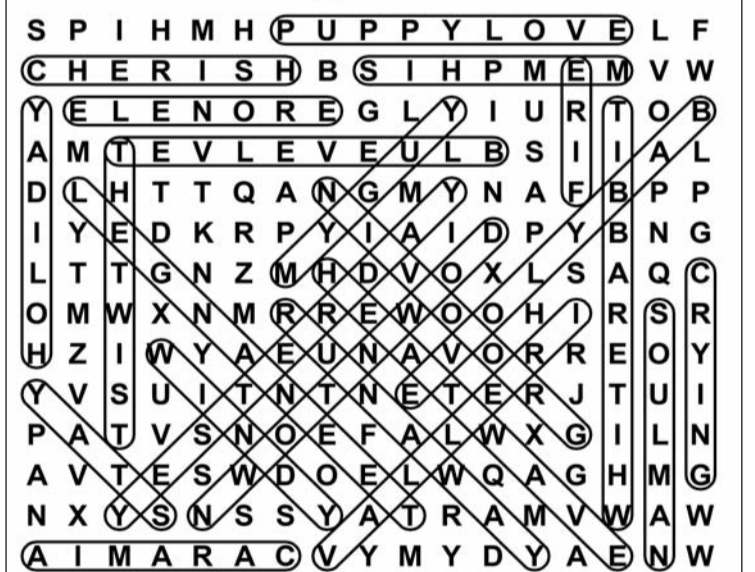


- | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| BLUE MOON | HAIR | SURF CITY |
| BUS STOP | HEY JUDE | THE BOXER |
| CHAIN GANG | LAST KISS | THESE EYES |
| CRAZY | MY GIRL | WOLARE |
| DIZZY | PEOPLE | VILD THING |
| EL PASO | RESPECT | WIPEOUT |
| FINGERTIPS | SHERRY | WORDS |
| GALVESTON | SPOOKY | |

Yesterday's Solution

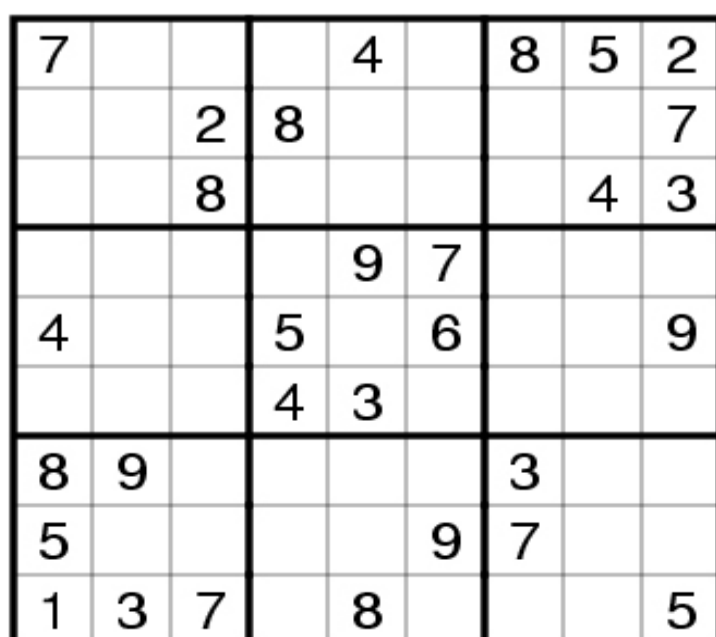
Large Print Word Search Puzzles

60's Songs 1 - Solution



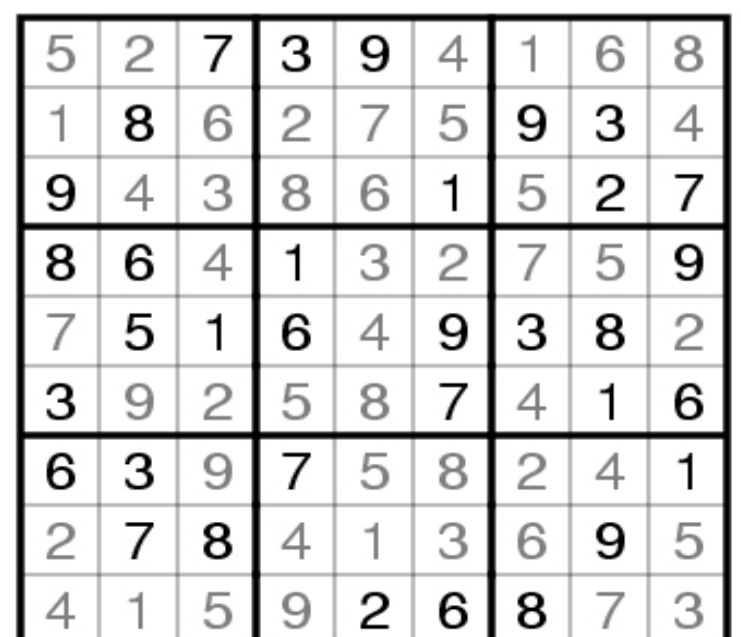
- | | | |
|-------------|------------|--------------|
| BABY LOVE | GROOVIN | STAY |
| BLUE VELVET | HEATWAVE | TEEN ANGEL |
| CARA MIA | HOLIDAY | THE TWIST |
| CHERISH | MEMPHIS | VALLERI |
| CRYING | MY PUPPY | WHITE RABBIT |
| DOWNTOWN | PUPPY LOVE | WINDY |
| ELENORE | RUNAWAY | YESTERDAY |
| FIRE | SOUL MAN | |

Daily SuDoku



very hard

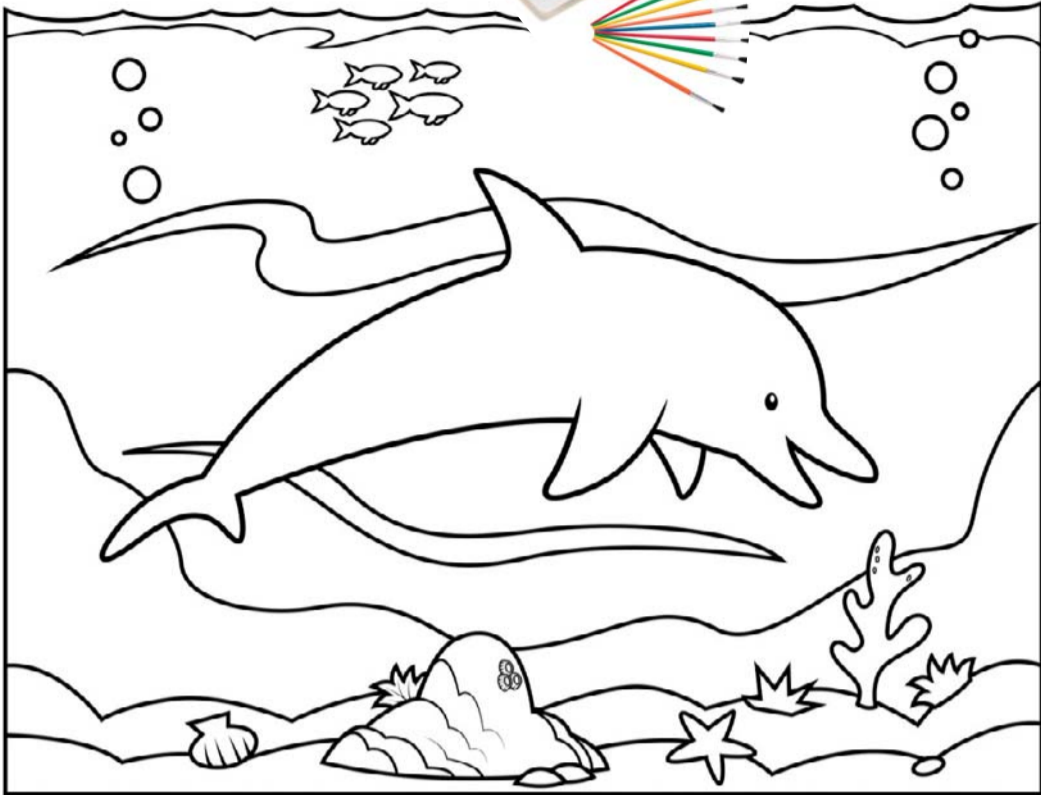
Yesterday's Solution



easy



Color me!



WORD SEARCH

Food Groups

Find and circle all of the Food Group items that are hidden in the grid. The words may be hidden in any direction.

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

- BREADS, CEREAL, RICE, PASTA
- VEGETABLES
- FRUITS
- MILK, YOGURT, CHEESE
- MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, BEANS, EGGS, NUTS
- FATS, OILS, SWEETS

BUBBLE TIME!



What You Need:

- Liquid dish soap
- Water
- Cookie tray
- Piece of wire

Instructions:

1. Mix one part liquid soap with six parts water. (For example: 6 cups of water with 1 cup of dish soap, or 3 cups of water with 1/2 cup of dish soap.)
2. Pour the liquid into a large cookie tray.
3. Make a 12 inch loop out of a piece of wire. Coat hangers will work but only if they aren't covered with nylon.
4. Lower your wire loop into the bubble solution and pull it out gently at an angle. The bubble will form as you pull up the wire. How big of a bubble can you make?



Loch Ness in Scotland

Loch Ness is a large, deep, freshwater loch in the Scottish Highlands extending for approximately 23 miles (37 km) southwest of Inverness. Its surface is 52 ft (16 m) above sea level. Loch Ness is best known for alleged sightings of the crypto zoological Loch Ness Monster, also known affectionately as "Nessie". It is connected at the southern end by the River Oich and a section of the Caledonian Canal to Loch Oich. At the northern end there is the Bona Narrows which opens out into Loch Dochfour, which feeds the River Ness and a further section of canal to Inverness. It is one of a series of interconnected,

Great Glen Fault, which runs from Inverness in the north to Fort William in the south.

Is there a Loch Ness monster?

Loch Ness is thought by some to be the home of the Loch Ness Monster (also known as "Nessie"), a cryptid, reputedly a large unknown animal. It is similar to other supposed lake monsters in Scotland and elsewhere, though its description varies from one account to the next. Popular interest and belief in the animal's existence has varied since it was first brought to the world's attention in 1933.

Hydro-electricity

Loch Ness serves as the lower storage reservoir for the Foyers pumped-storage hydroelectric scheme, which was the first of its kind in the United Kingdom. The turbines were originally used to provide power for a nearby aluminum smelting plant, but now electricity is generated and supplied to the National Grid. Another scheme, the 100 MW Glendoe Hydro Scheme near Fort Augustus, began generation in June 2009 producing 76 giga watt hours in its first months of operation. It was out of service between 2009 and 2012 for repair of the tunnels connecting the reservoir to the turbines.

Loch Ness records

John Cobb died in an attempt at the water speed record when his boat Crusader struck an unexplained wake on the surface of the loch in 1952. His accident was recorded by the BBC reporters on site at the time. Nearby, there is a memorial to him erected by the people of Glenurquhart. On 31 August 1974, David Scott Munro, of Ross-shire Caberfeidh Water Ski Club, became the first person in the world to water ski (mono ski) the length of Loch Ness. From Lochend to Fort Augustus and back, he covered the 48 miles (77 km) in 77 minutes at an average speed of 37 miles per hour (60 km/h). Brenda Sherratt was the first person to swim 22.5 miles along the length of Loch Ness in Scotland in 31 hours and 27 minutes in July 1966.



murky bodies of water in Scotland; its water visibility is exceptionally low due to a high peat content in the surrounding soil.

Loch Ness is the second largest Scottish loch by surface area at 56 km after Loch Lomond, but due to its great depth, it is the largest by volume in the British Isles. Its deepest point is 755 ft, making it the second deepest loch in Scotland after Loch Morar. A 2016 survey claimed to have discovered a crevice that pushed the depth to 889 ft but further research determined it to be a sonar anomaly. It contains more fresh water than all the lakes in England and Wales combined and is the largest body of water on the

Jokes!

Q: Why was 6 afraid of 7?

A: Because 7, 8, 9.

Q: What musical instrument is found in the bathroom?

A: A tuba toothpaste.
 Knock, knock.
 Who's there?
 Pizza.
 Pizza who?
 Pizza really great guy!

Q: What do you call cheese that's not yours?

A: Nacho cheese!

Q: What do elves learn in school?

A: The elf-abet.

Q: Why did the boy bring a ladder to school?

A: He wanted to go to high school.
 Knock, knock.
 Who's there?
 Interrupting, squawking parrot.
 Interrupting, squawking parr-SQUAWKKKKKKKKKK!

Q: Where do pencils go for vacation?

A: Pencil-vania.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The longest conga to this date included 119,986 people.
- The smallest cat is the Singapuras and weighs only 4 pounds.
- The longest movie made lasts 85 hours and is fittingly titled "The Cure for Insomnia."
- Mount Everest is the tallest mountain in the world, standing 29,028 feet high.
- Did you know that there is a world record for seeing how many times you can attempt a world record?!
- The smallest dog recorded was a Yorkie and was only 4 inches tall. The biggest dog weighed 344 pounds- more than two full grown men!
- The largest baby to be born so far weighed in at 15 pounds, 5 ounces!
- The longest recorded flight of a chicken is thirteen seconds.
- Wilt Chamberlain scored 100 points in a basketball game in 1962, when he played for the Philadelphia Warriors.

KIDS RECIPES



Passion fruit- Banana yogurt Smoothie!

You'll Need:

- * 8 passion fruits, seeded and flesh removed
- * 4 bananas, peeled
- * 2 cups fat-free plain Greek-style yogurt
- * 2 tablespoons honey
- * 8 ice cubes

Directions

1. In a blender, combine the passion fruits and bananas.
2. After the fruit is blended add yogurt, honey, and ice cubes.
3. Blend until smooth.

Canned Food Stilts



What You Need:

- 2 empty metal food cans
- Old towel or rag
- Hammer
- Nail
- Thin rope
- Paint and brush (optional)

Instructions:

1. Pack an old towel or rag tightly into each can. Use your hammer and nail to punch holes near the top of the closed end of the cans. Make the holes opposite each other.
2. Cut two pieces of rope that measure about the length of your body.

3. Take one piece of rope, thread it through one of the holes (towards the inside of the can) and tie a knot. The knot will be hidden inside the can.
 4. Thread the loose end of the rope through the other side of the can and tie a knot. Pull the rope tight and the knots will hold the rope in place.
 5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 with the other can and piece of rope.
 6. If you like, decorate your stilts with paint.
 7. Be sure to wear tennis shoes, and start stilt-walking!
- Note:**
 The part of the can where the holes are punched may be sharp so be careful!

SUDOKU

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

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



Sir Tom Jones is 'back in form' following his wife's death

Sir Tom Jones is "back in form" following the death of his wife Linda. The 75-year-old star lost his wife to cancer in April, but has revealed he is ready to perform again and has rediscovered his zest for music. He shared: "I'm feeling pretty good now. I'm back in it and getting back in form. It's been a tough few months, losing Linda. She had emphysema, and we thought that's all it was. But it turned out to be worse than that in the end." Sir Tom has previously claimed he would not be able to continue to perform without his wife's support, but he now says it is what Linda would have wanted him to do. He said: "Singing is what I do. I'm a singer and I love to sing. I have to be strong. I was wondering if I could use that love as a strength, and it was. (Linda) wanted me to go on and keep singing, she said not to stop. She was a

strong woman and was always there. It was a wonderful feeling to have known someone like that all my life." Sir Tom also credited his wife for helping him to remain humble in spite of all the fame and success he has achieved through the years. The chart-topping singer explained: "She kept my feet on the ground. She was a wonderful, wonderful person. Once I was smoking cigars and sipping champagne in our snooker room when we were in our 30s. She said to me, 'Just a minute, do you really think you're Tom Jones? The man I married was Tom Woodward.'" Sir Tom is set to perform at Hampton Court Palace on June 8 and is also preparing to embark on a full tour of the UK.



Horan is a fan of Styles' new look

Niall Horan thinks Harry Styles "looks good" now he's had his hair cut. The 22-year-old singer has revealed he only found out about Harry's newly-cut locks from seeing pictures of him on the internet, but admits he's a fan of his One Direction bandmate's latest look. Niall said: "He just posted a picture of it, of his hair, and it was gone. So that's the first I saw of it. It looks good, it looks good now." Meanwhile, Niall also revealed he is looking forward to facing fellow One Direction star Louis Tomlinson during an upcoming charity soccer match. The duo are on opposing teams for the annual Soccer Aid match at Old Trafford in Manchester, England, and Niall is relishing the prospect of going head-to-head with his good pal. He told Digital Spy: "I'm definitely confident about Soccer Aid yeah, usually this banter happens on

Twitter and stuff like that but I think the English boys have been a little bit quieter than they usually are. "I think they know what's coming, we've got a very, very strong team. We've got [Brazilian star] Ronaldinho, I think that pretty much says enough. Just in general it's gonna be an unbelievable experience. "It really feels like we're in a professional football team, it's something we've all dreamt of as kids so I think it's genuinely gonna be an unbelievable week." Louis' side for the charity match will feature popstar Olly Murs and actor Damian Lewis, while Niall will line up alongside the likes of Michael Sheen and Michelin-starred chef Gordon Ramsay. The overarching ambition of the game is to raise money and support for Unicef's work for children in danger.

Emilia Clarke:

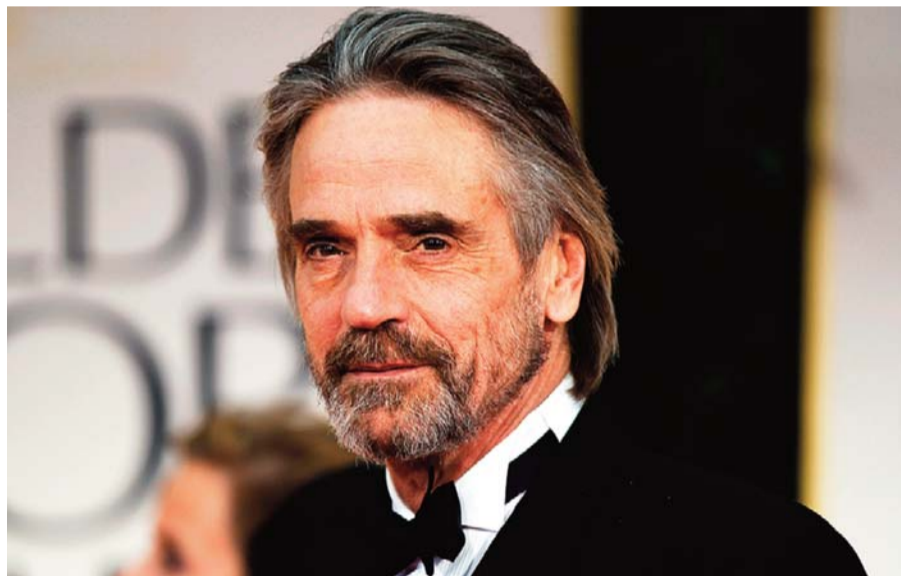
I want to be the first female James Bond

The 29-year-old actress has revealed that one of her biggest professional ambitions is to break new ground by becoming the first woman to star as the secret agent. She told the Daily Star newspaper: "I have a lot of unrealized dreams. "I would love to play Jane Bond. My ultimate leading man would be Leonardo DiCaprio. No doubt about it." Meanwhile, the stunning actress recently confessed she needed "vodka and some flattering lighting" to film nude scenes on 'Game of Thrones'. Emilia, who stars as Daenerys Targaryen in the HBO series, said she needed a little help before she agreed to strip off for the hit TV series. She shared: "All I needed was vodka and some flattering lighting and I was ready." The London-born star said she found one particular nude scene to be "empowering", when Daenerys walked through an inferno to emerge naked. Emilia said: "It was just a wonderful, strong moment I wanted to own, a real empowering, girl-power wow scene. "I was so thrilled with it. It's not a sexy scene, she's not naked for no reason, it's not gratuitous. She's naked because she's just destroyed her enemies in this almighty blaze after they underestimated her. "She played her trump card - how could I say no?" Emilia also revealed she declined the chance to have a body double take her place and insisted she is proud of her figure. She explained: "This is all me, all proud, all strong. That ain't no body double. I'm just feeling genuinely happy I said yes."

Ashlee Simpson wants more kids



Ashlee Simpson "definitely" wants to have more children. The 31-year-old star already has seven-year-old son Bronx with ex-husband Pete Wentz and 10-month-old daughter Jagger with spouse Evan Ross, and though she isn't ready to add to her brood again just yet, she is planning more kids in the future. She said: "It's a blessing. Kids are the best. I would love to have number three. I'm not ready for that just yet, but I definitely want more." And having her daughter has only made Ashlee love her 27-year-old husband more. She said: "Having a child with the person you love is just amazing. She's a little us. "Evan is an amazing dad, so it's fun to get to see each other grow in our love and our love for her." The blonde beauty loves spending time with her sister Jessica Simpson - who has kids Maxwell, four, and Ace, three, with husband Eric Johnson - and knows she can always call on her if she needs advice. She said: "We get all our kids together for a fun time. Bronx hangs with Maxwell and now Jagger is here they're all interested in her as the little baby. It's very cute. "Jessica is an incredible mom, so both of us give each other advice. If I have a question about parenting, I'd definitely go to her." Shortly after welcoming Jagger into the world, Ashlee returned to work, voicing a character on 'Space Dogs: Adventure to the Moon' and did so because she knew it would garner her approval from her son. She told Britain's HELLO! magazine: "He's always like, 'Mum, you should do a voice' so he was happy I did that. I'd just had Jagger so I brought her to the studio, so it all worked out. "I knew it would make my kids happy."



Irons loves meeting other celebrities

Jeremy Irons loves getting to meet other famous people. The 67-year-old actor has used his celebrity status to befriend a host of other well-known public figures down the years, including the likes of Robert Redford, Paul Newman and Diana Ross, and says it is one of the perks of being famous himself. He shared: "The wonderful thing about being a known quantity is that you get to meet the best people in the world. You may not hang out for long with them but you get to have lunch or dinner or whatever. "The first time I did a play on Broadway, in would walk Robert Redford, Paul Newman, Diana Ross, we'd sit and chat and have a cup of tea, and I thought, 'I'm so lucky.'" However, the 'Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice' star joked that his own poor memory has prevented him from being able to retell any of their stories. He

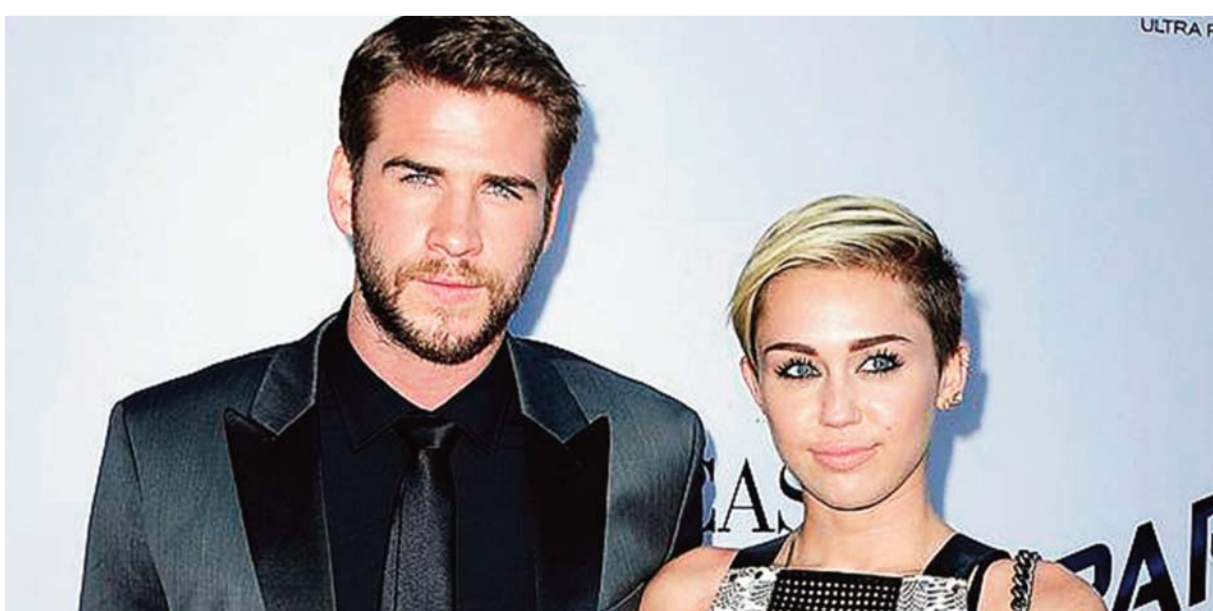
told the Mail on Sunday newspaper: "The terrible thing is, I could never write a book because I can't remember what we said." Meanwhile, Jeremy insisted that his own adult children have had good values instilled in them, even though he's enjoyed a life of fame and success. The award-winning actor - who has two sons, Max and Samuel, with his actress wife SinEad Cusack - said: "My kids are hard-working and pretty balanced, they haven't been brought up in a very wealthy environment, it was normal. "Privileged, yes, but not flamboyantly wealthy. So I know their values are absolutely right, and if they need a roof over their head and or other help then yes, I'll do that."



Hemsworth addresses Cyrus split

Liam Hemsworth says his split from Miley Cyrus "needed to happen". The pair broke off their engagement in 2013 after three years of dating before rekindling their relationship a few months ago and while Liam couldn't be happier now, he thinks the break-up was the right decision at the time. He told GQ Australia: "Of course it was hard, man. But at the time we were going in different directions and it's just what needed to happen. We were both super young and it was a good decision at the time - we both needed that." And speaking about their relationship now, he added: "People will figure it out, they already have... They're not dumb. "I guess when I feel something, then I just feel it and I go for it. I make my decisions about what's going to make me happy, what I think is right and

what I want to do - and I don't worry too much outside of that." Liam, 26, also revealed that he rarely goes out anymore, preferring to "get loose" at home after an incident in 2012 when a man threw rocks at him outside a bar and Liam hit him, with the entire incident captured on video. He said: "It was silly, drunk stuff and it's kind of why I don't go out anymore, I prefer to get real loose in my own house and have people come to me. When I'm drunk, like anyone, I don't think straight or make the best decisions. You don't see it in the video, but that guy tackled me pretty good... Not that I condone fighting, of course, um, do it in a cage, like in the UFC."



Lopez's children often crash her workouts



Jennifer trains with Tracy Anderson and the fitness guru revealed that nothing stops her spending time with twins Max and Emme, eight, and they love to hang out with their mother when she is working out. Tracy told PEOPLE: "She's such an awesome mom. That's the thing I love about her, her kids will run into the session at any time. "Emme is so sweet, she doesn't interrupt, she just watches and twirls. But Max is full of energy." And despite their young age, Tracy predicts Max and Emme are talented enough to follow Jennifer and their father Marc Anthony into showbusiness. She said: "Let's put it this way, they're both going to have tons of options. They're both clearly talented and beautiful kids already, for sure." Jennifer Lopez recently admitted she feels mom guilt when she gets lost in her work and hates to be away from her kids for too long. She said: "If

I get lost in my work for a little while I feel guilty. I feel so guilty when I come out of that haze. Like, 'Oh God, it's been seven hours and I haven't even checked on them. What is wrong with me? What kind of mother are you?' But the 46-year-old singer and actress does her best to try and alter her schedule to fit in with the kids. She added: "It's having good people to help you take care of those kids. My kids visit me at the set [of her new television show 'Shades of Blue']. They have a room on the set so after school they come right there. "I try to shoot this show in the summer so it's only a couple of months that I'm doing the show when they're in school. We work it out and have a life and this is their life."



Kendall Jenner's natural beauty

Kendall Jenner prefers to show off her natural beauty. The 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' star will always opt for less rather than more when it comes to her make up but admits she is a big fan of contouring. She told Cosmopolitan magazine: "I always think less is more and showing your natural beauty. Personally, I love a bit of contour but I also think it's about knowing your own face and knowing what works for your face." However, that's not to say make up isn't important to Kendall as she previously unveiled her own Estee Edit palette after she teamed up with Estee Lauder. She shared: "You guys, so

this is my palette, I have my own Estee Edit palette. I'm low-key freaking out inside and I think my head is exploding. "The palette is super me obviously because I created it. I'm very simple so a lot of the colors are simple." Meanwhile, when it comes to fitness, Kendall tries her best to exercise. She explained: "To be honest, I could probably be lazy and not work out and still look the same - but I'm not like that. I've always been really active. "I like to work out to feel better about myself. I do a lot of photoshoots with my stomach showing, and it just feels better to know that I can wear a crop top - or nothing, lol - at a last-minute shoot

and not be worried about it. It's all about feeling good about my body and being confident at work. "Eating healthy is a huge part of it. I can feel it in my workouts when I'm not eating right. I looove pasta, but it definitely makes me feel tired, which I don't like. I usually start my day with eggs, avocado, and oatmeal. I just feel better if I eat better! (sic)".

Rob K and Blac to make \$1 million from first baby photos

Rob Kardashian and Blac Chyna are set to receive \$1 million for the first pictures of their baby. The couple are expecting their first child together following a whirlwind romance and, according to TMZ, they will receive the huge sum for a photoshoot and interview. Meanwhile, Blac has claimed her relationship with Rob's family is "fantastic". Although the reclusive reality TV star's family were initially reported to be furious when he started dating Blac - who had been locked in a long-running feud with his sister Kylie Jenner - the former model insists that things between them all are perfect. Rob and Blac got engaged after just a few months of dating and announced Blac's pregnancy in April but she insists that they are in no rush to wed. She told Entertainment Tonight: "We're taking things slow. Everyone's happy! Things with Rob's family are fantastic." Blac, 28, already has a three-year-old son King Cairo, whose father is Tyga, the ex-boyfriend of Rob's sister Kylie, 18 and it was previously claimed that the Kardashians were concerned that Rob, 29, would "shut them out" if they didn't try and accept his wife-to-be. A source said: "The family in general still feels

Rob's relationship with Chyna is very rushed. They were hoping that Chyna would be more like a rebound. Someone who was able to help Rob, but that he then would move on. They never expected an engagement and a baby. "Rob has made it clear though that this is what he wants. He seems very happy. The family knows that they need to be on his side, or he will shut them out. They are really playing by Rob's rules now." The relationship between Rob and Blac was said to be particularly "difficult" for his mother Kris Jenner but it is good "from a business aspect" as it will make fantastic viewing on their E! reality show 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians'. The insider added: "Kris has had a difficult time with the whole situation. It's definitely been frustrating for her. But the baby will be welcomed. Just like with Kris' other grandkids, Rob's baby will be loved and spoiled." From a business aspect, Rob's new life is great for the show. They have had some problems coming up with new storylines. Rob's baby is great."



Olly Alexander obsessed with Matt Healy

Olly Alexander couldn't stop shaking when he met Matt Healy. The Years & Years frontman is obsessed with The 1975's lead singer and admitted he could not hide his excitement when the pair bumped into each other at BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend at Powderham Castle in Exeter on Sunday. He told BANG Showbiz: "I am obsessed with Matt Healy. I met him for the first time today. It was a big moment for me. I was shaking. He just gave me a hug and introduced me to his dog so I met his dog. I'm pretty much in there." Olly also revealed the band are currently working on new music and he would love to collaborate with Rihanna. When asked about new material, he said: "You never know. We've started thinking about it we've got a couple of ideas. We'd love to get something out before the end of the year. "I want to do a song with Rihanna we need to make that work." Meanwhile, Take That thrilled revellers when they joined Sigma on stage at the festival on Saturday. The drum and bass duo of Cameron Edwards and Joe Lenzie teamed up with the 'Back For Good' hit-

makers - Gary Barlow, Mark Owen and Howard Donald - to wow the crowds with a performance of their brand new track 'Cry'. Welcoming Take That onto the stage, they said: "You know this one right? You know we've got to do things big? Make some noise for Gary Barlow, Howard Donald and Mark Owen." During their electric set, Sigma was also joined by their special guest Paloma Faith for their hit track 'Changes'. Earlier on in the day, Nick Jonas opened the main stage by performing a selection of his biggest hits including 'Levels', 'Close' and 'Jealous'. Other highlights included Meghan Trainor, who brought a touch of glamour to Devon, strutting up and down the stage in a black glitter gown. And Mumford and Sons closed the evening, performing to the biggest crowd of the night. BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend Exeter 2016 will be live on Radio 1 on May 29. Watch live online, on BBC iPlayer, with highlights on BBC Four and Radio 1's YouTube channel.

Kristin Cavallari won't watch herself on 'The Hills'

The mother-of-three admitted that she tried to watch some old episodes of the MTV reality TV and cringed at how "obnoxious" she was. She told Entertainment Tonight: "I was so obnoxious and I'm like ... different time in my life. "I haven't gone back and watched them, but one day, I think it was two summers ago, my husband, Jay [Cutler], had them on when I came home one time and that was... it's kind of brutal for me to sit through." Meanwhile, her former co-star Audrina Patridge recently admitted what played out on the reality show was very different to what was really going on in the cast's personal lives, and any genuine relationships were "ruined" by being on TV. She admitted: "You can't have a real relationship on that show. 'The Hills', any real relationship you'd bring on or try to have, it would get ruined. ... "I think if social media was a thing, 'The Hills' would never be what it was. Even now going to dinner [fans] sit there and take pictures and film, and like, listen. The secrets! There would be no secrets at 'The Hills' anymore if there was social media back then!" Audrina admitted she was really "upset" and became "distrustful" of show bosses when a storyline was staged for her to date Spencer Pratt, who is now married to co-star Heidi Montag. She said: "Oh God, no! I did not have history with him and this was one of the things that really upset me and this was when I started distrusting the producers." Recalling when she was asked to go to a Pinkberry frozen yoghurt store with no explanation, only for Spencer, 32, to appear with flowers, she added: "That was all fabricated for drama because they needed something to film. "And I think that was one of the first dramatic-that's what started all the drama."



Saldana's \$8.7 million home

Zoe Saldana has splashed out \$8.7 million on a new Los Angeles home. The 'Star Trek' actress and her artist husband Marco Perego, both 37, are set to move into a 6,400 square foot home in Beverly Hills with their 18-month-old twins Bowie and Cy, TMZ reports. Zoe's new home is situated in an exclusive gated community and counts Jennifer Lawrence,

Cameron Diaz, Nicole Richie, Ashton Kutcher and Mila Kunis and Adele among its residents. Meanwhile, Zoe - who married Marco in 2013 after a whirlwind romance - recently revealed it was love at first sight when she met him. She said: "I know people don't believe in it; I didn't believe in it. I'm a very Sigmund Freud person, I'm very logical. "But that - I'm OK not having an explanation for that. Because I don't need to explain that. It was enough that I felt it. And that was it." The actress also recalled the moment she set her eyes on Marco, admitting she felt a "vibration". She added: "The spark was there before I even saw his face. I just saw him from behind, with like a man bun and a leather jacket. He had a sweater that draped out of the leather jacket. "It was 6:30 in the morning, I was on a flight to New York. And I can't even describe to you, it was a vibration. He turned in that moment, because he felt the vibration as well." And after welcoming their twins, Zoe admitted they have a "tribe" of family and friends to help them. She said: "We have a tribe. Whenever we're overwhelmed-and when you have twins, you get overwhelmed quite easily and really quickly - you just send out an SOS, man, and they will cancel. They will find a nanny for their kids. They'll bring the kids, and then we end up kind of relaxing. "I was surrounded by way too many moms who are always like, 'Oh my God, I got it so hard.' And my sister was always like, 'It's a piece of cake. It's super awesome!' So I stuck to her, and it's been fun."



Meghan Trainor tries to ignore her critics

The 'All About That Bass' hitmaker insists she avoids all the negative comments made about her online as she fears it would "get in her head". She said: "I never read YouTube or Twitter comments. I do read Instagram comments though as they are nicer but I can't sit there and read all the nasty things as it would get to my head." And the 22-year-old singer recently removed the music video for 'Me Too' after realizing it had been "photoshopped" and has hit back at claims she had planned it, insisting she has always been very proud of her body. She told the Daily Star Online: "I thought about doing a photoshoot in a bath tub to show them I'm proud of who am. I would want to make it really arty, I wouldn't just do a bikini shoot ... "I should have calmed down and taken a few more deep breathes but I just went at it on Snapchat. I didn't want my fans to be like where is the video. I actually spotted the Photoshopping before they did. I was really embarrassed about the whole situation and didn't want the track to be all about the controversy but it is." Meanwhile, Meghan previously revealed she was "sick" of being photoshopped. Speaking on Snapchat at the time, she said: "Hey guys, I took down the 'Me Too' music video because they photoshopped the crap out of me and I'm so

sick of it and I'm over it. So I took it down until they fix it. "My waist is not that teeny. I had a bomb waist that night. I don't know why they didn't like my waist but I didn't approve of that video and it went out for the world so I'm embarrassed. The video is still one of my favorite videos I've ever done, I'm very proud of it. I'm just angry that they broke my ribs, you know?"



Kate Beckinsale told to slim down

Kate Beckinsale was told she'd have to "work out" to secure a part in 'Pearl Harbor'. The 42-year-old actress was advised by the film's director Michael Bay that she needed to lose weight to star as Nurse Lt. Evelyn Johnson in the 2001 drama. She said: "I don't think I fitted the type of actress Michael Bay, the director, had met before. I think he was baffled by me because my boobs weren't bigger than my head and I wasn't blonde. "I'd just had my daughter and had lost weight but was told that if I got the part I'd have to work out, and I just didn't understand why a 1940s nurse would do that." And the 'Love & Friendship' star also recalled some of the harsh comments made by Michael during promotion for the film. Speaking on The Graham Norton Show, she shared: "When we were promoting the film, Michael was asked why he had chosen Ben [Affleck] and Josh [Hartnett]. He said, 'I have worked with Ben before and I love him, and Josh is so manly and a wonderful actor.' "And

then when he was asked about me, he'd say, 'Kate wasn't so attractive that she would alienate the female audience.' He kept saying it everywhere we went and we went to a lot of places." Meanwhile, Kate previously admitted she allowed her love life to dictate the decisions she made in her career when she signed up to star in 'Underworld' because it was being directed by Len Wiseman, her now estranged husband. She said: "The second we absolutely did because we were just getting married. When he did a movie, he'd be tied up for more than two years, and we weren't ready to have that happen to us. That was 100 percent what that was about. "I don't regret having done it, but I think I regret it has eclipsed some of the things that feel much more genuinely me. It's slightly taken over - it was running the show a bit, in a way that was surprising to me." — Bang Showbiz



Hundreds of cone shapes are prepared for forming and shaping during the hat manufacturing processes at the Akubra factory in Kempsey, Australia. — AP photos



Greg Brady checks the drying progress of hats before they are sent to the final shaping department during the hat manufacturing processes.



Geoff Edwards pulls a hat out of a press after the final shaping process during hat manufacturing at the Akubra factory in Kempsey, Australia.



Janis Neilson sews hat bands onto finished Akubras during the manufacturing processes at their factory in Kempsey.



Checking for fabric floors a worker handles a hat after it is removed from a press during the hat manufacturing processes at the Akubra factory in Kempsey.

Rugged, stylish Akubra hat a symbol of Australia

The image is seared into Australian lore: Under a hot desert sun, a mounted soldier pours the last of his water into his slouch hat to share with his best friend, his horse. For countless Australians over the past 130 years, Akubra hats have not just been a fashion statement, but an integral part of life. The Akubra, an Aboriginal word meaning "head covering," has provided Australians protection from the country's harsh elements, its fur felt blocking the scorching sun and holding back the rain.

Akubra hats hold the same place in Australian folklore as Stetson cowboy hats do in the American West. They symbolize life in the Outback and a rugged self-reliance that is still a source of pride for Australians, even if many have moved to a more comfortable lifestyle in the city. Making the Akubra started as a family business, and remains so to this day.

Shortly after arriving in Australia in 1874, Briton Benjamin Dunkerley settled in the island state of Tasmania and set up a modest hat factory. In 1904 he invited a fellow hat-making Brit, Stephen Keir, to join the company. Keir married Dunkerley's daughter Ada the next year.

The business moved to Sydney and in 1912 started using the trade name Akubra to market its hats. The word "Akubra" is now very much a part of Aussie vernacular and is often used colloquially to refer to all broad-brimmed hats worn by farmers. When World War I broke out, the company became one of two suppliers that produced the famed slouch hat worn by the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps soldiers, and it's still the major supplier for Australian troops. Today the business is run by Keir's great-grandson, Stephen Keir IV.

A process involving hot water, pressure and friction makes the rabbit-fur hats impervious to water.

Processed fur is fed into blowers that remove unwanted hair and dirt, leaving behind a soft blanket of downy-like cotton. Then the fur is sucked onto a large revolving cone while hot water is sprayed onto it, binding the fibers together and making the felt one of the world's strongest fabrics. The felt is passed through roller presses dozens of times before workers dye, mold, shape, soften and smooth each hat. Stitching in

"They like accessories, they like to look good and they're looking after themselves a bit better." More than 40 styles in varying colors make up their range of hats, including "The Stockman" and "The Cattleman." None may be as famous as "The Great White Shark."

Worn and promoted by former world No. 1 golfer Greg Norman, known as "The Shark," the hat gained popularity and took the small family-owned company



the sweat bands and trimming the interior complete the process. Milliner Robert Carroll, manager of Akubra's only retail store, Strand Hatters in Sydney, says they are selling more hats than ever before. "Men are wearing hats more now," Carroll says.

to international fame. In recent years, Akubra hats were used by medal presenters at the Olympics and worn by world leaders at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Australia. — AP



A worker in the Akubra hat factory removes a giant cone shaped form of fur felt from a stainless steel cones during the second stage of hat manufacturing.



Neil MacCudden waits for steam to settle during one of the many forming stages of the hat manufacturing processes at the Akubra factory.



Leading Swiss medical shoes, KyBoot, launched in Kuwait offering relief from medical conditions

Millennium Medical Group launched KyBoot, a leading Swiss based medical-shoe brand in Kuwait under the patronage and in the presence of the Swiss Ambassador to Kuwait, Aldo De Luca. The event was also attended by the inventor of the KyBoot, Karl Muller, and his team. The branch is located at Dalal Complex in Salem Al-Mubarak street, Salmiya.

The medical KyBoot shoes 'walking on air' is designed in accordance with the highest medical standards using unique light-weight substance to provide not only comfort and easy movement, but also health benefits. The technology uses an air pillow in the base of the shoes made of polyurethane with

advanced features, locking air bubbles in it. The air pillow is flexible in order to give you the perfect movement.

Speaking at the event, inventor Muller said the feet play an important part in a man's anatomy for a healthy body. "The KyBoot has been designed to stimulate the feet in such a way as to energize the feet while standing and walking." Further he noted that the special substance used to manufacture KyBoot is soft and supple and enables the feet to move effortlessly in comfort, in addition to lending strength to the legs.

Although the shoes are made of soft substance, it has been built to last. Tests have proven their durability through intensive use. The strength-building capacity of the shoes is attrib-

uted to its design which bears an effect on the leg muscles. Moreover, feet coordination also improves, which increases walking speed and the firmness of each step. Wearing the Kyboot alters the forces acting on your ligaments, muscles, tendons and joints. This has a positive effect on your posture and gait.

The launch was attended by the head and board members of Millennium Medical Group, the dealers of KyBoot. Representatives of other international brands and medical doctors from a range of specialties were also present. Millennium Medical Group offers its customers many choices in high-quality services and solutions that are cost-effective,

practical and hi-tech. The group is currently on track for GCC-wide expansion from Kuwait, and is aiming to establish an intricate network of international branches to extend its visions and goals in the health domain. The group is the sole distributor of KyBoot in Kuwait and is confident about the brand's success owing to its quality and beneficial effects on health.

Depp's daughter, former partner deny abuse allegations

Johnny Depp's daughter defended the Oscar-nominated star on Sunday, after his wife accused him of abuse and filed for divorce. Meanwhile, Depp's former partner allegedly said in a letter obtained by celebrity news website TMZ that the claims being made against him are "outrageous." Lily-Rose Depp posted a photo on Instagram apparently showing herself as a baby, with Johnny Depp holding her hands and helping her walk.

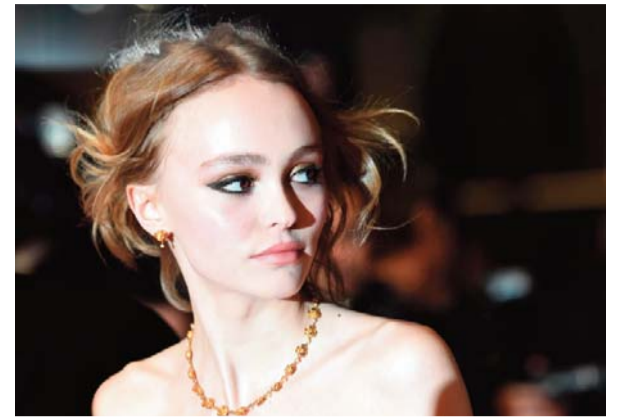
"My dad is the sweetest most loving person I know, he's been nothing but a wonderful father to my little brother and I, and everyone who knows him would say the same," Lily-Rose Depp said in the caption. Johnny Depp was hit with a temporary restraining order on Friday after his wife Amber Heard appeared in court with a black eye, accusing the actor of assaulting her. Heard, who filed for divorce in Los Angeles ear-

lier last week and is seeking spousal support from the 52-year-old "Pirates of the Caribbean" star, says she is the victim of repeated attacks by Depp.

Heard submitted pictures to the court showing a bruise on her face that she claims was inflicted during a fight and said she feared Depp might harm her. Actress-model Heard said in a sworn statement that Depp had been verbally and physically abusive throughout their time together. Depp and Heard met on the set of the 2011 film "The Rum Diary," when Depp was still in a relationship with the French actress Vanessa Paradis, mother of Lily-Rose and her brother Jack.

Celebrity news website TMZ on Sunday posted a photo of a handwritten letter that it said it obtained from Paradis, in which she describes her former partner as "a sensitive, loving and loved person." "I believe with all my heart that these

recent allegations being made are outrageous, in all the years I have known Johnny, he has never been physically abusive with me and this looks nothing like the man I lived with for 14 wonderful years," the note says. The letter is signed by Paradis, dated Friday in Los Angeles. Lily-Rose Depp, 17, recently walked the red carpet at Cannes for the premiere of "La Danseuse" (The Dancer), in which she portrayed American dancer Isadora Duncan to mixed reviews. She is also a model and the teenage face of Chanel. — AFP



This file shows French-US actress Lily-Rose Depp arriving for the screening of the film 'La Danseuse (The Dancer)' at the 69th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP



Actress Amber Heard leaves Los Angeles Superior Court after giving a sworn declaration that her husband Johnny Depp threw her cellphone at her during a fight Saturday, striking her cheek and eye. — AP

Amber Heard says Depp is 'Scary,' struggles with drug and alcohol abuse

Amber Heard detailed her husband Johnny Depp's history of drug and alcohol abuse, saying that she feared for her safety in papers filed during her appearance in Los Angeles County Court early Friday morning. "I am extremely afraid of Johnny and for my safety," the actress said in her declaration for a restraining order, which was temporarily granted against the "Pirates of the Caribbean" star for 100 days.

The documents allege a disturbing history of extreme anger, violent outbursts and substance abuse by the 52-year-old actor, describing in detail two violent incidents including the Saturday night altercation that she said led to her bruised cheek. Heard stated that in addition to a restraining order, that Depp should be required to enroll in treatment for anger management and for batterers. "His relationship with reality oscillates," she stated, "Depending on his interaction with alcohol and drugs. Johnny has a long-held and widely-acknowledged public and private history of drug and alcohol abuse," she said, "He has a short fuse. He is often paranoid and his temper is exceptionally scary."

The Los Angeles Police Department investigated the second incident detailed in Heard's request but found no evidence of domestic assault. Heard also declined to file a criminal report that night, May 21, according to a spokesman for the LAPD. Heard, who provided photos of her bruised face to the judge, said one of Depp's outbursts happened during an April birthday celebration at their condo in Downtown LA's Eastern Columbia building. "On Saturday, April 21, 2016, I celebrated my birthday with friends and family at the (Downtown LA) residence.

Inebriated and high

As everyone was preparing to leave, Johnny showed up inebriated and high. After my guests left, Johnny and I had a discussion about his absence from my birthday celebration which deteriorated into a bad argument that started with Johnny throwing a magnum size bottle of champagne against the wall and a wine glass on me and the floor. Johnny was also screaming and threatening me, taunting for me to stand up. After several minutes, Johnny stormed out of the condominium, not before tossing aside and breaking nearly everything in his path. I did not see him for another month," the declaration read. Depp and his lawyer argued that Heard's request was motivated by a financial settlement in their divorce case and "in response to the negative media attention she received" following the announcement of their separation earlier this week.

"Not only are such matters devoid of any exigency, but they are also wildly premature," his team added. "This case commenced this week." Related Amber Heard Granted Domestic Violence Restraining Order Against Johnny Depp Heard filed for divorce from the actor on Sunday, the day after the argument during which Depp "wound up his arm like a baseball pitcher" and threw his iPhone at her, striking her cheek and eye with great force, she stated, "The next time I saw him was on May 21, 2016. He arrived at the (Downtown LA) residence at approximately 7:15 pm. He was inebriated and high...When Johnny arrived at first, we were having a peaceful conversation in our living room about his mother's passing as I tried to comfort him while we sat on the couch. Suddenly he began obsessing about something that was untrue and his demeanor changed dramatically.

Irrational accusations

He became extremely angry. I tried to calm Johnny down by calling one of his trusted employees to alleviate his misplaced con-

cerns, but it did not work. "Johnny was becoming increasingly enraged. I began to have concerns for my safety and sent a text to my friend Raquel who was in the condominium next door. I texted her and told her to come over. As Johnny continued to rant in an aggressive and incoherent manner, he then demanded we call our friend Tillet Wright ("iO") to prove his paranoid and irrational accusations about delusion he was having.

"As my call to iO went through on speaker phone, Johnny ripped the cell phone from my hand and began screaming profanities and insults at iO. I heard iO yell at me to get out of the house. Johnny then grabbed the cell phone, wound up his arm like a baseball pitcher and threw the cell phone at me striking my cheek and with great force. "I immediately covered my face and was crying because of the pain resulting from the phone hitting me. Johnny charged at me, insisting on seeing my face. He taunted me, challenged whether or not the cell phone actually hit me. He then forcefully pulled back my hair as attempted to stand up from the sofa. I then yelled out 'Call 911' hoping it would be heard by iO who was still on the phone. Johnny continued screaming at me, pulling my hair, striking me and violently grabbing my face.

"Raquel entered the condominium using the key I had previously provided to her. I then escaped Johnny's grasp as he momentarily seemed distracted by Raquel's entrance. Johnny then charged me again after I had moved to the other side of the room. Raquel ran in between us and begged Johnny to stop. He then slapped away her arms that she had extended in a defensive manner and continued to yell obscenities at her and retreated to the couch. Raquel then came over to cover me in a protective posture. While Johnny then picked up the magnum size bottle of wine he had been drinking out of and he started swinging it around, smashing everything he could.

Personal property

"Johnny then stormed at me once again, demanding that I get up and stand. He did this about ten times-getting closer to me, louder and more threatening each time. Johnny's security team, that included Judge Jerry, entered the condominium at this time, but they stood back without saying or doing anything. I yelled to Jerry to please help me and told him that if Johnny hit me one more time I was going to call the police. I heard Jerry say, 'Boss, Please!' But Johnny continued screaming and breaking things, finally leaving the condominium.

"As Johnny went down the hallway, he smashed another bottle of wine and then went into the adjoining condominium unit I use as my office, painting studio and closet I could hear him destroying items of my personal property as he continued screaming. Joshua and Raquel took me into their condominium for safety. Eventually I did not hear Johnny anymore." Heard's friend Raquel Pennington also provided a statement, saying, "I ran over and stood in between Johnny and Amber, begging Johnny to stop yelling at her. I put my hands out in a defensive manner motioning him to stop. Johnny slapped my hands away and screamed foul obscenities at me. I then tried to covered Amber up with my body to protect her from him. Johnny picked up a magnum size bottle of wine and began swinging it like a baseball bat. Wine was flying all over the walls." The next hearing on the case is set for June 17. — Reuters

Loss, accusations mark a turbulent few days for Depp

Johnny Depp seemed the picture of rock star cool as he played guitar onstage in Portugal with his band, the Hollywood Vampires. An ocean away, he is facing serious accusations. A judge on Friday ordered Depp to stay away from estranged wife, Amber Heard, after she accused the Oscar-nominated actor of repeatedly hitting her during a recent fight and leaving her face bruised. Depp's publicist has not responded to a request for comment, and the "Pirates of the Caribbean" star made no mention of the allegations during his Friday night concert in Lisbon.

Depp appeared on stage puffing a small cigar and playing rhythm guitar to a large crowd that had gathered for a Rock in Rio concert. The 52-year-old was introduced to the cheering audience as "the wings of the vampire" by band-member Alice Cooper. The restraining order was issued on the day Depp's latest film, "Alice Through the Looking Glass," opened in theaters and caps a turbulent week for the star. His mother died May 20 and Heard filed for divorce on Monday. On Friday, she appeared in court with a bruise on her right

cheek below the eye, saying Depp threw her cellphone at her during a fight.

Heard's filing alleges a history of abuse throughout her relationship with Depp, which started after they met on the set of the 2011 film "The Rum Diary." A judge ordered Depp to stay away from Heard and not to attempt contact with her before a June 17 hearing. Los Angeles Police responded to a domestic violence call at the couple's home on May 21, but the person who made the call declined to file charges and officers determined no crime occurred. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Carl H. Moor rejected Heard's request that Depp attend a year's worth of anger management classes and the protective order extend to her dog, a Yorkshire terrier named Pistol.

The status of the couple's other dog, Boo, was not immediately known. (The dogs received worldwide publicity last year when Heard brought them into Australia without proper documentation. Heard and Depp released an awkward video last month apologizing for the action.) Depp's attorney, Laura Wasser, declined to comment. Wasser wrote

in a court filing that Depp was out of the country and would agree to a mutual stay-away order. Heard is seeking spousal support but Depp's response filed Wednesday asked a judge to deny the request.

Depp has been working steadily for the past few years, but his work has not always connected with the public. His eccentric heist comedy "Mortdecai" was a flop, but he rebounded by playing Whitey Bulger in the hit mobster film "Black Mass." Depp has also filmed "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales" - the fifth installment of the long-running franchise - and even played Donald Trump in a satirical comedy for the website Funny or Die. Last year, he and the Hollywood Vampires - Cooper and Joe Perry - released their self-titled album. His new film, "Alice Through the Looking Glass," a sequel to 2010's "Alice in Wonderland," has been critically panned and is performing below expectations going into the holiday weekend. — AP



Johnny Depp (left) and Alice Cooper (second left) and Joe Perry (second right) perform at the Rock in Lisboa music festival at Bela Vista Park in Lisbon on May 27, 2016. — AFP photos



Johnny Depp performs with his band 'Hollywood Vampires' on a festival in Herborn, central Germany.

Hollywood's golden age alive and kicking at retirement home

Johnny Weissmuller was said to walk the grounds of this retirement home letting out his trademark Tarzan yell. Another resident wistfully recalls missing out on a date with Marilyn Monroe, while a third has stories about "Walt" or "Frank" that is Walt Disney or Frank Sinatra. Hollywood's golden age may be long gone but it's still very much alive and kicking at this retirement community north of Los Angeles, where a who's who of the industry reside.

Here, you can meet a set director who worked on "Doctor Zhivago" or "Mutiny on the Bounty," a film researcher who worked on "Star Trek," "Chinatown" and "Fiddler on the Roof," or a 103-year old actress who knew Sinatra and recently auditioned for a horror flick. "The people here have done every kind of job you can imagine associated with film and television," said Bob Beitcher, president and CEO of the Motion Picture and Television Fund (MPTF), which runs the home located in Woodland Hills. "You have everything from publicists, to animators to character actors to directors, writers, wardrobe, costume, hair and makeup."

Founded in 1921 by cinema pioneers Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, D.W. Griffith and Mary Pickford, the MPTF's mission was initially focused on helping stars unable to make the transition from silent film to talkies. The charitable organization began with coin boxes that were placed at the studios, where actors could drop spare change to help industry professionals who often worked as freelancers and had no job protection. Nearly a century later, the MPTF continues to take care of its own through donations, albeit on a much bigger scale, with the likes of George Clooney, Kirk Douglas and Steven Spielberg lending their support.

"No other industry in the world has done something like this and this is what makes it so remarkable," Beitcher said. "People who work in the industry are like gypsies," he added. "They move from place to place, uproot their families to move to Louisiana, to New York or to Europe ... and many do physical labor on a film or TV set that is hard on them." About half of the 165 residents at the retirement home pay for their room and board, which ranges from \$3,400 to \$6,100 a month, and the Fund pays for the other half unable to afford the cost.

'THE BIGGER, THE FRIENDLIER'

Though a few of the retirees on the sprawling 40-acre campus are well-known in the industry, the majority are cast and crew members who spent their careers working quietly behind the scenes and never got on-screen billing. Steven Kohler, 87, can make your head spin as he ticks off the names of some of the greats he rubbed shoulders with during his long career as a set dresser.

"Oh yeah, the crew would all sit together for lunch some-

times during filming," he said, recalling his time on the set of the 1965 epic drama "Doctor Zhivago," starring Omar Sharif and Julie Christie. Marlon Brando, whom Kohler got to know during filming of the 1962 historical drama "Mutiny on the Bounty," was nothing more than a kind-hearted gentleman, he says. "The bigger they were, the more friendly they were," said Kohler, sitting in his impeccably decorated cottage at the retirement home, where he moved nearly five years ago.

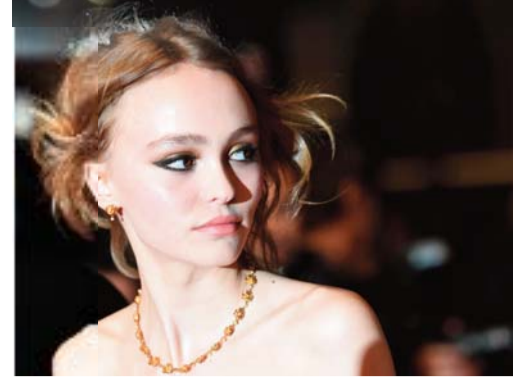


"Brando was very generous. He helped people without anybody knowing." Fellow resident Robert Mirisch, 77, whose family ran the Mirisch Company, one of Hollywood's top independent production companies in the 1960s, for his part likes to recall his missed date with Marilyn Monroe. He had met Monroe during filming of the romantic comedy "Some Like It Hot," produced by his family's company, and ended up being invited to accompany the sultry star to the movie's premiere in New York.

Only problem was that he had plans to visit his ailing father at the time and politely said "no." "So I'm the guy who turned down a date with Marilyn Monroe and my father had the gall to live numbers of years after that," jokes Mirisch, who was an entertainment industry attorney and who bears an uncanny resemblance to Bob Hope. — AP

The Motion Picture and Television Fund has announced that it has entered into a non-binding letter of intent with Providence Health and Services California with plans to broaden and expand healthcare services to the entertainment industry and the community on its Wasserman Campus. — AP

Depp's daughter, former partner deny abuse allegations



This photo shows students holding Chinese calligraphy scrolls called 'Mo Yun' at a primary school in Yiwu, eastern China's Zhejiang province. More than 30 primary school students spent over half a month creating the eight scrolls, each one measuring 12 meters long and 40cm wide. — AFP



Polish kayaker Aleksander Doba sails during the start of his transatlantic kayak adventure from New York to Lisbon in New York.



Polish kayaker Aleksander Doba signs flyers before the beginning of his transatlantic kayak adventure.



Polish kayaker Aleksander Doba begins his transatlantic kayak adventure from New York to Lisbon.



Polish kayaker Aleksander Doba waves to the crowd as he hugs his wife Gabriela Doba before the beginning of his transatlantic kayak adventure.

Polish grandpa heads from New York to Portugal... in a kayak

A Polish grandfather left New York Sunday on his third solo trans-Atlantic crossing in a kayak, aiming to arrive in Portugal in time to celebrate his 70th birthday on firm ground in September. Aleksander Doba paddled off from the tip of Manhattan after doing interviews and posing for selfies with a crowd of some 100 onlookers. A star at home, Doba gained global attention when he was named a National Geographic adventurer of the year in 2015. At that point, he already had two solo Atlantic kayak crossings under his belt.

The first, between October 2010 and February 2011, took him across one of the narrowest points of the ocean from the Senegalese capital Dakar to the Brazilian city of Acarau. "During the expedition bandits attacked me twice and I was robbed of almost everything," he said on his website. The second saw him set off from Lisbon in October 2013 and arrive in Florida in April the following year, navigating ocean swells and tempestuous weather. On Sunday, he embarked on what he has called his "hardest" journey yet, a 3,700-mile (6,000-kilometer) crossing through storm zones in the frigid waters of the North Atlantic.

"I know that this will be the toughest of

Age is just a number

He will be paddling between eight and 12 hours each day—not exactly anyone's notion of grandpa napping in a rocking chair. And Doba won't let his age get in the way of his dream. "I feel good. I don't want to think about being old," said the grandfather who sports a long white beard. "I feel young and I don't want to pretend that I'm old." And Doba was dismissive about risks of the journey. "When people ask me about the dangers of this, I will ask them: Where did you get up from? The bed? Did you know that 95 percent of people will die in bed? So why do you go to bed?" "What happens after? Let's see," he said smiling. He is in the kayak "mostly for myself but really, if that gives happiness and encouragement to others, why not?"

Doba's extreme hobbies haven't always made things easy for his family, acknowledges his supportive wife Gabriela through a translator. "I never agreed, but at a certain point, there was no return. So I was his best supporter for the first two expeditions," she said. "For a person of this type, this energy, this determination, you cannot stop somebody for doing what he really wants to do." He has already logged 96,000 kilometers by kayak and Doba says he is eager to see "my counter pass the 100,000-kilometre threshold" this year. — AFP

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Regardless of the obstacles, Doba—also an avid rock-climber, parachutist, glider pilot, sailor and yacht skipper—is determined to make it to the Portuguese capital in time to celebrate his 70th birthday on September 9. "I planned, from the beginning, to make a circle," Doba said, recalling how he planned his adventure from Europe or Africa to South America, from South America to the United States and from there to Europe. "My dream is to finish this." Doba's 21-foot (over six meter) white and yellow kayak, which he calls "Olo," was in large part designed by him.

Age is just a number

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Polish kayaker Aleksander Doba looks on before the beginning of his transatlantic kayak adventure.



Polish kayaker Aleksander Doba sails next to Statue Liberty.