

**Muwaizri to run for speakership, opposition seeks common ground**



**Abbas reelected party leader as Fatah opens rare congress**



**Does my hair look OK? World's oldest person turns 117 in style**



**Westbrook in a hurry as Thunder down Knicks**



## OPERATIONS BEGIN AT AZZOUR ELECTRICITY AND WATER PLANT

FIRST INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED PROJECT TO SELL OUTPUT TO MEW



Max 22°  
Min 13°  
High Tide 13:55 & 23:52  
Low Tide 06:55 & 18:31

By Sara Ahmed

**KUWAIT:** The first independently-owned power and water plant in Kuwait, Azzour North One, launched commercial operations yesterday. Azzour North One will generate 10 percent of Kuwait's power requirements (1,539 MW) and 20 percent of water needs (107 million gallons per day). The KD 519 million (\$1.7 billion) project was delayed for years due to political infighting but finally started construction in Dec 2013.

The power and water plant marks the first stage in a lengthy effort by the government to meet the state's growing power and water needs. It also represents the first successful test case for the implementation of the government's mega infrastructure development plan and the public-private partnership model. Azzour North One will be fueled by a blend of local gas and imported LNG. In 2015, Kuwait imported 3.1 million metric tons of LNG and has awarded a consortium to build a KD 882 million (\$2.9 billion) LNG import and regasification terminal at Azzour.

Falling under the first phase of the Independent Water and Power Project (IWPP), Azzour North One is owned and operated by Shamal Azzour Al-Oula KSC, which is 40 percent owned by a private consortium comprising ENGIE (formerly GDF SUEZ), Sumitomo Corporation, and Kuwait-based AH Sagar & Brothers. The remaining 60 percent is owned by the government of Kuwait, through the Kuwait Investment Authority (5 percent), the Public Institution for Social Security (5 percent), and Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (50 percent).

The government is mandated to sell 50 percent of the total ownership through an initial public offering (IPO) to Kuwaiti citizens after construction is completed. The government will retain a 10 percent stake following the IPO. All the power and treated water produced from the plant will be bought by the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) under a 40-year long-term deal. (See Page 3)



**KUWAIT:** The Azzour North One power and water plant is seen.

### SAUDI KING TO VISIT KUWAIT

HOPE FOR KHAFJI

**KUWAIT:** Saudi King Salman is to visit Kuwait next week as hopes rise in the state of a resumption of production from a jointly run oilfield after a two-year shutdown. The king will travel to Kuwait on Dec 8 after a Gulf summit in Bahrain and stay for three days. Al-Jarida newspaper reported yesterday. His visit comes as the state-owned Kuwait Gulf Oil Co (KGOC) readies for a long hoped-for resumption of production from the offshore Khafji field, jointly run with Saudi Aramco Gulf Operations.

In an internal memo seen by AFP, KGOC asked staff to make the necessary preparations. It ordered implementation of a Startup Readiness Plan to put "facilities in operational ready state within least possible period in order to achieve the resumption of Khafji crude oil production". Output from the Khafji field was halted in Oct 2014. Saudi Arabia cited environmental concerns but the move came amid a slump in prices that put pressure on producers around the world.

The halt to the field's production of 300,000 barrels per day - shared equally between the two countries - hit Kuwait far harder than Saudi Arabia. The state lacks the spare production capacity its giant neighbor enjoys. — AFP

## BILLIONS PLEDGED FOR TUNISIA

KUWAIT TO GIVE \$500M IN LOANS OVER 5 YEARS

### KUWAIT HAS SENT REQUEST FOR INT'L BOND PROPOSALS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait has sent a request for proposals for a potential debut international bond, according to sources. The sovereign is expected to issue next year, most likely in the US dollar market, continuing the spree of Gulf sovereign bond deals. In October, bankers said that Kuwait was in no rush to fund overseas, according to Reuters. Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh had said in July the government planned to sell as much as \$10 billion in conventional and Islamic bonds in international markets to help plug Kuwait's budget deficit for the current fiscal year, which will end on March 31.

Several Gulf sovereigns have sold bonds in the international markets this year, led by Saudi Arabia's record breaking \$17.5 billion triple-tranche offering in October. Other notable deals from Gulf sovereigns in 2016 include Oman's return after a 20-year absence, Qatar's \$9 billion trade and Abu Dhabi's \$5 billion transaction. Kuwait, however, will be a new name for investors, though corporates and banks from the country have outstanding US dollar bonds.

This year holding company KIPCO printed a \$500 million 2023 bond at a yield of 5 percent in March, while Borgan Bank printed the first ever senior US dollar deal from a Kuwaiti bank in September. Borgan, Boubyan Bank and National Bank of Kuwait also have outstanding subordinated bonds. Timing for the sovereign's debut issuance remains unclear. — Reuters

**TUNIS:** Tunisia won pledges of billions of dollars in financial support at an investment conference yesterday aimed at reviving the country's struggling economy. Nearly six years after its Arab Spring revolution, Tunisia hopes the meeting will help it tackle challenges including high unemployment, low growth and a tourism sector hammered by militant attacks. The two-day "Tunisia 2020" conference aims to put the North African nation "back on the investment map of the Mediterranean", officials said.

"Tunisia faces exceptional circumstances and needs exceptional support," said President Beji Caid Essebsi. "The success of the democratic project in Tunisia... serves the interests of the region and can help strengthen security and stability regionally and globally," he said. More than 2,000 business, finance and political leaders from 40 countries are attending the conference, including officials from global lenders such as the World Bank.

Continued on Page 13



**TUNIS:** Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi (center), Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani (left) and French Prime Minister Manuel Valls attend the opening ceremony of "Tunisia 2020", an international investment conference, yesterday. — AP



**LA UNION, Colombia:** Rescuers search for survivors yesterday in the wreckage of the LAMIA airlines charter plane carrying members of the Chapecoense Real football team that crashed in the mountains of Cerro Gordo. — AFP

### 75 KILLED AS PLANE CARRYING BRAZIL FOOTBALLERS CRASHES

**BOGOTA:** A charter plane carrying a Brazilian football team crashed in the mountains in Colombia late Monday, killing as many as 75 people, officials said. But they said six survived, including four players. Brazil's President Michel Temer declared three days of mourning for the victims. The LAMIA airlines charter declared an emergency at around 10 pm local time (0300

GMT yesterday), reporting it had suffered "electrical failures", and crashed a short time later near the city of Medellin, officials said.

The plane was carrying members of Chapecoense Real, a Brazilian football club that had risen from obscurity to play in the Copa Sudamericana finals today against Atletico Nacional of Colombia.

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## FEARS OF IS' USE OF WEAPONIZED DRONES

'DRONEJACKING' MAY BE NEXT BIG CYBER THREAT

**BAGHDAD/WASHINGTON:** The Mosul battle in Iraq has seen the Islamic State group increasingly resort to weaponized drones, which Western governments fear could lead to a new type of attack at home. France issued an internal note to its security forces last week warning that "this threat is to be taken into account nationwide" and ordering any drone be treated as a "suspicious package". The first record of a deadly IS drone attack was in October when two Iraqi Kurdish fighters were killed and two French special forces soldiers wounded.

The device had been booby-trapped and did its damage on the ground when forces approached it after it landed. "The use of drones by terrorist and insurgent forces is a

growing issue of international concern," James Bevan, executive director of the Conflict Armament Research NGO, wrote in a recent report. Western countries have seen an unprecedented wave of attacks perpetrated or inspired by IS and the new airborne threat is giving chills to security agencies.

"It's a threat we're looking into, especially with all those who will return from Iraq and Syria with bags of battle experience," a French government official told AFP. Some countries, especially those with large numbers of nationals among IS' foreign fighter contingent such as France or Belgium, worry that attacks on home soil will spike after the collapse of the jihadists' "caliphate". Drones are ubiquitous on the frontlines of the battle for IS bastion

Mosul, which Iraqi forces launched on Oct 17.

The militants have used them for some time for reconnaissance missions, just like government forces have, but they have more recently tried to modify them. In mid-November an AFP team on Mosul's southern front saw a small commercial drone, of the kind that will fly off the shelves in the run-up to Christmas, drop a grenade on a federal police position.

Forces battling their way to the outskirts of Mosul have reported several similar incidents. "They are also using drones in this area," Abu Mohammed Al-Atabi, a commander with the Hashed al-Shaabi paramilitaries deployed southwest of Mosul told AFP last week.

Continued on Page 13



**MOSUL:** Iraqi special forces, Lt Col Ali Hussein holds a destroyed drone used by Islamic State militants, which was shot down by his brigade on the frontline Bakr neighborhood on Nov 25, 2016. — AP



RIYADH: Kuwait's Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah (third from right) is pictured among participants in the 35th meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Interior Ministers meeting. — KUNA



Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah attends the meeting.



Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Saudi Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Prince Mohammad bin Nayef.

## KUWAIT STANDS BY SAUDI ARABIA TO FIGHT THREATS: INTERIOR MINISTER

RIYADH: Kuwait firmly stands in solidarity with Saudi Arabia in its efforts to stave off all threats and safeguard sacrosanct Muslim sites, Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday.

These remarks were made in a speech by the Kuwait minister during the 35th meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Interior Ministers, presided over by Saudi Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Prince Mohammad bin Nayef.

Moreover, on the meeting, he said that it is "part of regular discussions to review progress

made in security issues of mutual concern, which call for increased cooperation and appropriate decision-making."

Speaking on regional conditions, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled said that it would behoove GCC nations to be extra cautious, as "current challenges and obstacles require us to forge a concerted stance in a volatile juncture that the world is going through."

"Terrorism and extremism represent a grave threat that risk tearing apart nations in our region," the Kuwaiti Minister of Interior said, underscoring the need to ratchet up security cooperation on the part of GCC

nations. He also thanked GCC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani for expending efforts to organize such meetings, which prove crucial and instrumental to joint work.

Similarly, the Saudi Interior Minister underscored GCC nations' profound capabilities to overcome any security challenges and threats in the region.

With its proximity to conflict-ridden nations, the GCC has been able to preserve its security and stability, he added. The meeting featured talks over the latest security developments in the region as well as strategies to bolster GCC cooperation in that realm.

Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled later met with Prince Mohammad bin Nayef, during which he affirmed his country's deep ties with Saudi Arabia, and stressed the importance of bolstering Kuwaiti-Saudi security cooperation, exchanging mutual information and security expertise among all GCC countries, particularly in light of the current situation in the region.

The two sides discussed ways to boost mutual cooperation in the security field, including coordination, exchange of information, expand security cooperation prospect between the two countries, and create integration between GCC countries in order to achieve

security and stability for the region's people.

Shortly following his arrival in Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled said that it is imperative for the GCC member states to further promote and prop up their security cooperation and integration.

Stressing that the GCC member states will consolidate their security cooperation in order to maintain stability and address swift regional developments, he indicated that the meeting comes at a time when the region is witnessing critical security risks that pose a threat to the national interests of the GCC countries. — KUNA

## KUWAIT RENEWS COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTING CWC: OFFICIAL

BRUSSELS: The State of Kuwait has renewed its commitment to implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) on both local and international levels, said a Kuwaiti official yesterday. The use of chemical weapons by any party at any position and under any condition violates the provisions of the convention, Ali Salem Al-Thaidhi, head of the Kuwaiti delegation to the conference of 21st states parties to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), said in a statement. The conference which kicked off late Monday in The Netherlands' city of the Hague will run until December 2.

Thaidhi voiced Kuwait's condemnation of the repeated use of chemical weapons against the Syrian people. He affirmed Kuwait's support for the international community's efforts, mainly the ones of the OPCW-UN joint commission tasked with investigating the use of chemical weapons and bringing the perpetrators to justice, in combating these weapons. The State of

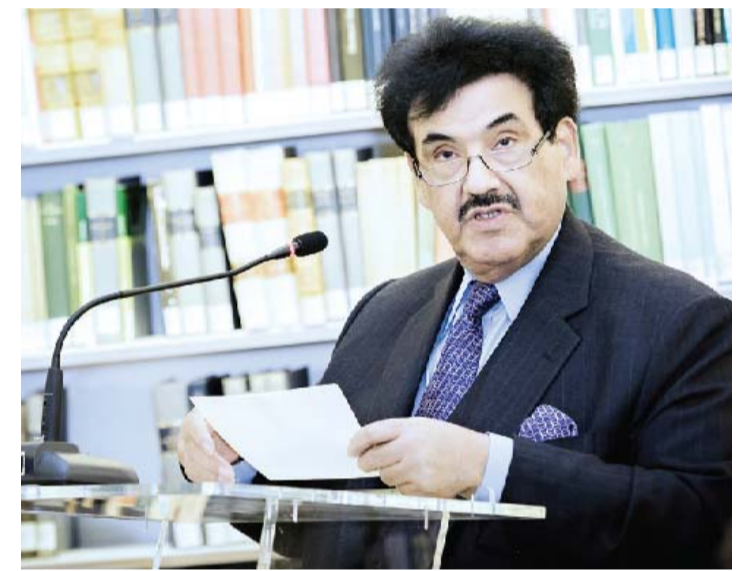
Kuwait late Monday urged the international community to prohibit all weapons of mass production in the world in general and the Middle East in particular.

Meanwhile, Director General of OPCW Ahmet Uzumcu stressed in a speech that this year has witnessed several challenges, reviewing the efforts exerted by the organization's secretary over the past period to make many achievements.

The organization is working on getting rid of Syria's chemical weapons program in accordance with security conditions, he said, expressing his concern over the repeated use of these weapons in Syria. He also reviewed the organization's efforts in Iraq, Libya and Russia, lauding the OPCW's role in achieving international peace and security. The conference discusses several key topics and Kuwaiti delegation took part in the meetings of national committees ahead of the conference during which means of implementing the provisions of the convention were discussed. — KUNA



GENEVA: His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah poses with a medal presented by President of Geneva University Professor Yves Flueckiger. — KUNA



His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah delivers his speech during the ceremony.

## SWITZERLAND HONORS SHEIKH NASSER AL-MOHAMMAD

GENEVA: Switzerland honored His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah of Kuwait for his efforts to further relations between both nations. He was awarded in a ceremony held to mark 50 years since the inception of bilateral ties between Switzerland and the State of Kuwait.

President of Geneva University Professor Yves Flueckiger handed His Highness Sheikh Nasser a commemorative medal christened, 'Schola

Genevensis', in a ceremony held last Friday, with Swiss Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Eves Rossier in attendance.

An alumnus of Geneva University, His Highness Sheikh Nasser thanked all those that "have shared their wisdom" with him. Moreover, reminiscing on Kuwaiti-Swiss ties, he noted that he was the very first Kuwaiti diplomat to serve the European Federal Republic, as he was appointed Kuwait's Consul General in Switzerland in 1966. Meanwhile,

in a speech of his own, the Swiss Foreign Minister lauded ties with Kuwait during the course of the last 50 years. Speaking on pupils of Geneva University, Flueckiger said that the school "is proud of its students, most notably, His Highness Sheikh Nasser," praising him for his successful stint as Kuwait's Ambassador to Switzerland. After the ceremony, a banquet in honor of His Highness Sheikh Nasser was held, where senior Swiss officials were in attendance. — KUNA

## LORD MAYOR OF LONDON MEETS KUWAITI OFFICIALS



KUWAIT: Lord Mayor of London Dr Andrew Charles Parmley received yesterday Director General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr Mishal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

He also visited His Highness Sheikh

Nasser Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Shuwaikh Palace on Monday.

Head of the mission of honor Governor of Hawalli Lieutenant-General Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attended both meetings. — KUNA

## UN ASSOCIATION PRAISES KUWAITI WOMEN

ROME: A United Nations Women's Association extolled Kuwaiti women's diligent efforts towards philanthropic causes, which represents Kuwait's firm commitment to humanitarian endeavors all across the globe.

In a speech to open a charitable bazaar in the headquarters of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) yesterday in Rome, with participation of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Rome's wife Dr Sara Al-Rakyan, head of the association Dima Kashour noted that such events help boost awareness on the misery of the needy. Moreover, she spoke of

women's contributions in the field of charity work to help out women, children, disabled people and other hapless segments of society.

Rakyan said that she is proud to be a member of such a prominent association, whose efforts to mitigate the suffering of children worldwide has been well-chronicled. She also underscored the bazaar as the latest in a string of events put together by the association to promote cultural harmony and co-existence, adding that her participation in this event is a testament to Kuwait's support of humanitarian causes. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The United Arab Emirates' Ambassador to Kuwait Rahma Al-Zaabi hosted a reception Monday night to celebrate his country's national day. Top state officials led by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, diplomats and other dignitaries attended the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



## FM MEETS WITH SAUDI MINISTER



KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met yesterday with visiting Saudi State Minister for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Affairs Thamer bin Sabhan Al-Sabhan.

Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled

Al-Jarallah also met the Saudi minister, in presence of a number of senior foreign ministry officials and the Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Dr Abdulaziz Al-Fayez. Jarallah later hosted a luncheon banquet in honor of the visiting minister and his delegation. — KUNA

# AZZOUR NORTH ONE POWER, WATER PLANT CONSTRUCTION COMPLETED

**KUWAIT:** Shamal Azzour Al-Oula KSC, the owner and operator of Azzour North One power and water plant, yesterday officially marked completion of the plant's construction phase and announced the commencement of full commercial operation. The \$1.7 billion facility that started construction in December 2013 is Kuwait's first independently owned power and water facility, and falls under the first phase of the country's IWPP project. The project was completed on schedule and on budget.

As of yesterday, the project has the capacity to generate 10 percent of Kuwait's power requirements at peak capacity (1,539MW) and 20 percent of water generation (107 million gallons per day). The plant is fueled by a blend of local gas and imported LNG. The combined facility of power and water generation is Kuwait's cleanest and most efficient source of electricity.

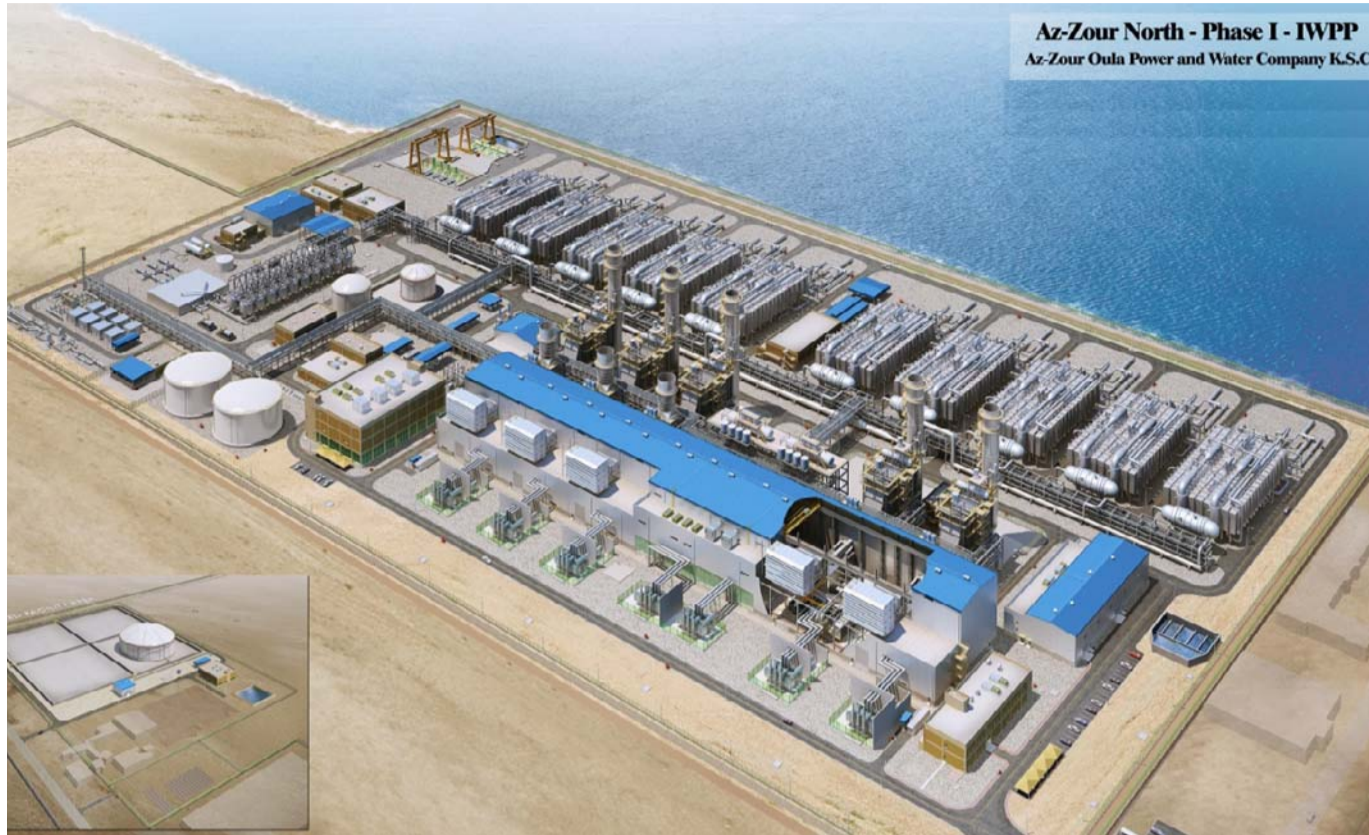
### Private consortium

Shamal Azzour Al-Oula KSC is 40 percent owned by a private consortium comprising ENGIE (formerly GDF SUEZ), Sumitomo Corporation, and A H Al-Sagar and Brothers.

The remaining 60 percent is owned by the Government of Kuwait, through the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA: 5 percent), the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS: 5 percent), and Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP: 50 percent). The Government of Kuwait is mandated to sell 50 percent of the total ownership through an Initial Public Offering (IPO) to Kuwaiti citizens after construction is completed. The government will retain 10 percent stake following the IPO.

The power and treated water produced from the plant will be entirely supplied to the country's national power and water grid operated by the Kuwait Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) under a 40-year long-term Energy Conversion and Water Purchase Agreement (ECWPA). ENGIE and Sumitomo will undertake the operation and maintenance (OandM) of the plant on an equal share basis.

The plant is the first stage of the country's plan to significantly increase capacity over the coming years, and falls within a larger effort to meet an anticipated peak demand of 25 gigawatts (GW) by 2025. It was awarded under the IWPP law and implemented through a process managed by the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects. The Plant is part of an overall IWPP



Az-Zour North - Phase I - IWPP  
Az-Zour Oula Power and Water Company K.S.C

located in the Azzour area. The overall IWPP is expected to be developed over five phases, for a total capacity of 4,800 MW of electricity and approximately 280 MIGD of

• Kuwait's first PPP project commences 100 percent commercial operations

• Adds 1,539MW and 107MIGD to the national grid today

• The combined facility of power and water generation represents Kuwait's most efficient source of electricity

desalinated water to be tendered over a period of four to six years to meet a projected rapid increase in electricity demand, which is expected to increase at a high rate of 7.6 percent per annum until 2020 against the backdrop of fast economic growth.

### Living proof

KAAP General Manager Mutlaq Al-Sane said, "Azzour North One project was our first PPP project to be tendered and the first to be completed. All of us at KAAP are extremely proud of this achievement and the transparent and efficient tendering process it involved."

Shamal Azzour KSC is living proof of the benefits of PPP model and how the private sector, international partners, and the State can all work together on delivering major infrastructure projects on schedule and on budget for the benefit of the people." Shamal Azzour KSC Chairman Yousef Al Hajri said, "On behalf our partners, our investors, and everyone working on the project, it gives me great pleasure to announce that as of yesterday Azzour North One is fully operational, with a production capacity of 1,539.2 MW and 107MIGD."

The plant is a testament to the country's vision and the private sector's capability in materializing the vision. All of us involved in the project are extremely proud of this achievement."

Shamal Azzour KSC CEO Andy Biffen

said, "I would like to thank MEW, KAAP, our EPC contractors Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) and Societe Internationale De Dessalement (SIDEM), General Electric, our staff, our shareholders, and everyone who had role in delivering a project of this magnitude on schedule and on budget; reflecting the skills, efficient organization and expertise of all those involved. Yesterday, as we celebrate the 100 percent commercial operation of the plant, we look forward to providing the country with the cleanest and most efficient power in the grid, to extending more opportunities for Kuwaitis, and to operating a safe, efficient environment for our employees."

Shamal Azzour KSC CFO, Quentin des Cressonnieres said, "Shamal Azzour achievements of the past three years would not have been possible without the Project Finance in place, and the strong support from our Lenders (NBK, JBC, NEXI, SMBC, Standard Chartered and BTMU) and our Shareholders (ENGIE, Sumitomo, Al Sagar, KAPP, KIA, PIFSS). We also look forward to start the IPO process of 50 percent of the Shares to Kuwaiti Citizens in the coming months (Mid 2017)".

### HIGHLIGHTS

- \* The power plant produces 1,539.2 MW in net contracted power capacity
- \* The power plant is operated by a combined cycle gas turbine: natural gas as main fuel and gas oil as backup fuel
- \* The power plant comprises five (5) General Electric GTG 9F-3 turbines generating 225.8 MW each and two (2) General Electric STG D1 turbines generating 251 MW each
- \* The water desalination plant comprises a multiple-effect distillation (MED) unit capable of producing 107 million imperial gallons per day (MIGD) (the equivalent of 486,400 m<sup>3</sup>/d) of desalinated water. The water desalination plant's output represent 20% of Kuwait's installed water treatment capacity
- \* The water plant uses MED technology through 10 SIDEM MED units, each generating 10.84 MIGD

### Project Achievements:

- \* Cumulative Man Hours: over 26 Million
- \* Environmental incidents: None.
- \* Early power generated after 18.5 months since start of development
- \* Construction project was completed on schedule and on budget

### Project Facts:

- \* Total project cost: \$1.7 billion
- \* Power plant: engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor: Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI)
- \* Water plant: engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor: Societe Internationale De Dessalement (SIDEM), a subsidiary of Veolia, France

### Azzour North One Project Timeline:

- \* March 2011: Request for proposal (RFP) issued for the Az-Zour North One Plant development
- \* March 2012: Preferred bidder was chosen
- \* December 2012: Successful bidder announced
- \* December 12, 2013: Kuwait's first PPP RFP process was successfully completed, signing ceremony with MEW, and start of construction
- \* January 10, 2014: Shamal Azzour Al-Oula reaches its financial close
- \* March 13, 2015: Key interfaces connection with MEW and KOC
- \* Electricity transmission facilities (MEW),
- \* Main fuel connection - Gas (KOC),
- \* Backup fuel connection - fuel oil (KOC)
- \* May 3, 2015: First megawatt of power was generated into the national grid of Kuwait
- \* June 28, 2015: ECOD 1 : 1 GTG in SC - 214.3 MW
- \* August 11, 2015: ECOD 2 : 2 GTGs in SC - 440.5 MW (achieved two days early)
- \* September 18, 2015: ECOD 3 : 3 GTGs in SC - 664.2 MW (achieved ten days early)
- \* November 26, 2016: Construction completed, full commercial operation starts

**Shrimpy**

SHRIMPYKW 1802 662

HAD ENOUGH?!

EAT MORE SHRIMP

In Brief

AMIR CONDOLES SISI

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences on Monday to Egyptian President Abdelfatah Al-Sisi on the death of his father-in-law Ahmad Amer Ameen. His Highness the Amir prayed that Allah the Almighty bestows the deceased with His blessings. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables. —KUNA



KUWAIT OFFERS CONDOLENCES

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah visited the Cuban Embassy in Kuwait yesterday and conveyed the condolences and grief of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as the Kuwaiti people over the death of former Cuban President Fidel Castro. —KUNA



UAE HONORS DAIHANI

**DUBAI:** The Mohammad bin Rashed Al-Maktoum Creative Sports award has named Kuwait's shooter Fheid Al-Daihani Monday as one of the distinguished and creative Arab sports figures of the year 2016. Daihani was chosen by the award's council of secretaries for his remarkable achievement, winning the gold medal in the men's double trap competition of the 2016 Rio Olympic Games in Brazil last August. The award honors individuals, teams, and establishments that demonstrate creativity in the field of sports. —KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A historical mosque is pictured in Kuwait City, with skyscrapers and other landmarks of the state's capital are seen in the background. —KUNA photo



KFH and Kuwait Dive Team representatives.

KFH OFFERS WHALY BOATS TO KUWAIT DIVE TEAM

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) continued its efforts in participating in several environmental awareness activities and events in collaboration with the concerned authorities such as the Environmental Voluntary Foundation and Kuwait Dive Team. This stems from KFH's endeavors to optimally assume the social responsibility and efforts to increase the awareness of the importance of keeping the environment safe, healthy and clean.

KFH contributed in supporting the efforts of Kuwait Dive Team through offering a number of Whaly Boats that help in lifting waste and neglected materials, not to

mention assist in the protection and rehabilitation mission of Kuwait's aquatic world and the safety of the marine environment.

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

KUWAITI NATIONALS SAFE FROM OSU VIOLENCE: EMBASSY

**WASHINGTON:** Kuwait Embassy affirmed that its nationals in the United States are safe after a man attacked people at Ohio State University (OSU) earlier Monday. In a statement the embassy called on all Kuwaiti citizens or students living in the US to report on any eventuality via the following phone lines: The embassy+IBK-s

emergency phone number: 262-0758 The emergency phone number of the Culture Office: 364-2104. A man, identified as Abdul Razak Ali Artan, 18, drove his car on an OSU sidewalk, got out of it and attacked pedestrians with a knife+ADs- he was fatally shot by an off-duty police officer. +IBM —KUNA

YOUTH COUNTRY'S REAL WEALTH: SHEIKHA INTISAR

**KUWAIT:** Sheikha Intisar Al-Sabah, Chairperson of Al-Nuwar Positive Initiative launched in 2013, has affirmed that the youth is the country's real wealth. She said in a statement that the 'Bareeq' program on youth is launched concurrently with the 2017 National Day celebrations, adding that the program is the first in its kind in both Kuwait and the Middle East that instills positive principles through events at Kuwaiti schools.

"The aim of the program is to disseminate positive situations when dealing with others," she said. "We target youth as they makes up the largest number of Kuwaiti citizens and is the country's real nucleus, she said yesterday. The program will train students on positivity through researches and scientific studies based on psychology, and enhance their instinctive belonging which help them feel satisfaction."

She called for preparing young people scientifically, bodily and psychologically to make them qualified for resolving problems and overcoming difficulties facing the country, indicating this will lead to everlasting prosperity, safety and stability in the country. Sheikha Intisar said that some training courses were organized at a number of schools in different areas for this purpose, adding the courses were highly appreciated and attracted by students.

Meanwhile, Roqaiya Hussein, head of the program, said that it aims to boost positive thought and achieve psychological welfare to help youth get behavioral balance. The program will also enable youth to achieve their scientific and practical goals positively and moderately, she added, noting that up to 66 cadres at 13 schools have been so far trained on the program. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Sheikha Intisar Al-Sabah launches the 'Bareeq' program on youth.



A group photo for Hawally Educational Zone officials.

## FIVE CONTEST ELECTIONS' RESULTS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Lawyer Dowaim Al-Mowazri announced his intention to file a case at the constitutional court contesting the election results on behalf of his client, second constituency candidate Salman Khaled Al-Azmi. Meanwhile, four contests were filed yesterday at the constitutional court with claims of forgery in the elections results in the first, third, fourth and fifth constituencies. In other news, the comprehensive court yesterday mandated the interior ministry to appoint a female citizen holding a degree in law as an investigator. The court also ordered compensating the citizen KD 5,001.

### Accident

Three female citizens were injured when they lost control over their vehicle and it turned over near the Basic Education College.

### Recycling site

The municipal council's technical committee yesterday approved removing all obstacles at the Saad Al-Abdullah City project's site including relocating a waste recycling site outside the city. Committee Chairman Fahd Al-Sane said the committee also recommended approving a request by MSAL to allocate special sites to build labor compounds in various governorates.

### Food authority

The board chairman and director of the public authority for food and nutrition Essa Al-Kandari yesterday issued a decision deputizing Kuwaiti employees working for municipality slaughterhouses to work with the authority for one year. Kandari also issued another decision forming the

authority's permanent technical committee under his chairmanship. He explained that the committee would be responsible for studying and making recommendations regarding food specific standards as per WTO regulations.

### Labor union

Chairman of the National Union of Employees (NUE) and the commerce and industry ministry employees' syndicate Ajmi Falah Al-Mutalqam said recent developments in Kuwait call for solidarity and hard work for Kuwait's best interests. He also called for fighting financial and administrative corruption prevailing in various state bodies. Mutalqam stressed that NUE is keen on achieving progress in various ministries and state bodies, adding that ministries must be given efficient and competent people capable of shouldering the responsibilities of protecting citizens' rights. "The PM must select the best on forming the new Cabinet," he underlined, giving an example of the ministry of commerce and industry, saying that it had been suffering very much under the previous minister who was incapable of resolving various problems.

### Jaber Causeway

The Ministry of Public Works' assistant undersecretary for road engineering affairs Ahmed Al-Hassan said 69 percent of Jaber Causeway has been completed and that the remaining work is proceeding steadily to finish according to schedule in Nov 2018. Hassan added that the project's total cost is KD 738.75 million and that the 36-km causeway linking Kuwait City to Subbiya will be the longest overseas bridge in the world. It will help cut the distance between both cities from 104 km to only 36 km.

# MP MUWAIZRI SAYS HE WILL CONTEST FOR SPEAKER POST

## OPPOSITION FACTIONS IN SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri who said during the election campaign he will contest the national assembly speaker post, said yesterday that he will not withdraw from the race. Muwaizri's statements on his Twitter account appear to be in response to calls by opposition figures that opposition MPs must field one candidate for the post to boost their chances of winning it against an expected tough competition from the outgoing speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem.

The lawmaker, who returned to the assembly after Saturday's election, said that he will continue to be in the race and that he has no plans to withdraw. Three leading opposition MPs are expected to contest the post - Abdullah Al-Roumi, Mohammad Al-Mutair and Muwaizri.

Roumi, a veteran MP and former deputy speaker, has been campaigning to boost his chances by visiting MPs who were elected on Saturday. Mutair however said yesterday that he believes that the opposition should field only one candidate in the race to increase their chances of winning it.

A large number of candidates have vowed during the election campaign that they will not vote for Ghanem and many of them have won seats in the assembly. The government



MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri

strength in the 16 votes remains the decisive factor in the race. As of now, it is certain that the candidate supported by the government is highly tipped to win.

But the government may be forced to vote for an opposition candidate or allow ministers a free voting if it wants to establish good relations with the opposition MPs who now represent nearly half of the 50-seat assembly.

### Common ground

In the meantime, the various opposition factions appear to be searching for a common ground for unity to forge its agenda. Leading

Islamist MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaie said the opposition is trying to create coordination between a group of 25 MPs, adding it will not become a united bloc like in the 2012 national assembly.

Tabtabaie expected the formation of a number of parliamentary blocs which will establish coordination among themselves, adding he and his colleagues will support any move that serves the interest of people.

He said that a large number of reformist MPs has been elected and the number would have been far bigger but for the single-vote voting system. He said their main priorities will be to amend the single-vote electoral system, scrapping the political exclusion and the DNA testing laws and also issuing laws to ensure the independence of judiciary and closely monitor public funds.

Islamist MP Abdullah Fahhad said the opposition will extend a hand of cooperation for the government and if it does not accept it, there will be a popular anger in the assembly chamber. Meanwhile, newly-elected independent MP Youssef Al-Fadhlah called yesterday for changing the prime minister, saying he has proved that he is incapable of running the government affairs. He said the selection of the prime minister and ministers must be based on competence, and hoped there will be new blood in the cabinet capable of ending legislative and executive chaos in the country.

## FIVE HURT IN FIRE

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Three brothers and two maids were injured and suffered smoke inhalation during a fire in a Taima area house. Firemen from Jahra fire station battled the fire and put it out. An investigation was opened to determine the cause of the fire.



### Municipality inspection

Ahmedi Municipality branch has launched a series of inspection campaigns focused on local co-ops to ensure quality of foodstuffs being sold. The campaign covered Dhaher, Fahaheel, Jaber Al-Ali and Regga areas and resulted in the issuance of 37 citations, while two stores were ordered shut because they were operating without a license.

### Construction licenses

Municipality Public Relations Department said the Engineering license department in the capital continued issuing construction licenses during the first six months of this year, and KD 11,368 were collected out of 1341 licenses. Director of capital branch Eng. Ammar Al-Ammar said a plan has been placed to ease procedures and remove obstacles.

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM) has made contacts with the government and MP Marzouq Al-Ghanem, who intends to run for the speaker's post, well-informed sources said. The sources added that ICM does not intend to directly take part in the cabinet for the time being because it had been severely criticized by other political bodies that questioned its credibility for running in the elections after boycotting them. "Taking part in the new cabinet might be interpreted as a deal made with the government in return for ending their boycott," explained the sources, noting that this would blow away their public support.

The sources added the ICM only asked the government to appoint Oroub Al-Refai as a minister, who is

close to them in ideology and is the daughter of former Islamist minister Yousif Al-Refai, in return for supporting the cabinet in the parliament. On the other hand, ICM promised to support Ghanem in the speakership elections with three of its MPs - Osama Al-Shaheen, Abdullah Fahhad Al-Enezi and Mohammed Al-Dallal - explained the sources, noting that MP Jamaan Al-Harbash will vote for Ghanem only if MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri drops his candidacy.

Separately, the Anti-Corruption Authority announced referring a complaint filed by Ghanem against Abdul Rahman Al-Anjeri to the public prosecutor. Notably, Anjeri had accused a project executed by Ghanem's companies of being involved in corruption, which was refuted by Ghanem.

Meanwhile, MP Saleh Ashour

announced starting consultations to form a parliamentary bloc that would adopt political and economic reforms. Ashour said the nucleus of the new bloc had already been formed by three MPs who are currently consulting with their peers to add more members. "The government has to reform itself and stop squandering money on expenses and aid," he underlined.

### DNA tests

The Ministry of Interior's assistant undersecretary for criminal security affairs Maj Gen Shehab Al-Shemmari strongly denied rumors about intentions to subject people arriving and departing through the northern land border exit of Abdaly to DNA tests. Speaking to the German news agency, Shemmari said the procedures followed in Abdaly are the same ones

used at Kuwait International Airport. He added that on direct orders from HH the Amir, the DNA law was referred to a special committee for amendment to include only people working in highly hazardous jobs like the military, army, police, national guard and firemen.

Shemmari added that people with criminal records would also be subjected to the DNA tests as a preventive measure in case of any terrorist acts. Shemmari added that the main aim of DNA tests is to serve justice and solve crimes. "When Al-Sadeq Mosque was attacked by a terrorist, we did not have a database of the victims and started subjecting their relatives to DNA tests," he explained, adding that for this reason and for security considerations, there was a plan to subject the entire population to DNA tests.

## PIC TO SIGN CONTRACTS ON OLEFINS AND AROMATICS IN 2017: OFFICIAL

**DUBAI:** The contracts of engineering studies on the olefins and aromatics projects will be signed in the first quarter of 2017, Husniya Hashem, deputy CEO of olefins and aromatics at Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC), said yesterday.

It is expected that the integrated project at Al-Zour Refinery Project will be finalized in the second quarter of 2022, Hashem added in a statement on the sidelines of the 11th Forum of Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA) currently held in Dubai.

She noted that the refinery project

will produce its output in the same period. The PIC will carry out new projects during 2017 and consider implementing some investment opportunities in the petrochemicals area in Asia and North America, she revealed.

She pointed out that the capacity of propylene production factory, established in cooperation among Korea's SK Gas Company, Saudi Advanced Petroleum Company (APCO), and Kuwait's PIC, reached 105 percent of its designed capacity reaching 600,000 tons every year. OIC owns 25 percent of this factory and it considers carrying out a

polypropylene production plant in South Korea, she affirmed.

The ethylene glycol plant established in the US State of Texas is expected to start its actual production in the second half of 2019, with a capacity of 750,000 metric tons, she said. Hashem stressed the importance of PIC's participation in GPCA form which helps participants get acquainted with the latest developments in the future industry of petrochemicals. PIC is a subsidiary of the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and a petrochemical industry leader in Kuwait and throughout the Middle East. —KUNA

**NORTHWEST Bilingual School**

## Job Fair for Teachers

Open House

Northwest Bilingual School is inviting potential applications of teachers for the academic year 2017-2018.

**Date & Time**  
Saturday, December 10th, 2016 - From 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Event Venue**  
Northwest Bilingual School, Farwaniya

**Location**  
<https://goo.gl/maps/5Xo6AyPSMSB2>

**Hiring Criteria**

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- Bachelor's Degree in Education for KG & Elementary Positions.
- Bachelor's Degree in Subject Area for Middle & High School Positions.
- At least 2 years of relevant teaching experience is preferred.
- Not under contract with another local school for year 2017-2018.

**Anticipated Vacancies**

Position	Grade Level
Home Room Teacher	Kindergarten/Elementary
Reading Specialist (English)	Kindergarten&Elementary
English Teacher	Middle School
Science Teacher	Middle School
Math Teacher	Middle School
English Teacher	High School
Social Studies Teacher	Middle/High School
College/Guidance Counselor	Middle/High School
Vice Principal	Middle/High School

Interested applicants shall bring in updated CV at the venue for interview.  
For any queries or to send CV for vacancies other than the listed ones please contact us at [car@nwsb.com](mailto:car@nwsb.com)

## US, EU PRAISE KUWAIT'S ELECTIONS

WASHINGTON/BRUSSELS:

The US on Monday congratulated Kuwait on the success of its National Assembly elections, describing the Gulf nation as a "regional leader" in constitutional governance. "We congratulate Kuwait and its people on a successful holding of a national parliamentary election," State Department spokesman John Kirby said at a briefing. "Kuwait has long been a regional leader with respect to constitutional governance as reflected by Saturday's free legislative elections," he added.

Meanwhile, European Union said that the elections to the National Assembly of Kuwait held on Saturday saw a broad participation of political groups, reflecting the full spectrum of Kuwaiti society. "Credible and inclusive elections represent one important element of the political life in Kuwait and we recall the unique character of the parliamentary system in Kuwait in the regional context," the spokesperson for EU High Representative Federica Mogherini said. "We reiterate the need for all political actors to participate constructively in the post-election process and to contribute to the further progress of Kuwaiti society," the EU spokesperson added. —KUNA

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 Lalla Gallery: 257197801  
 The Avenues: 22587727, 22587728  
 TK TOK(SoKa), The Avenues: 22200726  
 Alkout Mall: 22803038/9

Crime

Report

SUICIDE, ATTACKS ON POLICE AND ROBBERIES

**KUWAIT:** An Indian man killed himself by hanging. His friend found him hanging by a rope in a small grocery store. The man removed the rope and took his friend to the hospital. Doctors failed to revive him and he was pronounced dead. Kuwait records a relatively low suicide rate compared with other developed countries but has seen suicides increasing in recent years, especially among lower income expatriate communities.

Citizens beat police

Five young citizens were arrested as they attacked and beat two policemen in Farwaniya security department. The incident took place when a man sought police help after a reckless driver hit his car. The suspects were taken to the proper authorities to face charges.

Robbery cases solved

Taima detectives solved a spate of armed robbery cases when they arrested a bedoon and a Gulf national who were recognized by their last victim in a police lineup. An Indian told Taima police that two men impersonating detectives beat him up and stole his wallet. The two were identified by detectives, placed under surveillance and arrested. The two resisted arrest.

Wrong treatment

A parent accused a doctor of wrongly injecting his son in the left shoulder that caused a swelling. Investigations under way.

Co-op robbed

Forensic police are looking into the robbery of a cooperative society's branch in Abu Halifa. It was found that the thief or thieves committed the crime after the cameras stopped working. KD 400 in cash was stolen.

Garage thief caught

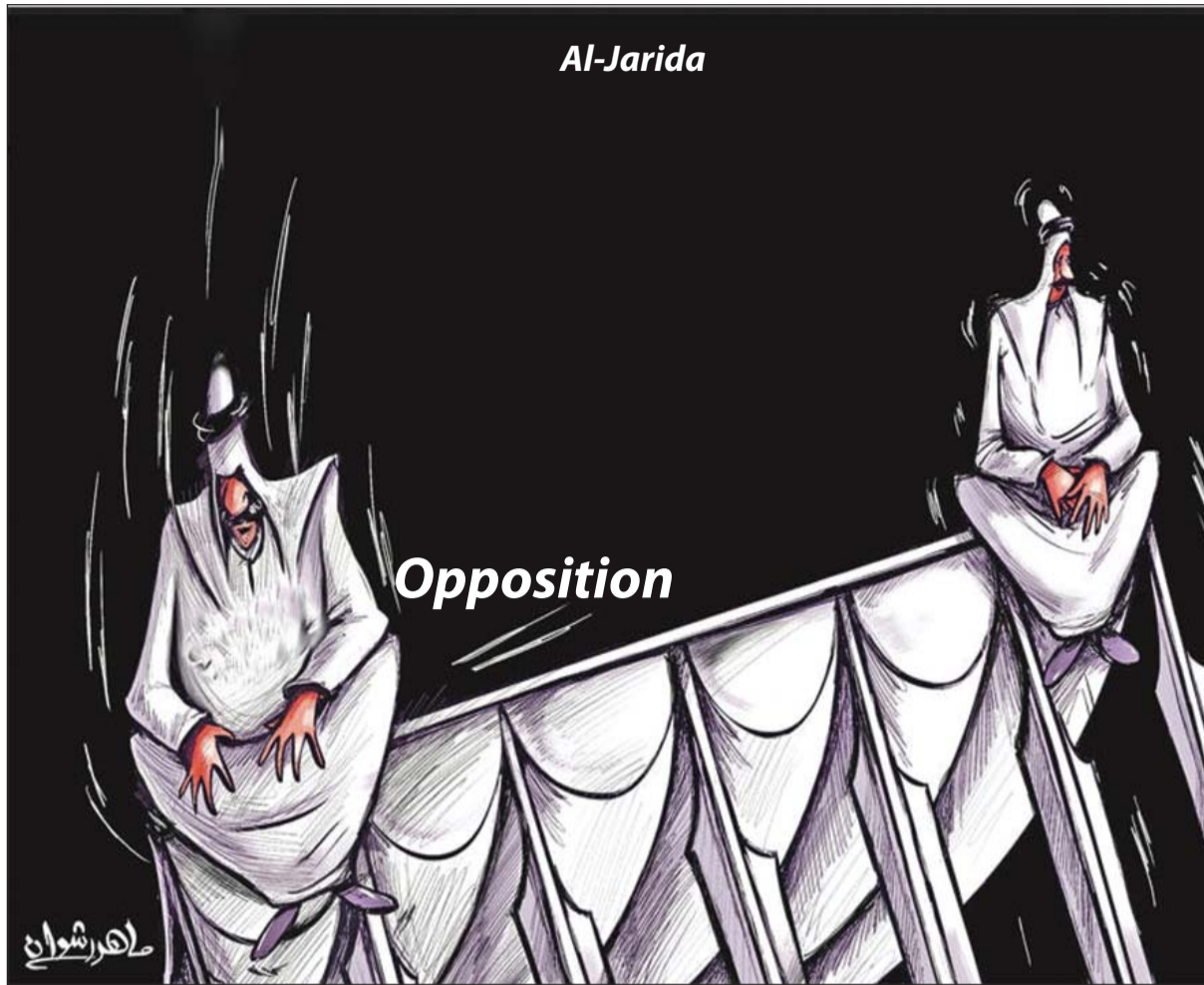
Jahra police arrested a citizen, while another citizen and a Gulf national escaped. The three men were involved in thefts that targeted the impoundment garage. The arrested man was caught in the act of robbing cars in the garage, and he took police to where he was hiding the stolen material on Salmiy Road. Police are looking for the two fugitives.

Gas station insult

A citizen complained against an unknown person who he accused of verbally insulting him at a gas station. A report was filed. In another gas station incident, an Indian driver told Zahra police he was insulted by a woman while filling his car with gas at a local petrol station. He said he had no idea what provoked the insult.

Yemeni jailed

Criminal detectives sent a Yemeni man to the criminal sentences implementation department to serve a five-year jail sentence. The man was sentenced for robbery and posing as a detective. In an unrelated incident, a citizen in his forties was sent to criminal detectives for possession of an unlicensed fire arm. The arrest was made in Khaitan. — Al-Anbaa



Al-Jarida

Opposition

النبا

Al-Anbaa

WHEREVER WE GO, SHE'S STILL A MOTHER

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

Cities may differ and countries may change - each race has its own beliefs and traditions, and our societies may be different, but we perhaps agree on one thing: a mother's love remains the same. Each of us has a certain date, which even if the mind forgets, the soul will always remember - the birthday of our mother who made us come to life in this world.

Today is her birthday. I was looking forward to write a column in the memory of my late mother, and while I was writing, I scrolled through Instagram and found a caption written by my cousin to her mother, describing herself and how she became similar to her mother, my aunt Mufida. Although I have read this in the past, I did not get the meaning until I grew older. The majority of daughters in our country grow up looking more and more like their mothers.

The following are the words:

I grew up; my mother, I am becoming like you more and more... now I wake up early.

I sleep before them, congestions irritate me, and talking exhausts me.  
I grew older, my mother, and I taste tea much better. I like herbs and the smell of amber.  
I grew older, my mother and I read everything alone. I cry silently all alone, and I miss my old self.  
I grew older, my mother, and everyone is leaving. I have less friends, I have started to like the silence and get tired of noises.  
I grew up, my mother, and I don't care about staying up late - now the sea gives me comfort like you.  
I am no longer that girl who sleeps to dream of that dress - the world has become very complicated, my mother.  
Everyone has become like toys, and I no longer know how to play.  
Life no longer looks like what you said, and it is barely colorful - the streets have become congested, and everyone, my mother, is worried.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

النبا

Al-Anbaa

BOOKS AND COVERS

By Saleh Al-Shayji

If we can read a book by a glimpse at its cover, the recently announced results of the parliamentary elections indicate that the new parliament is not likely to lead to political serenity that would ultimately help the country's greater good, which indicates its failure and short tenure. I will not go as far as describing the election results as knives bought by the candidates to slaughter their country with. However, reality is no different from this image. I hope my readers will not take this as pessimistic. It is, unfortunately, the clear truth and facts can be bitter and ugly.

*With such a parliament in our country, we are in sync with what is going on in surrounding Arab countries*

The breakthroughs made by some young people who made their way into the parliament by voters support is the only good thing achieved by bringing this parliament to office. However, it will not change the fact or calm the possible tension. It won't turn battlefields into flowery gardens because national consciousness or the country's greater good are not the judges here. Judging will be done by politically demonizing others and pulling strings with foreign motives. Arab countries no longer determine their fate, interests or geographical borders. All these things are done by pressurizing effective regional powers that have great access into those countries using the so-called politicians and parliamentarians. Situations in Iraq and Lebanon are the best examples of this because despite the problems and crises these two countries are still suffering from, nothing has changed in them or the politicians dominating them for ages.

So, with such a parliament in our country, we are in sync with what is going on in surrounding Arab countries. The only hope, if any ever exists, is in the independent MPs who do not have any foreign agendas. They are more accepted by the people and will have to form a special bloc to resist those with agendas, otherwise we will be in real danger!

—Translated by Kuwait Times from



Hamad Al-Sayer is pictured at the panel discussion.



Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer is pictured with Tmkeen delegates.

AL-SAYER PARTICIPATES IN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SYMPOSIUM 2016

COMMITTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH

**KUWAIT:** As part of the continuous sustainability efforts to support the national youth who shall become major pillars to boost the economy and sustainable development of the country, Al-Sayer Group Holding (ASGH) has participated in the recently concluded Tmkeen Youth Empowerment Symposium 2016. Following the event delegates from Tmkeen visited Al-Sayer Group Headquarters and met Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO to express their gratitude for the partnership along with sharing event report.

According to Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO Al Sayer Group Holding "We are glad to know from Tmkeen about the program outcome and the enthusiasm among Kuwait youth towards diversified entrepreneurship opportunities. Such strategic youth initiatives are important from a sustainability standpoint. We wish to have stronger engagement and long terms partnership to foster Kuwait youth community."

Sustainable growth

Eng Nehad Al-Haj Ali, Deputy Group Manager Corporate Excellence said "The main purpose of this initiative is to motivate and encourage them to go for most competent role of being self-made to build sustainable growth, employment, innovation, leadership and gain exposure through the ideas and topics presented during the event discussions towards building next generation entrepreneurs."

The symposium delivered outstanding knowledge to the talented young people to progress in their fields of interest and trigger their enthusiasm. This year Tmkeen Youth Empowerment Symposium showcased renowned international and local industry pioneers, creative leaders and professionals. Attendees benefitted from the lectures of



The Prius display stand at Tmkeen Youth Symposium.

Jeremy Liew - Partner at Light Speed venture capital, 1st investor in Snapchat, Corey Owens - Head North America Public Policy at DJI, who held similar positions at UBER and Facebook, and Jennifer Boulanger - Head of recruitment at Booking.com.

Effective practice

During the panel discussion on 'SME's Journey to Global Success', Hamad Al-Sayer, CEO of Al-Sayer Franchising commented on the importance of having effective CSR practice within the corporate business framework. Irrespective of the size of business, the leaders to define the role of business to collaborate for a constructive impact on its market and customers, who shall in return uphold great trust and solidarity for initiatives, products and services. Hamad Al-Sayer also

suggested to form a panel through Tmkeen including eminent industry leaders to support the evolution of youth in terms of leadership, idea consultancy, angel investment, mentorship to compete in the global stage.

Innovative engineering

Al-Sayer also exhibited innovative automobile engineering with the display and test drive of Prius, world's first mass produced hybrid from Toyota. Prius is a great driver of change introducing new sensation among youth, powered with tomorrow's technology for today. Jeremy Liew recalled his seven years' ecofriendly drive experience of Prius in San Francisco, and Corey Owen hinted about the relevancy of the Uber service along with Prius Hybrid in the emerging markets to experience new transport exposures.



Hamad Al-Sayer is seen at the Prius stand.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) took part in the 2016 Global Informatics Forum (GIF) which took place recently under the auspices of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The event was organized by the Salem Al-Ali Informatics Award under the title of 'Digital Transformation toward Knowledge Economy'. CBK provided silver sponsorship for the event.



**South Korea president says willing to leave office early**

**LOCAL VOTE IN LONDON, BREXIT BATTLEGROUND**

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Page 12

**OHIO ATTACKER ANGRY AT US INTERFERENCE**

**FUMMING FACEBOOK POSTS FOUND**

**COLUMBUS:** A university student whose family immigrated from Somalia rammed his car Monday into a crowd at Ohio State University and attacked them with a butcher knife, injuring 11 before police fatally shot him.

Identifying the assailant as Abdul Razak Ali Artan, officials in the northern US state said he appeared to have acted alone in what was being investigated as a possible terror attack. He also appears to have made an anti-US posting on Facebook minutes before the attack, on a page that was quickly disabled or taken down by authorities, US media said. "I can't take it anymore. America! Stop interfering with other countries, especially the Muslim Ummah. We are not weak. We are not weak, remember that," the post quoted by ABC television said, using a term referring to the global community of Muslims. "If you want us Muslims to stop carrying lone wolf attacks, then make peace," the post reads. "We will not let you sleep unless you give peace to the Muslims."

Artan also referred to Anwar al-Awlaki, a US-born Al-Qaeda cleric, as a hero in the posting. His shocking attack lasted just a few minutes-from the car careening into the crowd until the suspect was shot dead-but triggered a tense lockdown on the university's main campus in Columbus, with panicked students hiding in bathrooms before the scene was declared secure.

Officials said 11 people were being treated at local hospitals for stabbing wounds and injuries from the motor vehicle. None of their injuries were life-threatening. Columbus police chief Kim Jacobs said earlier in the day they were considering the "possibility" that it was terrorism related. US media reported that Artan was of Somali descent, though officials did not confirm that information. They did not release his exact age, saying only that they believed he was born in 1998.

An OSU student of the same name also was profiled in the August issue of student newspaper The Lantern, for an article in which he spoke of the lack of Muslim prayer rooms on campus. Artan, who was



**COLUMBUS, Ohio: Guests stand for a moment after lighting their candles during a vigil at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church on Monday. —AP**

identified as a third-year transfer student studying logistics management, told the paper he was uncomfortable with praying on campus. "If people look at me, a Muslim praying, I don't know what they're going to think, what's going to happen," he said. The rampage comes two months after a Somali immigrant stabbed 10 people at a mall in Minnesota, before he was fatally shot by an off-duty police officer. The Minnesota assailant, 20-year-old Dahir Ahmed Adan, was described as "radicalized"

and the Islamic State group claimed the attack as the work of an IS "soldier."

**A tense lockdown**

Monday's attack unfolded just before 10:00 am (1500 GMT), when police were alerted that a car had struck pedestrians on campus, and that the driver had jumped out wielding a large knife. "We could tell that the suspect was in the car by himself," said Craig Stone, chief of police at the university,

describing a review of surveillance camera footage of his grey sedan. A fire alarm, which investigators believed to be unrelated, had caused students and staff to evacuate a building prior to the attack.

The attacker "exited the vehicle, and used a butcher knife to start cutting pedestrians," Stone said. "Our officer was on scene in less than a minute and he ended the situation in less than a minute. He engaged the suspect, and he eliminated the threat." After the suspect was shot dead by the

responding officer, identified as 28-year-old Alan Harujko, university officials sent out a campus-wide alert to initiate a lockdown due to a possible active shooting incident. SWAT teams fanned out across the facility and an FBI team was also on the scene, searching buildings for any additional suspects.

**Screams and running**

It took nearly two hours before officials lifted the lockdown, and shocked students and staff began streaming out of buildings. The university canceled classes for the rest of the day. "I was right there," student Joseph Noll told Columbus television station WBNS. "I just heard some screams, and I saw people running."

Cydney Ireland told ABC she was walking out of class when she also heard screams. "Everybody was running in any direction they possibly could, students were running out of the classroom building," she said from her hiding spot in a locked bathroom. Ohio State has roughly 60,000 students on the main campus in Columbus, which sprawls across more than 1,900 acres (770 hectares). A number of vigils and gatherings were planned, as university officials offered student and staff counseling. "Days such as these test our spirit," university president Michael Drake said in a note to students and staff, "But together we remain unified in the face of adversity." "I encourage anyone in our community in need of assistance to utilize the university's resources." Classes are scheduled to resume yesterday.

"Our hearts go out to the families of those affected in Ohio-a tragic attack. Our prayers are with them," said Vice president-elect Mike Pence in New York. "While we do not yet have confirmation of terrorist connections, this is the type of indiscriminate violence our enemies are urging their followers to use against us," House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Michael McCaul said in a statement. "Whatever the case, we will continue to monitor the investigation to ensure any potential accomplices or instigators are found and brought to justice." —AFP



NEW

Tassyoura Breakfast

<b>KUWAITI BREAKFAST</b>	<b>5.950 KD</b>
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<b>LEBANESE BREAKFAST</b>	<b>5.950 KD</b>
FIRED EGG, GRILLED HALLOUM, SAUSAGE, LEBNEH "TRADITIONAL LEANNESS", MAKDOOS, COLD CUT, QIMAR & HONEY. SERVED WITH LEBANESE BREAD	
<b>JORDANIAN BREAKFAST</b>	<b>4.900 KD</b>
WHOLE EGG, FOUL, FALAFEL, MUSABAHA, WHITE CHEESE, OILVE OIL, ZATAR, SERVED WITH TANDOOR BREAD	
<b>INDIAN BREAKFAST</b>	<b>4.750 KD</b>
LENTIL MIX , QEEMA, TAWA CHICKEN , EGG TOMATO, YOGHURT MINT, SERVED WITH CHAPATTI	

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## EXPERTS, OFFICIALS TRASH TRUMP CLAIM OF MASS FRAUD

**NEW YORK:** Experts and elected officials on both sides of the political aisle on Monday dismissed Donald Trump's claim that "millions" of Americans voted illegally on Election Day, as efforts expanded to organize recounts in swing states.

The Republican billionaire's victory on November 8 saw him clinch the crucial Electoral College count, which determines the presidency, but lose the popular vote to rival Hillary Clinton by more than two million ballots.

Cloistered in his Florida resort for the long Thanksgiving weekend, the 70-year-old tycoon who has never previously held elected office took to Twitter to indulge in one of his customary tweet storms. On Sunday, before returning by private jet to New York to resume interviews with potential cabinet appointees, he claimed he would have won the popular vote if it were not for "the millions of people who voted illegally."

"Serious voter fraud in Virginia, New Hampshire and California—so why isn't the media reporting on this? Serious bias-big problem!" he followed up later. Trump, who spent the campaign warning that the result might be "rigged," is now with his aides pushing back hard as the Green Party works to secure recounts in three states which Trump won: Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

The campaign of Green Party candidate Jill Stein, who won a tiny fraction of the vote in each state and where Trump beat Clinton by thousands of votes, said voters had filed recount requests in more than 100 (out of 9,163) precincts in Pennsylvania promising that more would follow.

The party requested a statewide recount in Wisconsin on Friday and plans to request a recount in Michigan on Wednesday, the campaign said.

### 'No evidence'

But observers deny any evidence of widespread fraud. And few expect any change in the outcome of the vote, which former secretary of state Clinton conceded to Trump in an early-hours phone call on November 9.

Meanwhile, Trump increased his Electoral College vote count to 306, compared to 232 for Clinton, after Michigan certified its election results—and his victory there. Republican, Democratic and independent lawmakers dismissed Trump's claims as totally unsubstantiated.

Some experts warned they set a dangerous precedent by potentially undermining trust in democracy or confidence in his leadership. "I have not seen anything in the millions, I don't know what he was talking about," Republican Senator James

Lankford told CNN. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said "there has been no evidence produced to substantiate a claim like that."

Clinton's campaign has said it would join the process, but has also indicated it so far sees no evidence of hacking or vote tampering.

Bernie Sanders, who ran against Clinton for the Democratic nomination, called Trump's remarks "unfounded nonsense" that showed Republicans wanted to make it harder for people including minorities to register to vote.

### Discord

In New Hampshire, deputy secretary of state David Scanlan told AFP that isolated instances of voter fraud "show up in every election" but that the 2016 ballot had run "very smoothly." But the dispute roils what has already been a rough transition period, as Trump continues to hold back-to-back meetings with people he is considering for cabinet posts.

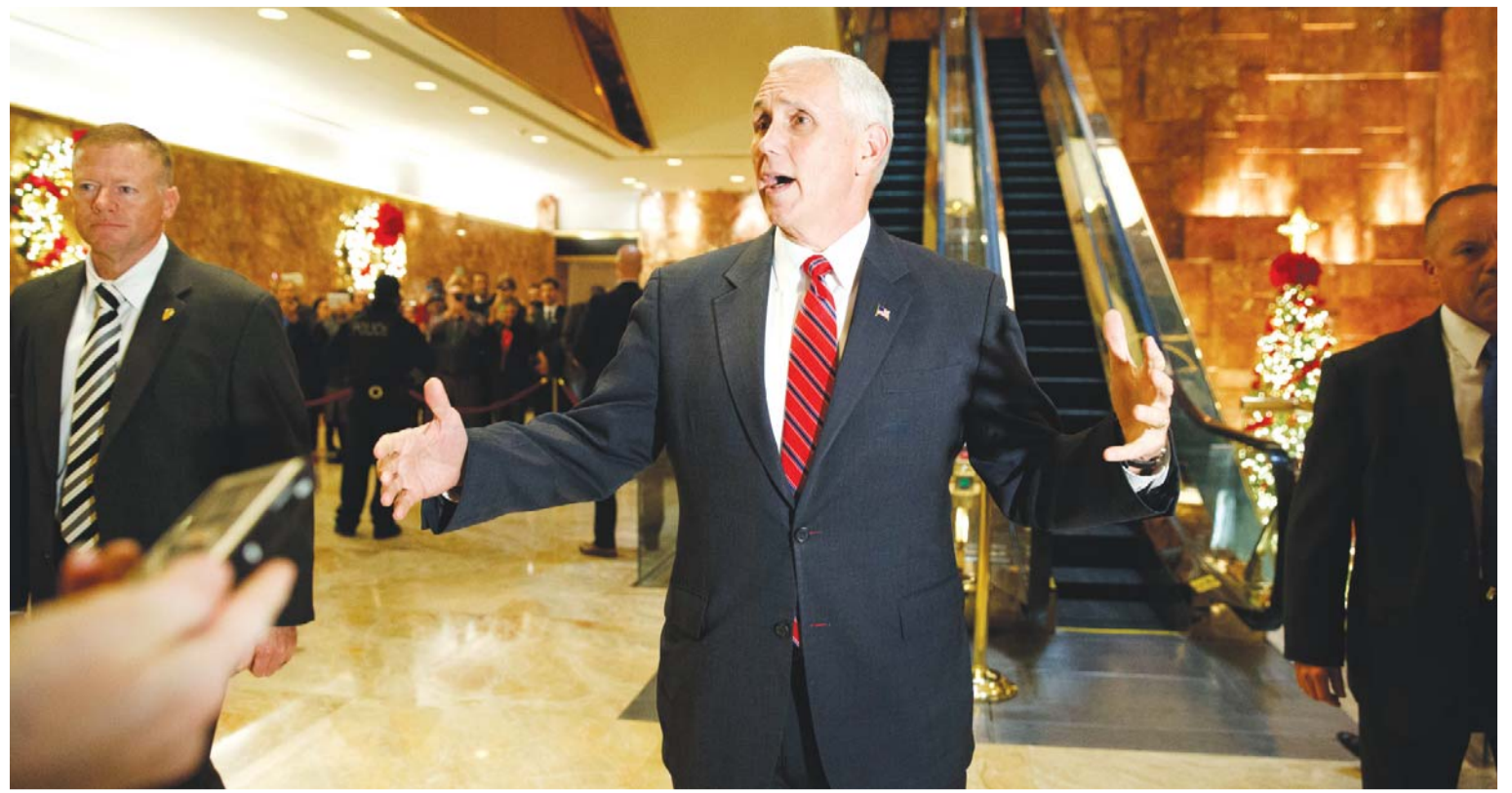
Trump has picked Georgia Representative Tom Price, a robust critic of President Barack Obama's health care reform law, to serve as health secretary, and plans to make a formal announcement as early as Tuesday, US media reported.

And his Vice president-elect Mike Pence told reporters to expect "a number of very important announcements" yesterday, fueling speculation of more cabinet posts to be revealed. Trump threatened to end the thaw in US relations with Cuba, following the death of Fidel Castro, unless Havana makes concessions on human rights and opening up its economy.

Discord has flared in the Trump camp over the pick for secretary of state, the most prestigious job in the cabinet-in particular over the candidacy of Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican presidential nominee. Other potential candidates are outspoken former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani; David Petraeus, the celebrated general who later resigned as CIA director and pleaded guilty to showing classified material to his mistress; and Bob Corker, a Republican lawmaker and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Trump met Petraeus on Monday, and was to meet Romney for a second time yesterday, in addition to a planned meeting with Corker. "Very impressed!" tweeted Trump of Petraeus just minutes after the general left the building, having described their conversation as "very good."

Romney was one of Trump's most outspoken critics during the campaign, and Trump aide Kellyanne Conway declared, in an unusual statement by a senior political aide, that she had received "a deluge" of concern from supporters about him.—AFP



**NEW YORK:** Vice President-elect Mike Pence talks with reporters as he leaves Trump Tower, Monday, Nov 28, 2016.—AP

## TRUMP SUMMONS ROMNEY FOR 2ND LOOK AS STAFFERS SQUABBLE

### THE HUNT FOR A SECRETARY OF STATE

**NEW YORK:** Donald Trump's hunt for a secretary of state is veering into dramatic terrain, with the president-elect summoning Mitt Romney back for a second look as a top aide leads a public pressure campaign against the pick.

Trump has a follow-up meeting yesterday with the 2012 GOP presidential nominee, who has become a symbol of the internal divisions agitating the transition team. He also plans to sit with Tennessee Sen. Bob Corker, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. On Monday, Trump spent an hour with retired Gen. David Petraeus, a new contender.

Aides were divided over Trump's choices, particularly the prospect that Trump could tap Romney for the top-tier diplomatic post. In an unusual public airing of internal machinations, Trump senior adviser Kellyanne Conway on Sunday warned that the president-elect's supporters would feel "betrayed" if he tapped Romney as secretary of state.

### Very important announcements soon

Exiting Trump Tower on Monday night, Vice President-elect Mike Pence simply teased "a number of very important announcements tomorrow." On Tuesday morning, the Trump transition team announced the selection of Georgia Rep. Tom

Price to lead the Department of Health and Human Services. It also announced that Seema Verma has been chosen to be administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

While other staffing decisions were being made, the search for secretary of state was still underway. Petraeus said he spent about an hour with the president-elect and praised him for showing a "great grasp of a variety of the challenges that are out there."

The former CIA chief pleaded guilty last year to a misdemeanor charge of mishandling classified information relating to documents he had provided to his biographer, with whom he was having an affair. Pence, who is heading the transition effort, is said to be among those backing Romney for secretary of state. Romney was fiercely critical of Trump throughout the campaign but is interested in the Cabinet position, and they discussed it during a lengthy meeting earlier this month.

Other top Trump allies, notably Conway, have launched a highly unusual public campaign against a Romney nomination. Conway's comments stirred speculation that she is seeking either to force Trump's hand or give him cover for ultimately passing over Romney.

Three people close to the transition team said Trump had been aware that Conway planned to

voice her opinion, both on Twitter and in television interviews. They disputed reports that Trump was furious at her and suggested his decision to consider additional candidates instead highlighted her influence.

Trump is said to have offered Conway a choice of White House jobs - either press secretary or communications director. But people with knowledge of Conway's plans say she is more interested in serving as an outside political adviser, akin to the role President Barack Obama's campaign manager David Plouffe played following the 2008 election.

Trump was considering former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani to head the Homeland Security Department, according to those close to the transition process. Giuliani was initially the front-runner for secretary of state and is still in the mix. But questions about his overseas business dealings, as well as his public campaigning for the job, have given Trump pause.

Those close to the transition insisted on anonymity in commenting because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the private process. In addition to the public staffing spat, the campaign was forced Monday to defend Trump's baseless assertions of illegal voting, made in angry response to a recount effort.—AP

## TEARFUL CUBANS PAY TRIBUTE TO FIDEL CASTRO

**HAVANA:** Hundreds of thousands of Cubans swarmed Havana's Revolution Square for a tearful tribute to Fidel Castro on Monday while his brother, Raul, led a private ceremony in front of the late communist icon's ashes.

A weeklong farewell to Castro began with long lines of mourners streaming past a black-and-white picture of "El Comandante" as a young, black-bearded revolutionary carrying a rifle. The crowd walked by silently, some took pictures with their phones and others sobbed uncontrollably as they looked up at the portrait flanked by white roses inside the monument to independence hero Jose Marti.

Many were dressed in state uniforms—school children, soldiers, veterans, doctors and customs officers—and the line continued as night fell. "We know that our comandante has become immortal," said 36-year-old university professor Pedro Alvarez.

To the surprise of many, Castro's ashes were not part of the public display. Cuban state television later showed Fidel's brother and successor, Raul Castro, leading a private ceremony in front of the dark wood urn at the armed forces ministry. It was the first time that his remains were shown since his death Friday at age 90.

Castro, whose 1959 revolution toppled a dictatorship with the promise of bringing justice and equality to the Caribbean island, was a towering fig-

ure of the 20th century. While some saw him as a socialist hero who brought education and free health care, others labeled him a tyrant who caused economic hardship and sparked an exodus of Cubans seeking a better life. "He's the father of all Cubans. My dad was my dad, but he couldn't give me what (Castro) gave me," said Lourdes Rivera, a 66-year-old retired civil servant who sat on a curb and cried as she waited in line. "He gave me everything. My freedom. My dignity."

Across the island, Cubans were invited to sign an oath to "keep fighting" for the revolution at hundreds of schools, hospitals and other public buildings. Raul Castro, who took over for his ailing brother a decade ago, and top officials signed the same pledge during their intimate ceremony after placing flowers in front of the urn.

### Terminator Trump?

In a sign of changing times, US President Barack Obama visited Revolution Square during his historic visit to Havana in March, when he became the first US leader since 1928 to step foot in Cuba, a nation of 11 million people. In 2014, Raul Castro announced a diplomatic detente with Obama, who has lifted some trade barriers. On Monday, the first regular flights from the United

States to the Cuban capital in half a century resumed.

But US President-elect Donald Trump renewed a threat to end the thaw unless Havana makes concessions on human rights and opening up its economy. "If Cuba is unwilling to make a better deal for the Cuban people, the Cuban/American people and the US as a whole, I will terminate deal," he said on Twitter.

Manuel Rodriguez Oliva, a 73-year-old interior ministry retiree who paid tribute to Castro, said Trump is "paranoid and crazy." "He can break relations. We have lived without them and we will keep living," Rodriguez Oliva added. Raul Castro has enacted gradual economic reforms. But he has firmly resisted any changes to the communist island's political system. Government opponents hope Fidel's death will trigger bolder reforms.

### Blame the US embargo

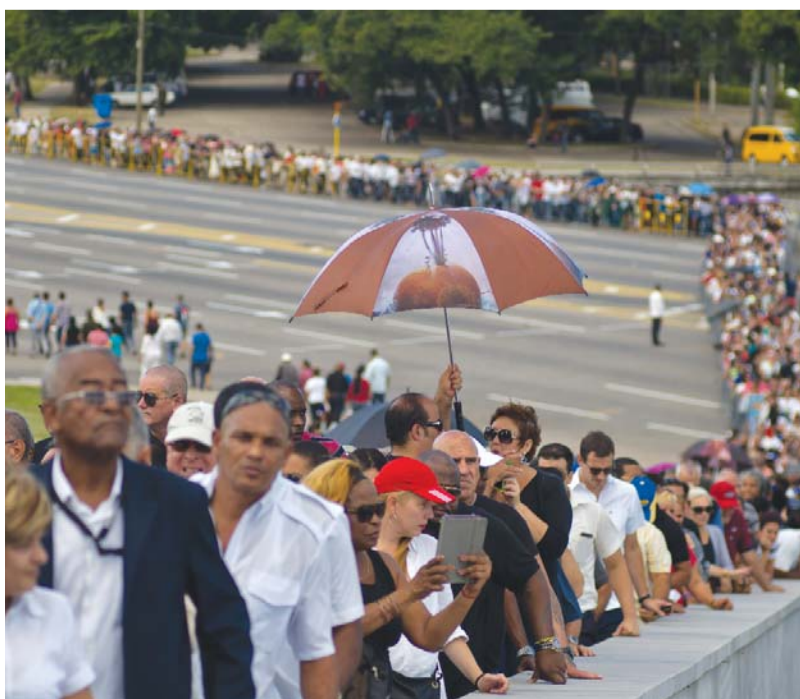
Dissidents who were repressed by Castro's regime for years said they were happy that the "dictator" had died, but called off regular demonstrations on Sunday out of deference to those in mourning. In Miami, where so many Cubans flocked in the past decades to escape Castro's policies, Cuban-Americans celebrated his death with street parties throughout the weekend.

The tributes will continue in Havana on Tuesday with an event featuring foreign dignitaries. Castro's leftist allies in Latin America are coming, including Presidents Rafael Correa of Ecuador, Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela and Evo Morales of Bolivia.

From Africa, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and Jacob Zuma of South Africa will fly in. But several Western leaders, including Obama, are not coming. Starting Wednesday, Castro's ashes will go on a four-day island-wide procession.

They will be buried on Sunday in the southeastern city of Santiago de Cuba, the heartland of Castro's uprising against US-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista. Fidel could do no wrong for the mourners at Revolution Square, where Castro would often rail against the US "empire" during his legendary, marathon speeches.

For them, the country's economic problems stem from the decades-old US embargo. "If we didn't develop more, it's the fault of imperialism," said a teary-eyed Augustin Fivale Hernandez, 80, holding his wife's hand after participating in the event.—AFP



**HAVANA:** Mourners line up at Revolution Plaza, the site of two days of tributes to the late Fidel Castro Monday, Nov 28, 2016.—AP



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## CHINA SAYS HOPES FOR 'CLEAR' MESSAGE WITH NEW N KOREA SANCTIONS

**BEIJING:** China said yesterday it hoped for a "clear" message to be sent with new UN sanctions on North Korea over its nuclear program, but would not comment on the draft, saying there had been too much speculation about the details.

The Security Council is set to vote on Wednesday to impose new sanctions on North Korea for its fifth and largest nuclear test, slashing Pyongyang's export earnings by some \$800 million, diplomats say. Diplomats say the council's five veto-wielding powers - the United States, China, Britain, Russia and

France - have agreed to new measures, seen by Reuters on Friday, that largely target the hermit Asian state's coal export earnings.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China supported further action against North Korea, but that it should be targeted and not harm normal humanitarian, civilian or development needs. "At present the Security Council members are having consultations on the draft," Geng told a daily news briefing.

"We hope Security Council members

can reach consensus on the draft as soon as possible, to send a clear and united message."

North Korea has been under UN sanctions since 2006 over its nuclear and missile tests. It conducted its latest nuclear test on Sept. 9, and the United States and China, North Korea's most important diplomatic and economic backer, spent more than two months negotiating new sanctions.

China is believed to be the only country that now buys North Korean coal and under the US-drafted UN resolution like-

ly to be adopted it would cut its imports by some 60 percent, or \$700 million on 2015 sales, diplomats said.

The new sanctions would cap North Korean coal exports at \$400.9 million, or 7.5 million metric tons, annually, whichever is lower, starting on Jan. 1. Over the first 10 months of this year, China imported 18.6 million tons of coal from North Korea, up almost 13 percent from a year ago.

Coal is one of North Korea's only sources of hard currency and its largest single export item. The draft UN resolu-

tion would also ban exports of copper, nickel, silver and zinc, which the US official said are worth about \$100 million a year.

Asked about the details of the new sanctions, Geng said there had been a lot of speculative reports around ahead of the resolution being passed. "So it's not appropriate to comment on conjecture and supposition."

China has always been conscientious about enforcing UN resolutions, and all countries have an obligation to do so, he added.—Reuters



**TAIPIING ISLAND:** Taiwanese Coast Guard carry a mock victim during a search-and-rescue exercise in the South China Sea yesterday.—AP

## TAIWAN HOLDS RESCUE EXERCISE IN DISPUTED SOUTH CHINA SEA

**TAIPIING ISLAND:** Taiwan held a search-and-rescue exercise in the South China Sea yesterday as part of efforts to cement its hold over a key island in the strategically vital waterbody.

Eight vessels and three aircraft took part in the drill simulating a fire aboard a cargo ship that forced crew members to seek safety on Taiping in the Spratly island group. Both coast guard and navy ships participated in the exercise.

While Taiwan claims all of the Spratlys, it only occupies Taiping and hasn't challenged the presence of forces from China and other nations on other islands in the group. Coast guard head Lee Chung-wei told journalists that Taiwan's sovereignty over Taiping is "undeniable," but that it

wants to turn the island into a base for humanitarian relief missions in the area. "The purpose of this drill is to tell international society that we are keen to conduct humanitarian relief on the island. We want to maintain peace in this region and put away disputes," Lee said.

In recent years, Taiwan's chief rival, China, has been aggressively pushing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, putting it in conflict with neighbors Vietnam and the Philippines. Malaysia and Brunei also claim parts of the South China Sea, while Indonesia has become increasingly assertive in defending its exclusive economic zone that encompasses rich fisheries and a potential wealth of mineral resources.—AP

## SOUTH KOREA PRESIDENT SAYS WILLING TO LEAVE OFFICE EARLY

BILL COULD BE PASSED AS EARLY AS FRIDAY

**SEOUL:** South Korea's scandal-hit President Park Geun-Hye said yesterday she was willing to resign early and let parliament decide her fate, a move critics said was a bid to delay impending impeachment.

Park has been engulfed in allegations of influence peddling and claims that tens of millions of dollars have changed hands, sparking widespread anger across South Korea and bringing hundreds of thousands of protesters onto the streets demanding her ouster. "I will leave the issue of my departure, including the (possible) reduction of my term in office, to a decision by the National Assembly," she said in a speech carried live on television. "Once lawmakers come up with measures to transfer power in a way that minimizes any power vacuum and chaos in governance, I will step down," she said.

Park's presidency has gone into a tailspin, with accusations that Choi Soon-Sil—a secretive confidante dubbed "Korea's Rasputin"—elicited more than \$60 million in payments from some of the country's top firms, including Samsung.

Park has been named as a suspect in the growing investigation, making her the first sitting president to be subject to a criminal probe while in office. While she retains the presidency, she cannot be charged with a criminal offence except insurrection or treason, but she could be charged once she steps down.

Huge protests calling for her impeachment have rocked Seoul every weekend for the more than a month, and opposition parties say they expect to vote to remove her as early as this week. Park's latest remarks are a possible bid to defang that effort, critics say, with the president hoping that she can cut a deal that would avoid or lessen-formal sanctions. But opponents on Tuesday rubbish her offer.

"Our stance to seek Park's impeachment remains unchanged," Choo Mi-Ae, leader of the main opposition Democratic Party, said, describing Park's remarks as "a trick" designed to distract attention.



**SEOUL:** South Korean President Park Geun-Hye speaks during an address to the nation, at the presidential Blue House yesterday.—AFP

### Push for impeachment

Three opposition parties, which jointly hold 55 percent of seats in parliament, and some members of Park's party are seeking to collect a two thirds of total votes to pass the bill as early as Friday. If the motion passes, Park would immediately be suspended from official duties and her prime minister would take over as interim head of government. But the impeachment would not be finalized until the Constitutional Court approves it—a process that could take six months. Massive weekly protests have intensified over the past month, with up to 1.5 million people braving freezing temperatures in Seoul Saturday to demand Park's resignation, according to organizers. Park has been hemorrhaging allies, with her justice minister stepping down

and staunch supporters within her own party calling for her to go. Park in her third public apology over the scandal-trying Tuesday to distance herself from Choi, who was charged earlier this month with coercion and abuse of power. She said the huge sums of money that had changed hands had been directed towards projects that were for "the public good".

"I have not sought any personal gain there" she said, but added: "It was my fault that I failed to keep my personal ties (with Choi and Choi's associates) under control." Park had earlier promised to submit to a judicial probe, as well as to a separate investigation by an independent special prosecutor. But she later backtracked, with her lawyer rejecting a series of requests by prosecutors to make herself available for questioning.—AFP



**HONG KONG:** This Thursday, Nov. 24, 2016 photo shows nine eight-wheeled Singapore-made Terrex infantry carrier vehicles seized at a container terminal.—AP

## CHINA BLASTS SINGAPORE'S MILITARY COOPERATION WITH TAIWAN

**BEIJING:** A Chinese state newspaper yesterday criticized Singapore over the Southeast Asian city-state's military training with self-governing Taiwan, following the impounding of nine Singaporean infantry fighting vehicles transiting through Hong Kong. The Communist Party-run Global Times said in an editorial Tuesday that Singapore was responsible for the incident, but gave no details about what laws or regulations have been broken by the shipping of the armored vehicles from Taiwan. The vehicles were being sent to Singapore from Kaohsiung, in southern Taiwan, after a military exercise there, when they were seized on Wednesday by Hong Kong.

The editorial said China has long opposed all forms of military cooperation between other countries and Taiwan, which Beijing claims as a breakaway province to be reunited with by force if necessary. "China opposes the outside world having any form of military cooperation or exchange with Taiwan," the paper said. "Singapore, a state that has diplomatic relations with China, should be cautious in this regard."

### What Singapore said

Singapore's defense minister, Ng Eng Hen,

said yesterday that the city-state supports the "one-China" principle - Beijing's view that the mainland and Taiwan are part of a single Chinese nation - and that Singapore is open about its overseas training arrangements. "Any training matters between us and other countries are bilateral, and we should not unnecessarily, until the facts come out, muddle the picture and impute various motives," he said.

Ng said Singapore "plays a positive role in cross-strait relations, and we will continue to do so," citing as an example the city-state's hosting of a historic meeting last year between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Taiwan's then-president, Ma Ying-jeou.

On Monday, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said that Beijing has lodged a protest with Singapore following the seizure of the vehicles. Geng Shuang reiterated China's opposition to military and other exchanges between Taiwan and the countries China has ties with. "We urge the Singaporean government to stay committed to the one-China principle," Geng said at a regular briefing.

Last week, Singapore's defense ministry sent a team to Hong Kong to ensure the securi-

ty of the eight-wheeled Singapore-made Terrex infantry carrier vehicles that were held by Hong Kong customs on Wednesday. It said the vehicles were not carrying ammunition or sensitive equipment and that the team would "assess the situation."

Singapore's army chief, Maj. Gen. Melvyn Ong, said Tuesday that the vehicles had been shipped commercially and the military was still attempting to ascertain the reason for the detention. Hong Kong's South China Morning Post newspaper has said Singaporean authorities would need to contact China's foreign ministry to get the vehicles back. The militaries of Taiwan and Singapore have long trained together, much to the irritation of Beijing.

The seizure also comes amid Chinese displeasure over Singapore's calls for China to heed international rulings over territorial claims in the South China Sea, which Beijing says belongs to it almost in its entirety. China says international law has no jurisdiction over the matter.

Some experts have speculated that China would use the seized military shipment to pressure Singapore to adopt a friendlier stance toward China on the dispute.—AP

## PHILIPPINES DETAINS HUNDREDS OF CHINESE IN CASINO RAID

**MANILA:** More than 1,300 Chinese citizens have been arrested in the Philippines for working illegally at an unlicensed online gaming business, the immigration bureau said yesterday. China has expressed concern over the raid at a casino-hotel complex in the northern Philippines and said Manila must guarantee "humanitarian treatment" of those being held.

Some 1,318 people were detained during the raid on November 24 in Angeles city, immigration bureau spokeswoman Maria Antonette Mangrobang told AFP. "A number of them have been charged for immigration offences, for engaging in gainful activity at an unlicensed online gaming business," she said.

Those found guilty are likely to be deported, she said, adding that sorting

through the documents of all of those being held would take time. China is "highly concerned about the detention by the Philippine side of such large number(s) of Chinese citizens," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters in Beijing Monday.

China has called on Manila to handle the case "with impartiality" and demanded the immediate release of those who are legally in the Philippines. Philippine authorities must "ensure the safety and humanitarian treatment of all the involved," they added.

Some of the people detained had arrived recently on tourist visas and others had working visas, Mangrobang said, adding that they could still be found guilty if their permit was unrelated to their actual line of work.—AFP

## UN TO VOTE ON TIGHTER N KOREA SANCTIONS

**UNITED NATIONS:** The United Nations is readying tighter sanctions on North Korea that would limit its coal exports to China, in response to Pyongyang's fifth and biggest nuclear test, US diplomats said Monday.

The resolution, spearheaded by the United States and negotiated with Beijing for three months, should go to a Security Council vote early Wednesday, according to diplomats who expect it will pass. "This resolution would impose a hard, binding cap that will cut the DPRK's coal exports, which are its largest single source of external revenues, by more than 60 percent," said a US official familiar with the text, using the formal acronym for the North.

The tightening aims to cut \$700 million from Pyongyang's coal earnings—or a 62 percent reduction from last year. "It would dramatically reduce the regime's access to hard currency used for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs," the diplomat stressed. "We do not claim that this resolution is going to cause the

DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons program... but this resolution would make it significantly more difficult."

And China, North Korea's lone ally, is also among the few potential markets for that coal. The draft text says that the Council "condemns in the strongest terms" the North's September 9 test. Pyongyang claimed at the time it had made major strides in its efforts to fit a miniaturized warhead on a rocket that could reach the United States.

"The measures imposed by this resolution are not intended to have adverse humanitarian consequences for the civilian population of the DPRK," the draft text adds.

US President Barack Obama reportedly told his incoming successor Donald Trump that confronting the nuclear threat from North Korea represents the top US national security priority. The restrictive regime has carried out more than 20 missile tests this year, one of which reached Japanese-controlled waters after a launch in August.—AFP

## 7 INJURED BY TURBULENCE AS CHINA AIRLINER APPROACHES SYDNEY

**SYDNEY:** Officials say seven people were injured when a Chinese airliner hit turbulence at it approached Sydney airport. China Eastern Airlines general manager Kathy Zhang said five passengers and two crew members were taken to a hospital after Flight 777 from

Kunming in China landed yesterday.

### All are in stable condition.

The Ambulance Service said in a statement that three complained of neck pain and the others suffered back pain, a minor head injury, a jaw laceration and a wrist injury.—AP



Dawn breaks after one of England's coldest nights of the autumn so far this year at Holme Pierrepont, Nottinghamshire, yesterday. — AP

## FEARS OF IS' USE OF WEAPONIZED DRONES

Continued from Page 1

A high-ranking army officer posted on the southern front said his soldiers were attacked by a modified Phantom 4, a basic camera-fitted "quadcopter" that can be purchased online for less than \$1,000.

Experts argue that, compared to the suicide car and truck bombs IS sometimes fills with several tonnes of explosives, drones represent a minor threat. Their autonomy is limited and they cannot carry heavy payloads. Yet there is evidence that IS weapons experts have been busy trying to perfect their drones. Conflict Armament Research in February saw a workshop abandoned by IS after Iraqi forces retook the city of Ramadi.

The group documented an unmanned aerial vehicle which IS had designed itself, using polystyrene foam and model aircraft components, and fitted with a camera. It said evidence in the workshop also showed attempts to build much larger drones from scratch. "No terrorist entity to date has demonstrated UAS

(unmanned aircraft systems) capability that would be considered highly capable, highly lethal and highly secure," Don Rassler, from the Combating Terrorism Center, said in an October report.

He warned that could soon change, however. "Future off-the-shelf drones will be able to carry heavier payloads, fly and loiter longer, venture farther from their controller and be able to do so via more secure communications links," he said. The disaster scenario is one in which IS uses drones to disseminate the kind of chemicals it has so far used with limited success on rockets. "Although technically much more difficult to achieve, aerosol or spraying devices can also be attached to a UAS to distribute chemical and biological agents," Rassler said.

To counter this new threat, some Western countries have started developing defense systems capable of spotting, tracking and destroying drones. The US military is using kinetic anti-drone systems that physically take on the devices, while others favor hacking or scrambling.

Another more unusual technique developed in France uses eagles that are trained - by being fed meat on drones - to spot the aircraft and take them down. "They are capable of detecting them from thousands of metres away and neutralizing them," French air force general Jean-Christophe Zimmermann said.

Separately, a big rise in drone use is likely to lead to a new wave of "dronejackings" by cybercriminals, security experts warned yesterday. A report by Intel's McAfee Labs said hackers are expected to start targeting drones used for deliveries, law enforcement or camera crews, in addition to hobbyists. "Drones are well on the way to becoming a major tool for shippers, law enforcement agencies, photographers, farmers, the news media, and more," said Intel Security's Bruce Snell, in the company's annual threat report.

Snell said the concept of dronejacking was demonstrated at a security conference last year, where researchers showed how someone could easily take control of a toy drone. "Although taking over a kid's drone may seem amusing and not that big of an issue, once we look at the increase in drone usage potential problems starts to arise," he said. The report noted that many consumer drones lack adequate security, which makes it

easy for an outside hacker to take control.

Companies like Amazon and UPS are expected to use drones for package deliveries - becoming potential targets for criminals, the report said. "Someone looking to 'dronejack' deliveries could find a location with regular drone traffic and wait for the targets to appear," the report said. "Once a package delivery drone is overhead, the drone could be sent to the ground, allowing the criminal to steal the package."

The researchers said criminals may also look to steal expensive photographic equipment carried by drones, to knock out surveillance cameras used by law enforcement. Intel said it expects to see dronejacking "toolkits" traded on "dark web" marketplaces in 2017. "Once these toolkits start making the rounds, it is just a matter of time before we see stories of hijacked drones showing up in the evening news," the report said. Other predictions in the report included a decrease in so-called "ransomware" attacks as defenses improve, but a rise in mobile attacks that enable cyber thieves to steal bank account or credit card information. The report also noted that cybercriminals will begin using more sophisticated artificial intelligence or "machine learning" techniques and employ fake online ads. — Agencies

## 75 KILLED AS PLANE CARRYING BRAZIL...

Continued from Page 1

"The pain is terrible. Just as we had made it, I will not say to the top, but to have national prominence, a tragedy like this happens. It is very difficult, a very great tragedy," club vice-president Ivan Tozzo told Globo SportTV. In all, there were 72 passengers and nine crew on board the British Aerospace 146.

A police commander, Jose Gerardo Acevedo, initially said only five people survived the crash, but Colombian authorities later said a sixth person was found alive, raising hopes there might be other survivors. "The rescue of a sixth survivor, player Helio Hermito Zampier Neto, who is in the process of being evacuated, is confirmed. The possibility that other people will be found alive has not been ruled out," Colombia's disaster risk management agency said.

One of the survivors was Alan Ruschel, a 27-year-old defender for the Brazilian team, the head of Colombia's civil aeronautics agency, Alfredo Bocanegra, told reporters. Radio Caracol said two other players - Marcos Danilo Padilla and Jackson Follmann - also survived and were taken to hospitals, along with a flight attendant and a journalist.

The LAMIA airlines flight originated in Sao Paulo, Brazil and had made a stop in Santa Cruz, Bolivia before continuing on to Rionegro, a city near Medellin. The airport statement said the plane reported an emergency at 10 pm local time (0300 GMT). "It declared it had electrical failures." It went down about 50 km from Medellin, Colombia's second largest city, in an area called Cerro Gordo.

Elkin Ospina, the mayor of the town of La Ceja near the crash site, said the mountainous terrain was some 3,300 m above sea level and very difficult to access. Rescuers carrying stretchers had to hike for more than

half an hour to reach the site. On its Twitter account, the airport said a plan to use an air force helicopter had to be shelved because of bad weather in the area.

Ospina said authorities were on the scene and hospitals and medical centers were preparing to receive the injured. But the bad weather forced the search to be suspended in the early hours of yesterday, with plans to resume. Colombia's civil aeronautics agency said it had a team at the airport in response to the crash. Conmebol, the South American football confederation, meanwhile officially called off the Copa Sudamericana final that was to be played between Chapecoense and Atletico Nacional. "All activities of the confederation are suspended until further notice," Conmebol said.

Chapecoense and Atletico Nacional were supposed to have faced off in today's first leg of the final of the Copa Sudamericana, the second most prestigious club football tournament in South America after the Copa Libertadores. Chapecoense had reached the final after completing a victory on away goals last week over Argentinian side San Lorenzo in the semi-finals.

Chapecoense is widely regarded as one of the minnows of Brazilian club football, having been founded relatively recently in 1973 in the city of Chapeco in southern Santa Catarina state. After decades in the lower divisions, Chapecoense returned to Brazil's top flight Serie A in 2014 for the first time since 1979. The club finished in 14th spot in the 2015 edition of the 20-team championship. Nine team members did not travel to Colombia.

Two weeks ago, the same plane was used to fly the Argentine national team with Lionel Messi on board to San Juan, Argentina for a World Cup qualifying match. Atletico Nacional said on its Twitter account it "profoundly laments and expresses solidarity with @chapelcoensereal for the accident that occurred." — AFP

## BILLIONS PLEDGED FOR TUNISIA

Continued from Page 1

The government is seeking bids on 140 ventures - from infrastructure and agricultural projects to hi-tech schemes - worth roughly \$32 billion. At the conference's opening session, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani pledged \$1.25 billion to "support the Tunisian economy and strengthen its process of development". Kuwait said it would lend Tunisia \$500 million over the next five years, while Canada and Algeria also pledged financial support.

The European Investment Bank (EIB) said it would lend Tunisia €2.5 billion (\$2.65 billion) by 2020, while the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development said it would give \$1.5 billion in soft loans over the same period. Turkey said it would deposit a \$100 million zero-interest loan at Tunisia's central bank.

French Prime Minister Manuel Valls said the French Development Agency (AFD) would invest "at least €250 million (\$265 million) every year" in Tunisia, a former French colony. That is on top of an aid package France announced last year to pump a billion euros (\$1.06 billion) into Tunisia's economy by 2020. "We want to go further," Valls said, adding that France has "duty and a responsibility" to support Tunisia, and called on Europe to "live up to expectations".

The Tunisian government says the conference is part of a charm offensive aimed at attracting private sector investment to reinvigorate growth and create jobs. The meeting came as French auto giant PSA said yesterday it would open a factory in Tunisia to produce Peugeot pickups for the local market. PSA and its Tunisian partner

Stafim said they will produce 1,200 vehicles a year from 2018. But with around 15 percent of its workforce unemployed as of spring 2016, according to the World Bank, Tunisia needs much more investment in order to stave off social unrest. Many of its jobless are young graduates who have seen the hope of the Arab Spring dissipate.

Prime Minister Youssef Chahed's government took office in August in place of an administration heavily criticized for its economic management. That followed a catastrophic 2015 in which attacks claimed by the Islamic State group killed 59 foreign visitors and 13 Tunisians. The attacks dealt a devastating blow to the tourism industry, which in 2010 employed 400,000 people and represented 10 percent of Gross Domestic Product.

Strikes and social unrest have also hit strategic sectors including phosphate mining. In January, Tunisia faced its biggest social unrest since the revolution. Chahed told AFP last week that Tunisia deserved support and that the international community "should invest in Tunisian democracy". The International Monetary Fund approved a \$2.9-billion loan to Tunisia in May to help implement economic and financial reforms. The European Union also announced a doubling of its financial support in 2017 to \$318 million.

Essebsi will head to Brussels today and tomorrow for an EU-Tunisia summit. Incoming UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres told yesterday's conference that Tunisia had not yet received enough economic support. "The success of Tunisia requires a strong economy," he said. "For the private sector, investing in Tunisia is an intelligent decision." — AFP

Kuwait Times

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## Focus

AFGHANISTAN TAKES  
ON RICH, POWERFUL  
IN WAR ON GRAFT

Afghanistan's anti-corruption court has held its inaugural public hearings in Kabul, the first steps on the long road to transparency in one of the most corrupt countries in the world - and expectations are immense. Afghans hope the Criminal Justice Centre against Corruption, created by presidential decree, is destined to prosecute the rich and powerful behind major cases of graft. These, according to anti-corruption NGO Transparency International, are numerous. Afghanistan is at the very bottom of their authoritative global ranking, alongside North Korea and Somalia.

"It is a very important moment that will put an end to impunity. One hopes to reach the highest levels of the state, to the former ministers and important people who were never held to account until now," says Yama Torabi, chairman of the Independent Committee for the Observation of Corruption. The anti-corruption center, the fulfillment of a promise made by President Ashraf Ghani to the international community last May, is armed with prosecutors, judges and police criminal investigators, and had a war chest of half a million dollars for its first four months. It is headed by a 32-year-old judge, Mohammed Alif Urfani, who sits in prefabricated offices in a heavily guarded compound between the headquarters of the special police and the anti-drug units.

## Threats and Pressures

"I see two types of threats: Within the government, some do not want the center to work; and the Taliban, they do not want the government to be strong," he told AFP. A father of two young children, Urfani is guarded by two soldiers and one member of the Afghan intelligence service. "I have not received any direct threats, but this is just the beginning. The pressure will inevitably increase when the biggest cases are reached," he says, citing threatening phone calls received by police officers who arrested a three-star general at the Ministry of Defense.

Thirty-five people, including 14 judges, have been assigned to the center, which comprises a court of first instance and a court of appeal. "Whoever they are, they have been checked and cleared," the spokesman for Attorney General Jamsheed Rasooli told AFP. To date, they have taken 55 cases and 31 suspects are behind bars, with "five ministries" in their sights, as well as "the Central Bank of Afghanistan and the issuing authority of identity cards," he says, but gives no further details.

Earlier this month the court handed down its first sentence: Two and a half years in prison for military prosecutor General Abdul Haye Jurat. He was caught red-handed as he pocketed 50,000 Afghanis (\$760) from a prisoner's family, demanded to secure the man's release at the end of his sentence. The offence appears minor in view of the billion dollars diverted from Kabul Bank in 2010, a massive scandal that highlighted how deep the roots of corruption go in Afghanistan - but it is a start. "The sum is small but the accused is a two-star general," said Urfani. "We proved that we can bring high-ranking officers to justice."

## Impatience

"We know that the population and the international community are scrutinizing us," says the young judge, the only person in his village to learn to read and write. Today his childhood friends watch when he appears on television. He regrets the "impatience" of Afghans: "Some cases take years: When you want to bring a minister to justice, you need proof and to arrest the people involved. If you go too fast, you will lose."

At a very high level, witnesses fear for their relatives. "People are scared to help us, they fear kidnappings, the mafia is inside the government," he says. The first hearings were attended by a large number of foreign observers, including those of the embassies which financially support the center - the United States, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands in particular.

"This is a considerable challenge when it's about the rich and powerful... Corruption is the basic problem," the European Union ambassador, Franz-Michael Mellbin, told AFP, referring to the many "ghost employees" of the ministries and even of the army or the police. But both the international community and the Afghan people must be realistic, he added. "Previously a lot of cases were poorly prepared and it was very easy for defense lawyers to dismiss them," he adds, justifying the need to "isolate the institution from the power to let them work and gather the evidence and build the cases properly". —AFP

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## YOUNG US IMMIGRANTS WORRIED ABOUT FUTURE

Hundreds of thousands of young immigrants living in the country illegally willingly came out of the shadows and identified themselves to the Obama administration on the promise that they'd be safe from deportation and allowed to work. Some may now regret that decision. President-elect Donald Trump has promised to immediately scrap the program that protected these immigrants. If he does, it's not clear whether he would take action against the more than 741,000 participants. But if he decides to pursue them, the government now has their addresses, photographs and fingerprints.

Twenty-year-old Nancy Villas was among the first to apply for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program in the summer of 2012, waiting in line hours at a sign-up site at Chicago's Navy Pier. Since then she's been working part time at a child care center to pay for college classes. Now she's worried she may eventually be forced to return to Mexico, a country she left when she was 9. "I knew it was the only way to have better opportunities," Villas said. "I took the risk without thinking that somebody would want to take it away."

Trump made illegal immigration the cornerstone of his campaign, promising to build a massive wall along the Mexican border and deport millions of people living in the country illegally. Once he takes office, Trump can almost immediately rescind the promised protection and, with it, likely void the accompanying work permits. But there is little to suggest that he would move swiftly to deport program participants. In a post-election interview with CBS' "60 Minutes," Trump said he would focus initially on criminal immigrants living illegally in the US. He said that could be about 2 million to 3 million people, though that figure is likely inflated.

Mark Krikorian, executive director for Center for Immigration Studies, said the fears of pro-

gram participants may be overblown. "Unless there's a crime issue or something specific that's going to draw attention to an individual, I can't see how they'd be a priority," said Krikorian, whose think-tank describes itself as low-immigration, pro-immigrant.

President Barack Obama initiated the program to shield from deportation young immigrants, some of whom don't even remember their native countries. It didn't give the immigrants legal status, only "deferred action" - meaning they wouldn't face deportation while they participated. There was never a guarantee that it would last beyond Obama's term as president. A former immigration official who helped craft the

program, John Sandweg, said the White House and the Homeland Security Department considered the reality that a future president could end it. But at the time, he said, it appeared that revoking already-approved protections would be politically difficult.

## Opposition

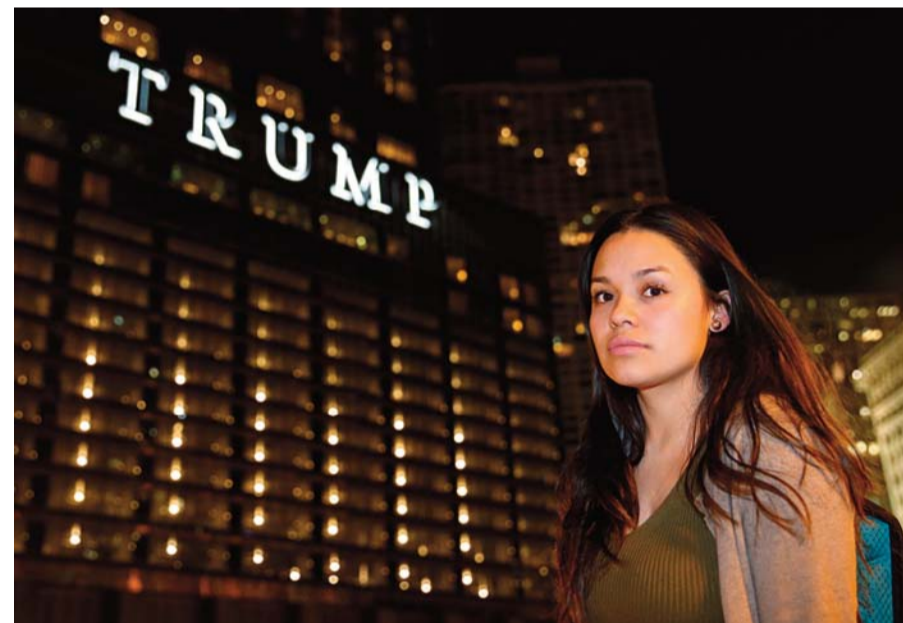
"These are the kinds of kids you should bring out of the shadows," said Sandweg, a former acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. "I don't think anyone envisioned a President Trump when this was created." Trump wasn't subtle about his opposition to the program. He called it an "illegal

amnesty" and promised to "immediately terminate" the program. And since winning office, Trump has said he will nominate immigration hardliner Sen Jeff Sessions as attorney general. As he considers other Cabinet vacancies, Trump has met with Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, who led his state's court fight to prevent an expansion of the deportation protection plan.

When the program started, the Obama administration suggested that application files would not generally be used for enforcement efforts. US Citizenship and Immigration Services addressed the concern in its published "frequently asked questions," saying information would be shared with enforcement officials only if someone "meets the criteria" for deportation proceedings. But revoking the deportation protection would make those young immigrants almost immediately eligible to face deportation.

Sandweg said going after participants would be a massive logistical undertaking that would only worsen backlogs in an already overburdened immigration court system where many people wait years for a final decision. Adding about 750,000 to the court system "would do nothing for public safety," Sandweg said. Nonetheless, the mere prospect of that has prompted some Democratic lawmakers to ask Obama to protect these immigrants with pardons before he leaves office.

And advocates for the young immigrants have pledged to keep up their fight to win public and political support for overhauling immigration laws. "We organized across the country, we shared our stories publicly and we came together. We took direct actions and held politicians accountable," said Cristina Jimenez, executive director and co-founder of United We Dream. Under a Trump administration, Jimenez said, that won't change. —AP



In this Nov 17, 2016 photo, Nancy Villas stands on a street in Chicago. —AP

## FROM MILK TO BULBS, CASTRO RESHAPED CUBA

Fidel Castro changed the flavor of the milk Cuban children drink at breakfast. He filled Cuban kitchens with energy-saving rice cookers, and he gave a two-hour lesson in their use live on national television. He even changed the nation's lightbulbs, launching a nationwide campaign to replace incandescent bulbs with fluorescents that cast a pallid white light in Cuban homes to this day.

Castro, who died Friday night at 90, gained global stature with grand visions: Confronting the United States; building universal healthcare and education; sending Cuba's doctors to heal the Third World's sick and its soldiers to fight alongside socialist allies from Vietnam to Angola. At home, he expended vast quantities of time and energy remaking the minutest aspects of life in the country he ruled for nearly 50 years. Obsessive, restless, fixated on details, Castro is being remembered by many Cubans for his decades of smaller-scale, often quixotic initiatives to implant Soviet-style central planning on an unruly and improvisational Caribbean island.

Ten years after Castro turned power over to his brother Raul, the artifacts of his time in command still feature in the daily lives of average Cubans, particularly those related to Castro's passions for agricultural productivity and energy-saving. Millions of Cubans still depend on the pale-blue ration book that once provided a month's worth of free food, reduced today to about 15 days of rice, beans, eggs, chicken, cooking oil, salt and sugar.

In Nov 2005, Castro tried to persuade his countrymen to also feed their children "chocolatin", a mix of powdered milk and cocoa distributed to families in 200-gm bags. "Seven of every 11 grams are whole milk powder, believe me," he said. "Check it if you're skeptical. Take it to a laboratory and test it. There's also four grams of

cocoa, which is very strong, as strong as it is healthy. I know that our doctors over there in the mountains of Kashmir are drinking their chocolate every night." To this day, it's hard to find a Cuban child who doesn't ask for chocolate-flavored morning milk, itself a legacy of Castro's pledge to give every Cuban under age 7 one liter of milk every day.

## Initiatives

In 1961, two years after Castro's revolution won power, the new Cuban government launched an ambitious campaign to stamp out illiteracy. Some 250,000 volunteer teachers, many of them young women, fanned out across the country, especially in rural areas where access to education was spotty and the need was greatest. In the space of a year, about

700,000 people learned to read and write, said "Maestra", a documentary that explores the initiative's history. Today, Cuba reports a literacy rate of 99.8 percent, on par with the most developed nations in the world.

In 1960, Castro launched the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, neighborhood watch groups given the job of implementing social welfare projects and natural disaster assistance, looking out for the elderly and organizing modest block parties. They also serve as the government's eyes and ears, networks of informants that enforce compliance and watch for suspicious activity such as political dissidence or an illegal satellite hookup. The committees are so ubiquitous that just about everyone in Cuba, especially in the cities, still

lives within sight of the home of a committee member.

In 1985, many Cubans stopped smoking when Castro abandoned his ubiquitous cigars as part of a nationwide campaign against tobacco, which remains one of the island's principal exports. Some Cubans fondly remember his personal involvement in the daily problems of individual citizens, while others say he created a leader-dependent autocracy that remains virtually immobile without direct commands from the president. "A friend of mine solved her housing problem when she got Fidel's response to her letter seeking help," said Elisa Marquez, a 54-year-old state human resources manager. "With his signature on the letter, it got fixed."

In 2005, Castro's government decided as part of its "energy revolution" that the incandescent light bulb's time was up. Workers went door-to-door across the country as people handed over old 60-watt bulbs and were given energy-efficient replacements in the 5- to 18-watt range, with the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution helping keep track of those who complied. The switch is still evident today in millions of dimly lit homes, stores and offices. Some people have complained that the light is barely enough to read by or for kids to do homework after nightfall.

In March 2005, Castro stunned islanders with the sudden announcement that the government would hand out 100,000 new pressure cookers each month until some 2.5 million were distributed in all - and that still more would then be made available at subsidized prices, along with Chinese-made rice cookers. The move "will do away with the rustic kitchen", Castro said in remarks to the Federation of Cuban Women. Today the pressurized appliances remain a fixture in households everywhere. —AP



In this Feb 13, 1961 file photo, Cuba's leader Fidel Castro cuts sugarcane in an unknown location in Cuba. —AP















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## OIL 'HEEBIE-JEEBIES' AS PROSPECTS OF OPEC DEAL DIM

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**BASRA:** An Iraqi worker operates valves at the Rumaila oil refinery, near the city of Basra, 550 kilometers southeast of Baghdad, Iraq. Iraq's prime minister says his country will agree to cut production to boost oil prices. OPEC members will try to complete a production-cut deal when they meet today in Vienna. — AP

## IRAN, IRAQ AT LOGGERHEADS WITH SAUDIS ALGERIA, VENEZUELA SEEKING RUSSIAN OPEC ACCORD

**VIENNA:** Iran and Iraq are resisting pressure from Saudi Arabia to curtail oil production, making it hard for the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to reach a global output-limiting deal when it meets today. OPEC sources told Reuters a meeting of experts in Vienna on Monday failed to bridge differences between OPEC's de facto leader, Saudi Arabia, and the group's second- and third-largest producers over the mechanics of output cuts.

"The revival of Iran's lost share in the oil market is the national will and demand of Iranian people," Iranian news agency Shana quoted the country's oil minister Bijan Zanganeh, who was due to arrive in Vienna later, as saying. OPEC, which accounts for a third of global oil production, agreed in September to cap output at around 32.5-33.0 million barrels per day versus the current 33.64 million bpd to

prop up oil prices, which have halved since mid-2014.

Iran has argued it wants to raise production to regain market share lost under Western sanctions, when its political arch-rival Saudi Arabia increased output. In recent weeks, Riyadh offered to cut its own output by 0.5 million bpd, according to OPEC sources, and suggested Iran limit production at below 4 million bpd. Tehran has sent mixed signals including that it wanted to produce 4.2 million bpd. Iraq has also been pressing for higher output limits, saying it needs more money to fight the militant group Islamic State.

The argument between Iraq and Saudi Arabia mainly focuses on whether Baghdad should use its own output estimates to limit production or rely on lower figures from OPEC's experts. As tensions within OPEC mounted, Saudi Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih said at the weekend that oil markets

would rebalance even without an output-limiting pact. He had previously said Riyadh was keen for a deal. Falih was not expected to land in Vienna before evening, leaving little time for traditional pre-meeting discussions with other ministers. "The feeling today is mixed," Indonesian Energy Minister Ignasius Jonan told reporters yesterday when asked about the prospects of a deal. "I don't know. Let's see."

### Goldman sees deficit

Brent crude was down more than 2 percent, near \$47 a barrel, after the Indonesian comments. Some analysts including Morgan Stanley and Macquarie have said oil prices will correct sharply if OPEC fails to reach a deal, potentially going as low as \$35 per barrel. Goldman Sachs, one of the most active banks in oil trading, said yesterday it saw prices averag-

ing \$45 a barrel until mid-2017 even without any OPEC deal and added the market was likely to move into a deficit in the second half of 2017.

A year ago, Goldman was saying a global glut would push oil prices to around \$20. Prices fell to multi-year lows of \$27 per barrel in January 2016. Besides disagreements with Iran and Iraq, Saudi Arabia has also signaled it was unhappy with Russia's position. Oil ministers from OPEC members Algeria and Venezuela travelled to Moscow yesterday to try to persuade non-OPEC Russia to take part in cuts instead of merely freezing output, which has reached new highs in the past year. They made no comment as they emerged from their meeting. Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said he had no plan to travel to Vienna but could meet OPEC once it reaches a deal. — Reuters

## SAUDI PULLS BACK WITH OIL RETREAT

### MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

**DUBAI:** Saudi Arabia's stock market gave up early gains by the close yesterday as oil prices pulled back, while other Gulf bourses were mixed. Profit-taking pulled Egypt's market lower after big gains this month. The Saudi index has soared over 25 percent - almost entirely erasing its losses this year - since the government's \$17.5 billion international bond issue in late October eased fears about its ability to cope with an era of cheap oil, and helped it begin making delayed payments to settle its debts to private companies.

In early trade yesterday the index rose as much as 0.7 percent. But Brent crude oil fell around 2 percent to below \$47.50 a barrel yesterday afternoon on signs that oil exporters were struggling to agree a deal to cut production. This pulled the stock index down 0.1 percent in active trade to 6,897 points at the close. It failed to confirm a clear break of major technical resistance on the April peak of 6,876 points. The banking and petrochemical sectors, which led the market up during most of its rebound this month, underperformed yesterday; banks dropped 0.3 percent and petrochemicals lost 0.6 percent.

Much activity focused on smaller stocks with retailer Jarir Marketing, beaten down earlier this year by economic slowdown due to low oil prices, jumping 6.1 percent. Central bank data showed cash withdrawals from

automated teller machines edged up in October, suggesting cuts to public employees' financial allowances might not be hurting consumption as much as some analysts had feared.

Insurance stocks favored by local retail speculators also surged yesterday, with Al Rajhi Takaful up 3.9 percent. Speculative activity in small caps also supported markets in the United Arab Emirates. Dubai's index rose 0.7 percent as Dubai Investments surged 3.2 percent. Loss-making construction firm Arabtec climbed 2.3 percent after it appointed Hamish Tyrwhitt as new chief executive; Tyrwhitt was CEO of Australian contractor Leighton Holdings, since rebranded CIMIC Group, between 2011 and 2014.

Abu Dhabi's index edged up 0.1 percent, buoyed by banks, with Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank adding 1.8 percent. Qatar's index fell 0.5 percent, as Qatar National Bank slipped 3.7 percent. Egypt's index fell 0.9 percent as profit-taking resumed after its 37 percent jump in the weeks after the Nov 3 float of the Egyptian pound. But Arabia Investments jumped 7.1 percent after its nine-month consolidated net loss shrank to 10.3 million Egyptian pounds (\$572,000) from a year-earlier loss of 11 million pounds, while operating revenues rose. Exchange data showed foreign investors remained net buyers of Egyptian stocks yesterday, by a modest margin of about \$2 million. — Reuters



**MUNICH:** Airplanes of German airline Lufthansa are parked in front of the Lufthansa terminal at the Franz-Josef-Strauss airport in Munich, southern Germany yesterday. — AFP

## STRIKE SLASHES 800 LUFTHANSA FLIGHTS

**FRANKFURT AM MAIN:** German airline Lufthansa said it had slashed 800 flights yesterday as pilots walked out for a 48-hour strike following a four-day stoppage last week in a long-running pay dispute. Around 82,000 passengers are affected by the latest industrial action, the 15th by the carrier's flight crew since April 2014. While yesterday's walkout affects short-haul flights, today will see a further 890 flights cancelled including some long-haul services. Lufthansa failed to obtain an injunction to halt the strike from a Munich court the second time in a week its attempts to block industrial action by legal means have fallen through after a similar judgment in Frankfurt.

A spokesman told AFP the group had withdrawn an appeal against the Bavarian court's judgment. There is little sign of an end to the drawn-out dispute between pilots and managers at Lufthansa, with union Vereinigung Cockpit warning of further strikes if the airline does not soften its

position. "Strikes can continue as long as we don't have an offer we can negotiate over," union leader Joerg Handweg told the Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily. Pilots complain that they have had no pay rise in five years, while the airline has continued to book healthy profits.

They demand a pay increase of an average of 3.66 percent per year, retroactive for the past five years. But managers have rejected such a settlement, with their last offer a one-off bonus of just under two months' salary and a 4.4 percent pay increase spread over two years-a deal refused by Cockpit at the weekend. The pay deal was "only a part of an overall package" that included cuts to pensions, Handweg said. Lufthansa says it pays pilots significantly more than its competitors. According to managers, a co-pilot earns a starting salary of 6,500 euros (\$6,890) gross per month, while a late-career captain can be paid as much as 22,000 euros. — AFP









## Alghanim Automotive (Chevrolet and Cadillac) wins first and third place at General Motors' Dealers Technicians Competition Among 1960 auto technicians from the Middle East



**FIRST PLACE**



**THIRD PLACE**

service competitions in the region. Organized by General Motors, the competition rated the skills and proficiency of 40 authorized auto technicians in the Middle East wherein Alghanim Automotive's very own team came on top.

The annual competition, now in its eighth year, is inspired by General Motor's "Fix It Right First Time" program, where the technician team at Alghanim Automotive service centers, as well as Chevrolet and Cadillac service centers across the Middle East, are considered to be certifiably competent to not only diagnose any fault or malfunction but fix it as well on the first time, thereby elevating the customer's trust of their favorite automotive brand and peace of mind. About 40 top auto technicians from General Motors competed last week in Dubai for the honor to be named the best in the region. And it should be noted that this is not the first win for Alghanim Automotive in this esteemed competition, as they had placed 1st in 2014, and 5th and 6th in 2015.

The triumph of Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons Automotive comes as a result of the comprehensive training opportunities that its technicians avail of all year long, in addition to them being provided with the latest and most advanced service equipment that would ensure their job gets done on time while meeting customer service standards.

"Our main aim at GM is to be customer centric; so naturally, making sure customer vehicles are fixed to the highest standard possible is a critical part of this," said Mario A. Spangenberg, President and Managing Director of GM Africa and Middle East. "This commitment to our customers is part of our culture at GM. This competition is one of the many ways we encourage our technicians to develop their craft in order to provide our customers with the best aftersales experience possible."

After having gone through a qualification process over the past year, the 40 finalists met in Dubai to compete in a series of tasks to test their technical skills, they diagnosed and fixed 40 purposely booby-trapped vehicles. The competition is refereed by 20 judges from General Motors as well as third party experts from several different areas of relevant focus.

The group collectively fixed 10 issues over 10 hours during the two-day event.

The winner of the competition was Sherwin Anthony Ribeiro, an Indian national, who is a technician for the Yusuf Ahmad Alghanim & Sons Co (Chevrolet and Cadillac), followed by his colleague in the company Willbold Bensley

at 3rd position. Sherwin scored the most points for his accuracy and speed in diagnosing 10 difficult issues on various vehicles, be they from Cadillac or Chevrolet, and formulating the best course of action for a correct fix from the outset in the quickest time.

"After my first participation last year, I went back to Kuwait and decided that I will work harder for the following year, and here I am!" Sherwin enthused after Mario A. Spangenberg, President and Managing Director GM Africa and Middle East handed him his winner's trophy during a gala dinner. He continued; "The Competition is full of challenging tasks, it pushes us technicians to work harder and fix a customer's car right from the first time. It is an amazing initiative by GM, because it maintains a high level of skills and I hope to participate and win again."

"Since the inception of this competition and its supporting training programs, there has been a significant improvement in the 'fix it right the first time' rate across the region. This year, GM Middle East, across its four brands' service efforts, has the highest ever customer satisfaction levels in the region's history, something that we are very proud of. Our dealer technicians' skills, highlighted by this competitive tool is a major contributor to our customers' satisfaction," said Mohammed Al Fayyad, Director of Customer Care and Aftersales for General Motors Middle East.

It has been a long road to get here. 1960 GM dealer technicians from around the Middle East signed up for the competition in February.

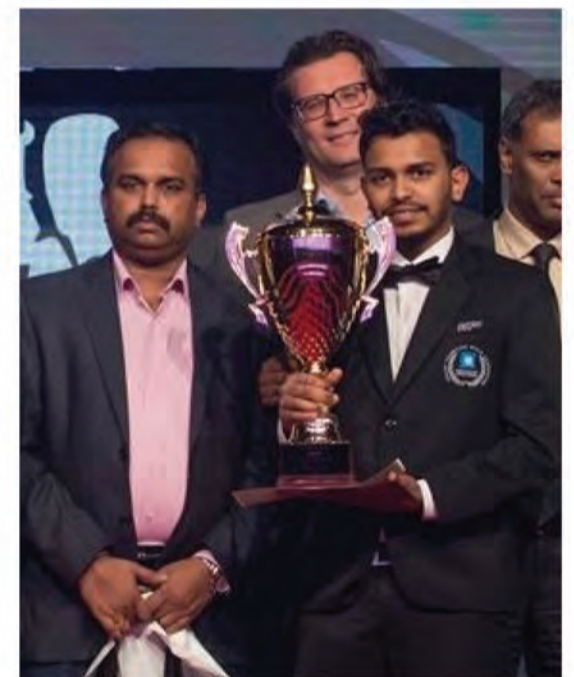
Since then, they have been through training programs and five grueling elimination rounds consisting of online and written tests. This cut the field down to 300 and down to the top 40 who flew into Dubai to compete in the finals this week.

On a closing note, this win marks another proud achievement in a fulfilling year for Alghanim Automotive, whereby Mr. Abdullah Al-Khatib won first place at the General Motors Middle East's 2015 Service Advisors Skills Competition, Mr. Gemiliano Cabalar was awarded the "Best TAC (Technical Assistance Center) Contact" award for 2015 during the General Motors TAC Seminar, and Mr. Ayman Ahmed Marie was declared the best wholesale person in the Gulf.

On Alghanim Automotive Service Center (Chevrolet and Cadillac) The Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons Service Center in Shuwaikh is the biggest and most advanced automotive service center in the world, with 73,000 sq m of built up area, servicing 1,000 vehicles every day. Throughout the facility,

advanced technology is used to provide customers with reliable service performed by a team of proficiently trained technicians, on-site and ready to offer necessary advice and support as well as cost-effective operations to customers' vehicles.

Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the exclusive distributor of both Chevrolet and Cadillac vehicles in Kuwait, adds a new entry in its achievement record by winning first place at one of the biggest automotive



## FOR APPLE AND OTHERS, TIN SUPPLY CHAIN HAS TIES TO REBEL-HELD MYANMAR MINE UNITED WA STATE ARMY BLACKLISTED BY US

**YANGON:** From a remote corner of northeastern Myanmar, an insurgent army sells tin ore to suppliers of some of the world's largest consumer companies. More than 500 companies, including leading brands such as smartphone maker Apple, coffee giant Starbucks and luxury jeweler Tiffany & Co, list among their suppliers Chinese-controlled firms that indirectly buy ore from the Man Maw mine near Myanmar's border with China, a Reuters examination of the supply chain found.

The mine is controlled by the United Wa State Army (UWSA), which the United States placed under sanctions for alleged narcotics trafficking in 2003. The seven companies extracting tin from the mine are all owned or controlled by Wa military and government leaders, Wa officials and people with close ties to UWSA leadership said. This potentially puts companies, which also include industrial conglomerate General Electric, at risk of violating sanctions that forbid "direct or indirect" dealings with blacklisted groups, according to a former and a serving US official and lawyers with expertise in sanctions enforcement.

Several sanctions experts said the US government was unlikely to fine companies who unwittingly used the Myanmar tin. Still, it may force them to shift to new suppliers, they said. A Treasury Department spokeswoman said US sanctions "generally prohibit US companies from

engaging in any direct or indirect transactions or dealings with individuals or entities" on a blacklist, but declined further comment on specific circumstances. The situation illustrates the difficulties facing multinationals in monitoring supply chains that have grown increasingly complex.

Following a 2012 US regulation, companies have spent billions of dollars scrutinizing whether certain minerals used in their products come from mines controlled by armed groups in Central Africa. But the regulations do not require them to assess the origins of minerals from other conflict zones. Apple, Tiffany and GE, and other companies contacted by Reuters, said that to fulfill those regulations they looked to an audit program designed by the industry group Conflict Free Sourcing Initiative (CFSI).

A CFSI program director said the group was "aware of tin exports from Myanmar to other countries and of security and human rights issues in Myanmar". The group said it was updating its audit requirements to include "a broader definition of conflict-affected and high-risk areas". Tin supply chain expert at monitoring group Global Witness, Sophia Pickles, said companies must not wholly outsource due diligence responsibility to a scheme that has exclusively focused on central Africa. "Companies, not schemes, bear the primary responsibility for ensuring that supply chains are responsible," she said.

### Civil war

Most of the tin mined globally is used as solder in electronics, for making batteries and plating. The Man Maw mine roiled the global tin market when huge quantities of high grade ore were discovered around 2013. Annual production is now estimated at about 33,000 tons of tin concentrate, more than a 10th of global output of the metal. The mine is controlled by the UWSA, the strongest of the myriad armed groups that have kept Myanmar in a state of near-perpetual civil war for decades. Reuters visited the remote mine last month, the first international media organization to do so.

Interviews with officials running the mine, UWSA leaders and executives at Asian tin suppliers, together with an examination of public disclosures of suppliers made by companies in regulatory filings, indicate Wa tin likely ends up in an array of products made by US and other international companies. Tin from Man Maw provides revenue critical to the survival of the self-proclaimed Wa State and its rulers, who have refused to disarm or participate in Myanmar's peace process. "There are dozens of trucks carrying tin ore to China every morning," the head of the Wa territory foreign affairs office, Zhao Guo An, told Reuters. "Tin mining is the pillar of our economy. It's the biggest source of income." —Reuters



## ROGUE ONE STAR WARS LIMITED EDITION TAKES OVER LOS ANGELES AUTO SHOW

**DUBAI:** Nissan unveiled the last of four new vehicles debuting at the Los Angeles Auto Show, the 2017 Nissan Rogue: Rogue One Star Wars Limited Edition. The dramatic reveal featured a special interactive presentation of the Intelligent Safety Shield technologies available in the redesigned 2017 Rogue (known as X-Trail in the Middle East) against a high-action video. The video was followed by a drive-out of a pair of the Nissan Rogue: Rogue One Star Wars Limited Edition vehicles accompanied by battle-ready stormtroopers. Custom features of the Nissan Rogue: Rogue One Star Wars Limited Edition - the first production vehicle ever to include Star Wars-branded elements - include a unique badge, exclusive interior and exterior trim items and a full-size Death Trooper collectible helmet.

Only 5,400 units of the Limited Edition vehicle will be available in the US and Canadian markets. The Rogue One Star Wars Limited Edition package is only available on 2017 Rogue SV equipped with the Sun and Sound Touring Package. Reservations for the vehicle are being taken now at



NissanUSA.com. "The Nissan Rogue and the first Star Wars standalone movie share more than just a name. The Star Wars film franchise has pushed the boundaries of technology since the debut of the original episode nearly 40 years ago," said Jeremy Tucker, vice president, Marketing Communications & Media, Nissan North America, Inc. "Nissan is doing the same with its industry-leading

cars, trucks and SUVs like the new Rogue - our most advanced Rogue to date - so it's natural that the two join forces."

Nissan has also created an immersive "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story"-inspired experience for consumers visiting the Nissan display during the Los Angeles Auto Show, which takes place at the Los Angeles Convention Center, Nov. 18 through 27. Activities

include a full-scale Tie Fighter replica, a Star Wars character-themed digital mirror experience, an Augmented Reality generator and weekend appearances by stormtroopers. In addition, a special gallery features a display of costumes and model props used during the production of the upcoming "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" movie, including Y-Wing, AT-ACT and X-Wing fighters.

## HENKEL PRESENTS NEW STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, FINANCIAL AMBITION

**DUBAI:** Henkel presented its new strategic priorities and financial ambition, which will shape Henkel until 2020 and beyond - summarized as 'Henkel 2020+'. Based on its strong foundation, Henkel aims to generate continued profitable growth by focusing on four strategic priorities: Driving growth, accelerating digitalization, increasing agility and funding growth. "We will build our future on a strong foundation, which will enable us to generate sustainable profitable growth in the coming years."

"We have an excellent track record of outperforming our markets, a balanced and well-diversified business portfolio with exciting brands, innovative technologies and leading positions in highly attractive markets and categories - and a passionate global team with a strong culture, common purpose and shared values," said Hans Van Bylen, Chief Executive Officer of Henkel. "At Henkel, we share the common purpose to create sustainable value - for our customers and consumers, our employees, our shareholders, as well as for our stakeholders and the communities in which we operate. In addition, our values guide all our actions, decisions and behavior," said Hans Van Bylen.

### Ambition for 2020+

"We want to continue Henkel's successful development in a highly volatile business environment, characterized by globalization, accelerating digitalization, rapidly changing markets, and an increasing relevance of resource scarcity and social responsibility. By 2020 and beyond, our ambition for Henkel is to generate more profitable growth and to become more customer-focused, more innovative, more agile, and fully digitized in our internal processes and customer-facing activities. In addition, we aim to promote sustainability in all our business activities, reinforcing our leading position," Hans Van Bylen explained.

"In order to achieve this ambition, we will focus on driving growth, accelerating digitalization across all our businesses and functions, increasing agility in our organization and teams, and funding our growth through targeted initiatives. In addition to



Hans Van Bylen

organic growth, acquisitions will continue to be an integral part of our strategy in order to further strengthen our portfolio. We will begin to implement our strategic priorities in a highly energized way from day one, to continue our successful development and create sustainable value," said Hans Van Bylen, summarizing Henkel's future strategic direction.

### Profitable growth

In a highly volatile and uncertain market environment, Henkel has defined a concrete financial ambition for the period until 2020: Over the next four years, Henkel aims to achieve an average organic sales growth between 2% and 4% with an over-proportionate contribution from emerging markets. For adjusted earnings per preferred share, Henkel targets a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7 to 9%. This ambition for EPS growth includes the impact of currency developments and excludes major acquisitions as well as share buy-back. In addition, Henkel aims for continued improvements of its adjusted EBIT margin and free cash flow expansion. Overview of strategic priorities.

### Drive Growth

Driving growth in mature and emerging markets

will be a key strategic priority for Henkel. The company will launch a range of targeted initiatives to create superior customer and consumer engagement, further strengthen its leading brands and technologies, develop exciting innovations and services, and capture new sources of growth.

### Accelerate Digitalization

Accelerating digitalization will help Henkel to successfully grow its business, strengthen the relationships with its customers and consumers, optimize its processes and transform the entire company. By 2020, Henkel will implement a range of initiatives to drive its digital business, leverage industry 4.0 projects, and transform the organization.

### Increase Agility

In a highly volatile and dynamic business environment, increasing agility of the organization will be a critical success factor for Henkel in the future. This will include energized and empowered teams, fastest time-to-market as well as smart and simplified processes.

### Fund growth

In order to fund growth, Henkel will implement new approaches to optimize resource allocation, focus on net revenue management, further increase efficiency in its structures, and continue to expand its Global Supply Chain organization. Together, these initiatives will contribute to further improve profitability and enable Henkel to fund its growth ambitions for 2020 and beyond.

To reinforce its commitment to sustainability, Henkel has defined clear targets to improve its resource efficiency, for example by creating more value with less resources. Henkel has defined ambitious sustainability milestones which would result in an overall efficiency improvement of 75 percent by 2020 compared to 2010. Engaging all Henkel employees globally to act as sustainability ambassadors toward customers and consumers, business partners and society will be a driver of Henkel's sustainability leadership.



Mohamed Alabbar and Rashid Alabbar

## YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP, MOHAMED ALABBAR PARTNER

**KUWAIT:** YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP SpA (MTA: YNAP), the world's leading online luxury fashion retailer is delighted to announce a joint venture with Symphony Investments, an entity controlled by Mohamed Alabbar, to create the Middle East's undisputed leader for online luxury retail, in a partnership that will draw on the region's enormous growth potential. The partnership will see Mohamed Alabbar focus his entire online luxury retail activity in the region exclusively through the new joint venture.

YNAP will hold a 60% stake in the joint venture ("JV"), which will be fully consolidated in YNAP's accounts, while Symphony Investments will own the remaining 40%. The JV will manage all of the Group's existing multi-brand online stores in the region - NET-A-PORTER, MR PORTER, YOOX and THE OUTNET-as well as, in agreement with the brands, select existing and future Online Flagship Stores "Powered by YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP" that have significant business potential in the Middle East.

The new company will operate in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries ("GCC") - the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman. The JV may expand to other countries in the Middle East and North Africa in the future. To provide Middle Eastern luxury customers with a fully localized offer, the JV will establish on-the-ground operations, which will allow YNAP to capture the region's significant growth potential.

### Localization strategy

In particular, the JV's localization strategy will include: - The establishment of a Dubai-based entity to bring the company closer to its customers: a local office with dedicated sales & marketing, customer care and PR teams will provide Middle Eastern customers with a highly tailored offering that will set a new standard of customer service in the region and further drive brand awareness; - the opening of a new distribution centre in Dubai powered by YNAP's omni-stock techno-logistics platform to guarantee the highest level of service, including premier same-day delivery; - the development of a localized offering ranging from Arabic-language customer care and content, as well as local currency and payment methods.

The JV will open the local office and distribution centre in Dubai by end of 2017. YOOX and THE OUTNET will debut in 2018, while NET-A-PORTER and MR PORTER will launch in 2019, followed by select Online Flagship Stores. "The Middle East is one of the fastest growing global centers for luxury retail. The region also has a significant population of over 200 million young people who are tech-savvy and influence luxury retail decisions."

With this joint venture to be based in Dubai, a global business & leisure hub, we are pioneering a never-before online luxury retail experience that integrates luxury with techno-logistics. It will redefine the retail sector, and create a brand-new way to access the world's high-end brands brought by YNAP. A ground-breaking initiative, the JV will serve as go-to online destination for luxury retail and set new industry benchmarks in customer service, speed of delivery and diversity of choice" said Mohamed Alabbar, Chairman of Symphony Investments.

### Unique experience

"We are thrilled by the potential of the Middle East market: combining YNAP and Mohamed Alabbar's strengths, we look forward

to giving shoppers in the region access to a fantastic luxury assortment with our unparalleled service and content. We were delighted to welcome Mohamed Alabbar as a strategic investor earlier this year and together we are now embarking on a major expansion in the region," said Federico Marchetti, Chief Executive Officer of YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP.

This partnership will combine the unique experience and expertise of both parties. YNAP will contribute its burgeoning business in the region, as well as its strong existing brand recognition and a high-value customer base. It will also provide long-standing expertise as the world's leading online luxury retailer, plus a world-class techno-logistics platform that is tailored to luxury fashion. Symphony Investments will bring its unique experience of luxury retail in the Middle East along with its unmatched knowledge of luxury consumer trends and its extensive network in the region.

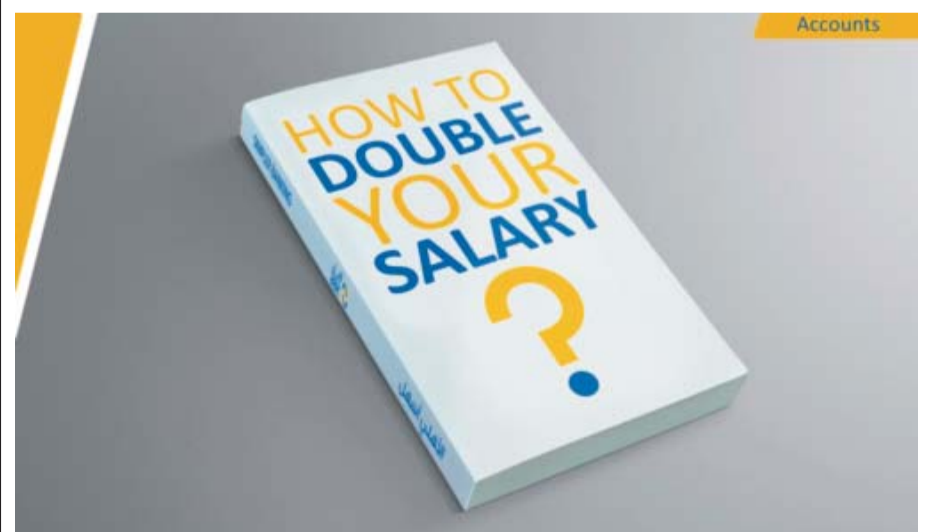
The founder of Symphony Investments, Mohamed Alabbar, is also the Chairman of Emaar Properties and Emaar Malls, and is world renowned for successfully developing and managing The Dubai Mall, the world's largest retail destination. Symphony Investments will make a significant cash contribution to the JV, to be phased over the first three years of the venture, which will support YNAP's expansion in the Middle East and the related investments.

### Digital transformation

The JV further strengthens an existing relationship that was forged when Alabbar invested in YNAP through subscription for a A100 million capital increase in April 2016. Symphony Investments, along with its affiliates, operates and invests in businesses in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Africa across a variety of sectors including luxury fashion, retail, e-commerce, mining, and real estate, among others. Mohamed Alabbar is now leading the digital transformation in the Middle East with the launch of Noon.com which aims to be a generalist e-commerce platform that will include payments and logistics enablers.

He also led two investor groups in buying a combined 16.45% stake in Dubai-based global logistics provider Aramex. The Middle East region accounted for 3% of global luxury consumption in 2015 and is expected to significantly outpace the growth of the global personal luxury goods market over the next five years. The region boasts one of the highest GDP per capita worldwide, a particularly high concentration of high-net-worth individuals ("HNWIs") and a promising e-commerce landscape, driven by a young and mobile-friendly population, growing internet penetration and public investments in IT, e-services and telecoms infrastructure.

The joint venture will have an indefinite duration; however, the agreement allows Symphony Investments to exit the JV after a few years of operations. In addition, the agreement envisages that YNAP will have the right to exercise a call option on Alabbar's stake during pre-defined time periods. YOOX NET-A-PORTER will appoint the majority of the JV's Board of Directors and will nominate the Chief Executive Officer and the Finance Manager. The Chairman of the board will be appointed by Symphony Investments.



## ABK ANNOUNCES 'DOUBLE YOUR SALARY' WEEKLY DRAW WINNERS

**KUWAIT:** Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its 31st 'Double Your Salary' weekly draw on 28th November, 2016 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, announcing the names of the winners for this week. The promotion includes weekly draws, with two winners per draw. The campaign will run until 27th June, 2017. The winners this week were: (1) Abdullah Hamad Abdullah Al Qahtani - Head Office Branch. (2) Amirah Sayed Ahmad Yousef - Al Ferdous Branch.

New customers who transfer their salary to ABK receive KD 100 and will auto-

matically be entered into the weekly draws to double their salaries. Existing customers who are already transferring their salary to ABK are entered into a separate draw. The next 'Double Your Salary' draw will be held on 5th December, 2016 where two new lucky winners will be announced. All winners will be contacted personally and a weekly announcement will be made through the media with the winners' names. For more information about Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait please visit eahli.com or contact a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.



## TEXAS REPORTS FIRST CASE OF ZIKA SPREAD BY LOCAL MOSQUITOES

**TEXAS:** Texas health officials have reported the state's first case of Zika likely spread by local mosquitoes, making Texas the second state within the continental United States to report local transmission of the virus that has been linked to birth defects. The case involved a woman living in Cameron County near the Mexico border who is not pregnant, the Texas Department of State Health Services said. Pregnancy is the biggest concern with Zika because the virus can cause severe, life-long birth defects, including microcephaly, in which a child is born with an abnormally small head, a sign its brain has stopped growing normally.

Texas said it currently has no other sus-

pected cases of local Zika transmission, but officials there plan to step up efforts to watch for the virus. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said it was coordinating with state and local officials to increase surveillance efforts and "vector control activities" such as spraying for adult mosquitoes and applying larvicide to kill emerging mosquitoes. Texas is one of several US states where *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, which carry Zika, are present.

Florida's Miami Dade County has been battling Zika within local mosquito populations since mid-summer. As of today, the state has had 238 cases of locally transmitted Zika. "We knew it was only a matter of time before we saw a Zika case

spread by a mosquito in Texas," Dr. John Hellerstedt, Texas Department of State Health Services commissioner, said in a statement. "We still don't believe the virus will become widespread in Texas, but there could be more cases, so people need to protect themselves from mosquito bites, especially in parts of the state that stay relatively warm in the fall and winter."

Dr. Amesh Adalja, an infectious diseases expert at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, said local transmission in Texas was "totally expected." Both dengue and chikungunya, two closely related viruses, have already spread locally in Texas, and the state "is a well-established home" of *Aedes* mosqui-

toes. "What this case underscores is the risk of local transmission in any area in which *Aedes* mosquitoes are present and the urgent need to continue aggressive vector control measures to minimize the impact of such local introductions," he said. Officials in Cameron County and the City of Brownsville have assessed the woman's home and have begun trapping and testing mosquitoes to understand how widespread the virus is in local mosquito populations.

The city recently sprayed for mosquitoes in the area, and will continue to take action to reduce the mosquito population, state and local officials said. "Even though it is late in the mosquito season, mosquitoes can spread Zika in some areas of the

country," CDC Director Tom Frieden said in a statement. "Texas is doing the right thing by increasing local surveillance and trapping and testing mosquitoes in the Brownsville area." There is no vaccine or treatment for Zika, which causes mild fever, rash and red eyes. An estimated 80 percent of people infected have no symptoms, making it difficult for individuals to know whether they have been infected.

The connection between Zika and microcephaly first came to light last year in Brazil, which has since confirmed more than 2,000 cases of the birth defect. In adults, Zika infections have also been linked to a rare neurological syndrome known as Guillain-Barre, as well as other neurological disorders. —Reuters



SEKIKAWA, Japan : Wearing anti-virus suits, soldiers of the Ground Self Defense Force head for chicken farm in Sekikawa, Niigata prefecture, yesterday.—AFP

## JAPAN ORDERS MAJOR POULTRY CULL AFTER BIRD FLU OUTBREAK

'SOUTH KOREA TO CULL 3 PERCENT OF POULTRY'

**TOKYO:** Japan has started culling more than 300,000 chickens and ducks after the discovery of a highly contagious form of bird flu on farms in the north of the country, local officials said. The bird flu outbreaks are the first in nearly two years in Japan and news of the cullings boosted shares in some infection-control product makers.

In Niigata prefecture north of Tokyo, authorities on Tuesday started culling about 310,000 chickens at a farm in the village of Sekikawa after 40 birds were found dead from H5 bird flu, a prefectural official told Reuters by telephone. The cull will continue until Dec 2, the official said. Further north in the prefecture of Aomori, about 16,500 ducks were being culled in the city of the same name after some tested positive for bird flu, according to a statement on the prefecture's website. This is the first time that highly pathogenic avian influenza has been confirmed in Aomori prefecture, it said. The agriculture ministry said the outbreaks are the first for nearly two years in poultry farms in Japan.

Taiko Pharmaceutical Co, which makes infection-control products, surged 3.2 percent, and

mask maker Daiwabo Holdings, jumped 5.1 percent. Protective clothing maker Azeath Corp, which is listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange's second section, soared 17 percent to its daily limit of 681 yen. Meanwhile, grilled-chicken restaurant operator Torikizoku Co dropped 2.8 percent. "The news about bird flu is affecting these shares, but these moves tend to be short-lived," said Mitsushige Akino, chief fund manager at Ichiyoshi Asset Management. South Korea last Friday announced a temporary nationwide standstill order for poultry farms and related transport over the weekend in a bid to contain a spread of H5N6 bird flu, a severe strain of the disease. Another severe strain of bird flu, H5N8, has hit several countries in Europe and led to the culling of thousands of poultry after being detected in wild ducks in Northern France. In recent weeks there have also been outbreaks in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Romania and Germany. Dutch authorities destroyed about 190,000 ducks on Saturday at six farms following an avian flu outbreak.

Farmers located in humid regions, where the risk of transmission is higher, are advised by

health authorities to keep poultry flocks indoors or apply safety nets preventing contact with wild birds. The H5N8 virus has never been detected in humans but it led to the culling of millions of farm birds in Asia, mainly South Korea, in 2014 before spreading to Europe. The World Organization for Animal Health had warned in an interview with Reuters mid-November that more outbreaks of H5N8 were likely in Europe as wild birds believed to transmit the virus migrate southward.

### In another development,

South Korea will cull 3 percent of its total poultry population to curb an outbreak of bird flu that has hit a number of farms across the nation, its agriculture ministry said yesterday. Since a severe strain of bird flu known as H5N6 cropped up on Nov 18, Asia's fourth-largest economy has stepped up its quarantine measures to contain the virus, including issuing a 48-hour nationwide standstill order for this last weekend. Despite the efforts, Korea's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs said in a statement yesterday that four new cases of H5N6 had been confirmed in central South Korea.

That brings the total number of infected birds to 13 since H5N6 appeared about two weeks ago, according to the statement. Nine other farm birds are also being tested for suspected infections, it said.

To contain the further spread of the virus, the ministry will slaughter at least 2.78 million birds, including 1.68 million that have already been culled, the ministry said. That would be nearly 3.3 percent of South Korea's total poultry population of 84.7 million. Sales of chicken, eggs and ducks at three major discount stores - E-Mart Inc, Lotte Mart and Homeplus Stores Co - have not dropped as consumers know that poultry products are safe to eat as long as they are cooked properly, company spokesmen at the three retailers said.

Supplies of chicken and duck meat and eggs have not tightened, an agriculture ministry official said, but it would have to implement measures such as importing more to meet demand if the bird flu outbreak was prolonged. South Korea's poultry supply is self-sufficient, but it still imports some chicken products, mainly from Brazil, Denmark and the United States. — Agencies



SEKIKAWA, Japan : Soldiers of the Ground Self-Defense Force prepare before heading chicken farm in Sekikawa.—AFP

## GREAT BARRIER REEF SEES RECORD CORAL DEATHS

**CANBERRA:** Warming oceans this year have caused the largest die-off of corals ever recorded on Australia's Great Barrier Reef, scientists said yesterday. The worst-affected area is a 700-kilometer swath in the north of the World Heritage listed 2,300-kilometer chain of reefs off Australia's northeast coast, said the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies.

The center, based at James Cook University in Queensland state, found during dive surveys in October and November that the swath north of Port Douglas had lost an average of 67 percent of its shallow-water corals in the past nine months. Farther south, over the vast central and southern regions that cover most of the reef, scientists found a much lower death toll. The central region lost 6 percent of bleached coral and the southern region only 1 percent. "The mortality we've measured along the length of the Great Barrier Reef is incredibly patchy," the center's director, Terry Hughes, told reporters. "There's very severe damage in the northern section of the reef."

"The good news is that south of Port Douglas, including the major tourist areas around Cairns and the Whitsundays (Whitsunday Islands), have had relatively low levels of mortality," he added. The governments of Australia and Queensland will update the UNESCO World Heritage Center this week on progress being made to protect and improve the reef, including their response to coral bleaching. Providing a status update to the World Heritage Committee was required as part of its decision in June last year not to list the reef as "in danger."

Federal Minister for the Environment and Energy Josh Frydenberg said Tuesday that the reef's coral cover had increased by 19 percent in recent years before it suffered a "significant bleaching event" this year, caused by the El Nino weather effect and climate change. "What that shows is that the Great Barrier Reef is very resilient and quite strong," Frydenberg's office said in a statement. The governments plan to spend

2 billion Australian dollars (\$1.5 billion) over the next decade on improving the reef's health. Hughes said the coral death rates in the north would likely make the task of keeping the reef off the "in danger" list much harder.

"In its ongoing dialogue with UNESCO, Australia has said the outstanding universal values of reef are in tact because of the pristine condition of the northern reef. That's simply no longer the case," Hughes said. Researcher Andrew Baird said the 2016 coral die-off was "substantially worse" than the previous worst-ever event in 1998. "The proportion of reefs that were severely affected was much, much higher," Baird said, adding that he did not have precise figures immediately available. The 1998 event was restricted to in-shore reefs around the Queensland coastal city of Townsville, while the 2016 destruction affected a much larger area, he said.

Scientists expect that the northern region will take at least 10 to 15 years to regain the lost corals. They are concerned that another bleaching event could interrupt that recovery. There have been three extreme mass bleaching events in 18 years on the reef. In each case, the areas that suffered the worst bleaching were where the water was hottest for the longest period of time. Reef tourism operator Craig Stephen did not expect the dead coral would diminish visitors' experience of one of Australia's biggest tourist drawcards.

"The patchiness of the bleaching means that we can still provide our customers with a world class coral reef experience by taking them to reefs that are still in top condition," Stephen said in a statement. Graeme Kelleher, who headed the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for 16 years, said last week that Australians must not buy the "political lie" that they can have the reef as well as major coal mines nearby. "We've lost 50 percent of the coral cover on the Great Barrier Reef in the last 30 years and the main cause of that is the burning of fossil fuel. I sincerely hope UNESCO rejects the claim that the government is doing enough," Kelleher said.—AP



GREAT BARRIER REEF, QUEENSLAND, Australia : A undated handout photo received from the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, shows researcher Graeme Frank completing bleaching surveys along a transect line at One Tree Reef, Capricorn Group of Islands on the Great Barrier Reef off Northern Queensland following the bleaching event.—AFP photos



GREAT BARRIER REEF, QUEENSLAND, Australia : A undated handout photo received from the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, shows staghorn corals killed by coral bleaching at Bourke Reef on the Great Barrier Reef off Northern Queensland following the bleaching event.

## 1 IN 7 WITH HIV IN EUROPE UNAWARE OF THE INFECTION

**STOCKHOLM:** One in seven people with HIV in Europe is unaware of their infection, the EU and World Health Organization reported yesterday as 2015 marked another record year for new HIV cases in the region. "HIV/AIDS continues to be a serious problem in Europe... The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control's (ECDC) estimate that one in seven people living with HIV are unaware of their status is particularly worrying," EU Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis said in the report released ahead of World AIDS Day on Thursday.

"People who do not know they are infected cannot benefit from life-saving treatment, and can continue to transmit the virus to others," he noted. The ECDC figure is based on data from the 28 EU nations plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Almost half of cases in those countries - 47 percent—are diagnosed at a late stage of infection, the ECDC said, estimating that on average it takes almost four years before an HIV infection is diagnosed and reported. Sex between men remains the main reported HIV transmission mode in those 31 countries, accounting for 42

percent of diagnoses. Men who have sex with men is the only group that has seen a steady increase in infections over the years, the report said. Heterosexual sex accounts for 32 percent of diagnoses, followed by drug use at four percent.

### High rates of infection

Meanwhile, Europe registered its highest number of new HIV cases in a single year in 2015, at 153,407 cases, up from 142,000 in 2014, the WHO said. The 2014 figures were also a record number, driven by cases in Russia

and immigrants who acquired the virus after arrival. The WHO regional office for Europe has a different definition of Europe and compiles data from 53 countries. Almost 80 percent of the 2015 cases it tallied were reported in eastern Europe, 18 percent in western Europe and three percent in central Europe. Russia, where HIV remains a largely taboo subject, accounted for 64 percent of all newly diagnosed infections in the WHO's European region, and 81 percent of cases in eastern Europe.

There, heterosexual sex is the main route of transmission of the virus which is spread

through contact with contaminated body fluids. Other countries with high rates of new infections last year were Ukraine, Belarus, Estonia, Moldova, Latvia and Georgia. "Despite significant efforts, HIV remains among the main public health concerns in the WHO European region, in particular in its eastern part," the WHO regional director for Europe, Zsuzsanna Jakab, said. She urged member countries to implement a new action plan they endorsed in September, including improving access to HIV testing and prevention methods, to reverse the HIV epidemic. —AFP



DIKANAS, Sweden: Reindeer belonging to Vilhelmina Norra Sameby run during a reindeer herding near the village of Dikanaess, about 800 kilometers north-west of the capital Sweden. —AFP photos

## A REINDEER'S PERILOUS JOURNEY IN SWEDISH LAPLAND

DIKANAS: A herd of reindeer moves silently down the mountain, their silver coats and majestic antlers blending into the Swedish tundra as their herder leads them to their winter grazing grounds in the plains below. The annual pilgrimage, called transhumance, takes on almost sacred meaning for Sweden's indigenous Sami reindeer herders nowadays, as they face modern-day threats to their livelihood from wind turbines, global warming, logging, and mining. "It's a painful life, but the most beautiful there is," says Margret Fjellstrom, who owns several hundred reindeer in Dikanas, a village in Sweden's mountains 800 kilometers north of the capital Stockholm. "My identity depends on this life. When a fawn is born, we forget all of our troubles," the 30-year-old Sami said.

Every autumn, the reindeer are taken to their winter pasture in the plains by their owners, the Sami-formerly called Lapps—the only people authorized to herd reindeer in Sweden. In Dikanas, helpers on snowmobiles and quad bikes prepare for the move by leading thousands of the animals into an enclosure. There the fawns are marked, and the adults are separated. The fattest are sent to the slaughterhouse—their meat is considered a delicacy in the Nordic countries—while the others are sent to the forests in the plains teeming with lichen, a type of moss that makes up the reindeer's main diet.

Margret Fjellstrom's lasso whirrs above her furled hat as she shouts out orders to her helpers. Around her waist in a sheath rests the indispensable knife used to carve

the mark in the animals' ears. They need to move quickly. Night falls before 3:00 pm this far north, the semi-domesticated reindeer are getting stressed and the herders are exhausted from a hard day's work. Under the watchful gaze of a group of fascinated children, the herders lay the reindeer down and hold them still as they mark and vaccinate them. The herders then load them onto the trucks that will take them to their winter pasture, 200 kilometers east.

### Deadly dangers

In Dikanas, reindeer herding is no longer done the traditional way, on foot: the animals' journey through the wilderness full of peat bogs, dense forests and lakes has become too perilous. With global warming, the crossing has become more treacherous as the ice on the lakes is not thick enough to walk on yet. "The water (current) is strong and therefore impassable, or the ice is too fragile. A farmer from a Sami village a little further north drowned in early November," Fjellstrom recalls. This leaves the herders no other choice than to take to the road, even though it costs more. Other dangers lie in wait. Forty percent of fawns die from the cold, while wolverines, bears, wolves, lynx and eagles all prey on the reindeer. Fjellstrom estimates her losses in 2015 at 250,000 kronor (23,400 euros), despite the damages paid by local authorities to compensate for her reindeer lost to predators. "Sweden has decided to protect its species to diversify its wildlife. That's good, but is it fair that I have to pay for it?" she asks. —AFP



DIKANAS, Sweden: A Sami man from the Vilhelmina Norra Sameby, catches a reindeer during a gathering of his reindeers herd for selection and calf labeling.

# DOES MY HAIR LOOK OK? WORLD'S OLDEST PERSON TURNS 117 IN STYLE

'I THINK HER SECRET IS GENETIC'

ROME: Emma Morano, humanity's last known survivor of the 19th century, turned 117 in style yesterday, dressing up for the occasion and demanding to know "does my hair look all right?" before having her photograph taken. The oldest known person alive can hardly see, is very hard of hearing, has been largely bed-bound for the last year and has not left her small second-storey flat in Verbania on the shores of Lake Maggiore in northern Italy for over two decades. But her doctor, Carlo Bava, said his patient remained alert and continued to have a reasonable quality of life.

Bava told AFP she was very aware of all the fuss being made about her reaching the latest milestone in a remarkable life that began on November 29, 1899. "She is very lucid, very present," Bava said. "She was very happy and honored to get a telegram of congratulations this morning from President (Sergio) Mattarella. "There was a television crew there and she got flowers. She had dressed up and she was very proud. She posed for a photographer and even asked if her hair looked good. "So I think you can say she is on good form."

### No veggies, thanks

Morano has reached a ripe old age despite an extraordinarily tough life, even by the standards of many of her contemporaries, and following a diet that flouts almost every piece of established medical wisdom. "I eat two eggs a day, and that's it. And cookies. But I do not eat much because I have no teeth," she told AFP in an interview last month. She has long eschewed vegetables and her consumption of fruit is limited to the occasional handful of grapes or snacks of apple puree. Her prodigious egg habit started when she was diagnosed with anaemia at 20 and a doctor told her to start eating two raw and one cooked every day: a habit she maintained until her appetite began to ebb slightly around the age of 110.

When she still had teeth, she was also fond of chomping chicken and lean raw steak. Along with her fondness for pure protein, she has always had a sweet tooth meaning visitors were usually advised to come bearing gifts of Colomba, a cake rich in egg and butter that Italians associate with Easter, or Pannetone and Pandoro, traditional Christmas treats of a similar ilk.



VERBANIA, PIEMONTE, Italy: (FILES) This file photo shows Emma Morano, 116, posing for AFP photographer in Verbania, North Italy. —AFP

### Very strong character

But it wasn't clear if she would be enjoying any of the birthday cake she received on yesterday. "The last time I ate a little, but then I did not feel good," she confided to AFP last month. Bava suspects that Morano has thrived despite her unusual diet, not because of it. "I think her secret is genetic. All of her family lived very a very long time," the doctor said. "The diet she has had would have destroyed the liver of most people. But with Emma, I think she could even eat pebbles and she would still have lived a very long time. "What might be more important is that she has always had a very strong strong character. It has always been her who decides

what she does or doesn't do." Morano herself has attributed her longevity to having the courage to take the life-changing decision of leaving a violent husband in 1938, shortly after the death in infancy of their son, her only child. It was always an unhappy marriage. Years before, her true love had gone off to fight in World War I and not come back.

Leaving a husband was no easy thing to do in the Church-dominated Italy of the 1930s and Morano worked in a factory producing jute sacks to support herself. "Back then, the workers in those factories were constantly breathing in dust and yet her lungs are fine—that's genetics," said Bava. —AFP

# SOUTHERN STORMS SHOULD EASE DROUGHT; FIRE THREAT REMAINS

ATLANTA: Storms roaring across the South appeared to be taking aim at some of the largest wildfires burning across the region, which could finally help firefighters in their efforts to subdue the blazes, authorities said Monday. As the storm system passed over Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee late Monday, it was heading toward some of the largest wildfires in Georgia, Tennessee and North Carolina. In Gatlinburg, Tennessee, smoke and fire caused the mandatory evacuation of downtown and surrounding areas, according to the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency.

The wildfire set 30 buildings ablaze and was at the edge of Dollywood, Dolly Parton's theme park, TEMA spokesman Dean Flener said in a news release. TV news broadcasts showed residents

streaming out of town just as rain started to wet roads. The rain forecast "puts the bull's-eye of the greatest amounts right at the bull's-eye of where we've been having our greatest activity," said Dave Martin, deputy director of operations for fire and aviation management with the southern region of the US Forest Service. The projected rainfall amounts "really lines up with where we need it," Martin said Monday.

"We're all knocking on wood." Yet after weeks of punishing drought, any rain that falls should be soaked up quickly, forecasters said. It will provide some relief but won't end the drought - or the fire threat, they say. Drought conditions will likely persist, authorities said. The problem is that rainfall amounts have been 10 to 15 inches below normal during the past three

months in many parts of the South, authorities said. "I think we racked up deficits that are going to be too much to overcome with just one storm system," said Mark Svoboda, director of the National Drought Mitigation Center in Lincoln, Nebraska. "I would say it's way too early to say 'Yes, this drought is over,'" Svoboda said. "Does it put a dent in it? Yes, but we have a long ways to go."

The rain also brings danger because strong winds at the leading edge of the storms can topple trees and limbs that can kill and injure firefighters, he said. In Mississippi, trees were reported down in nearly 20 counties across the state. Sustained winds of 30 to 40 mph with gusts of more than 50 mph were reported and more than 2 inches of rain fell in some areas. Power outages peaked

at more than 23,000 statewide in Mississippi. Powerlines downed by winds sparked grass fires in four counties, said Greg Flynn, a spokesman for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.

The storms were moving across Alabama on Monday night and were expected to slam into Georgia during the overnight hours. High wind warnings were issued for mountainous areas in northern parts of Georgia.

In South Carolina, the stormy forecast was giving hope to firefighters battling a blaze in the northwest corner of the state. The South Carolina Forestry Commission hopes to contain the Pinnacle Mountain fire by the middle of next week. More rain was expected today morning in parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. — AP

# CLINIC PAGE



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# ICSK TO HOST MEGA ARTS FEST FOR INDIAN SCHOOLS



The Indian Community School, Kuwait is organizing the first-ever mega arts fest for the students of all the Indian schools in Kuwait on 1st & 2nd December, 2016. Around 2,000 students will take part in this grand event titled 'Indian Schools' Mega Arts Fest' with 80 different items for competition which will be organized on 6 stages at three venues (ICSKS Senior, Amman and Junior) in the two days from 8 am to 8 pm.

The Inaugural ceremony will be held on Thursday, 1st December at 8 am at ICSK Senior. Along with this, teacher representatives (Principals) of all the Indian schools will be recognized. Ambassador of Britain to Kuwait Matthew James Lodge will attend the event as the chief guest. Sudha Chandran (film actress and dancer) will attend as guest of honor while Maryam Abdul Rahman Dashti, department of Middle and High School, Ministry of Private Education, will grace the occasion as special guest.

The valedictory ceremony and prize distribution will be held on Friday, 2nd December 2016 at 6 pm at ICSK Senior. Indian Ambassador Sunil Jain will be chief guest of the event Oscar Award winner Padma Shri Dr Resul Pookutty will be the guest of honor who will give away more than 600 prizes to all the winners. A musical concert by Stephen Devassy will also be presented. This spectacular cultural show, a historic event in the history of Indian schools in the country, is going to be organized for the first time in the Middle East Region and Kuwait with such a large number of items for competition. This spectacular event aims at finding the best talents in Kuwait.

Announcing the event at press conference, held at ICSK Senior branch on Sunday evening, Dr V Binumon, Principal and General Convenor of the Indian Schools' Mega Arts Fest 2016 said, "The aim of Indian Schools' Mega Arts Fest is to provide a platform to showcase the artistic flair of the budding talents belonging to the Indian diaspora. Students from KG to Class 12 will take part in this mega festival," he said.

Registration for this event is strictly restricted through school as only the best from each school is going to compete in this. Competitions will be held in five categories-Cat I (Classes LKG, UKG & 1), Cat II (Classes 2, 3 & 4), Cat III- (Classes 5, 6 & 7, Cat IV (Classes 8, 9 & 10) & Cat V (Classes 11 & 12). The result of each competition will be declared within 15 minutes of the completion of the event, he added. In each category the best performers will be conferred the title of 'Kalaprabh' (male) and 'Kalathilak' (female), awarded 1/2 sovereign gold. The event will be telecast live (icsk-kw.com/ISMAF2016/Live.php). Others who attended the press conference included Secretary, Board of Trustees A. Amer Mohammed, Principal, ICSK Amman Rajesh Nair Principal, Joint Convenor Sunish Mathew and Program Committee Convenor Jacob George.



## 35 STUDENTS FROM UCMAS-KUWAIT PARTICIPATE IN DUBAI COMPETITION

35 students from UCMAS - Kuwait (Abacus Mental Arithmetic) participated in the 21st UCMAS International Competition 2016 hosted by UCMAS - UAE in Dubai on Friday 11th November 2016. The international competition is an annual event organized by UCMAS Education Group, Malaysia with thousands of learners from over 50 countries competing every year.

In Visual competition 11-year-old Omar Mansour won 2nd place in higher C level and 6 years old Anusha Pereira won 2nd place in elementary B category. Omar Mansour who also participated in listening calculation competition reached to the final level till 3 digits 40 rows and to the 14th position in a tough competition amongst 180 students from all over the

world. Each students participated in the competition received a paper ranging between 100-200 arithmetic math problems depending on their level and age. They get time of 8 minutes to finish as many problems as they can.

Universal Concept Mental Arithmetic System is an international education organization globally recognized as a leader in

whole brain development and mental arithmetic training. This gives the children considerable improvement in academic performance as well as level of concentration. Moreover it is complementary to the School Curriculum and well accepted by education experts worldwide. Congratulations to all UCMAS students who participated and the winners.



The Public Relations Department at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training's Secretariat and Office Management College organized a meeting recently to welcome its administrative employees.



The 5th Anniversary of (KTAO) Kuwait Triskelion Alumni Organization was held at Rezayat Villa recently and was sponsored by SebaMed.

## CHARITY BAZAAR

TES has joined Second Chance - a local grassroots environmental group, and several local vendors to raise money for the beleaguered Yemeni people with a charity bazaar that features recycled and up-cycled arts and crafts, valuable handmade goods, new and slightly used apparel, and must-have household goods. Don't miss this indoor-outdoor bargain extravaganza! Kids and adults can participate in recycling arts and crafts while enjoying a selection of snacks, including vegetarian and vegan choices. All proceeds will be donated to needy Yemeni families; cash donations are also accepted. Saturday, December 10 @ 10am - 5pm Address: Villa No 67, Street 413, Block 4, Shuhada Area, Kuwait



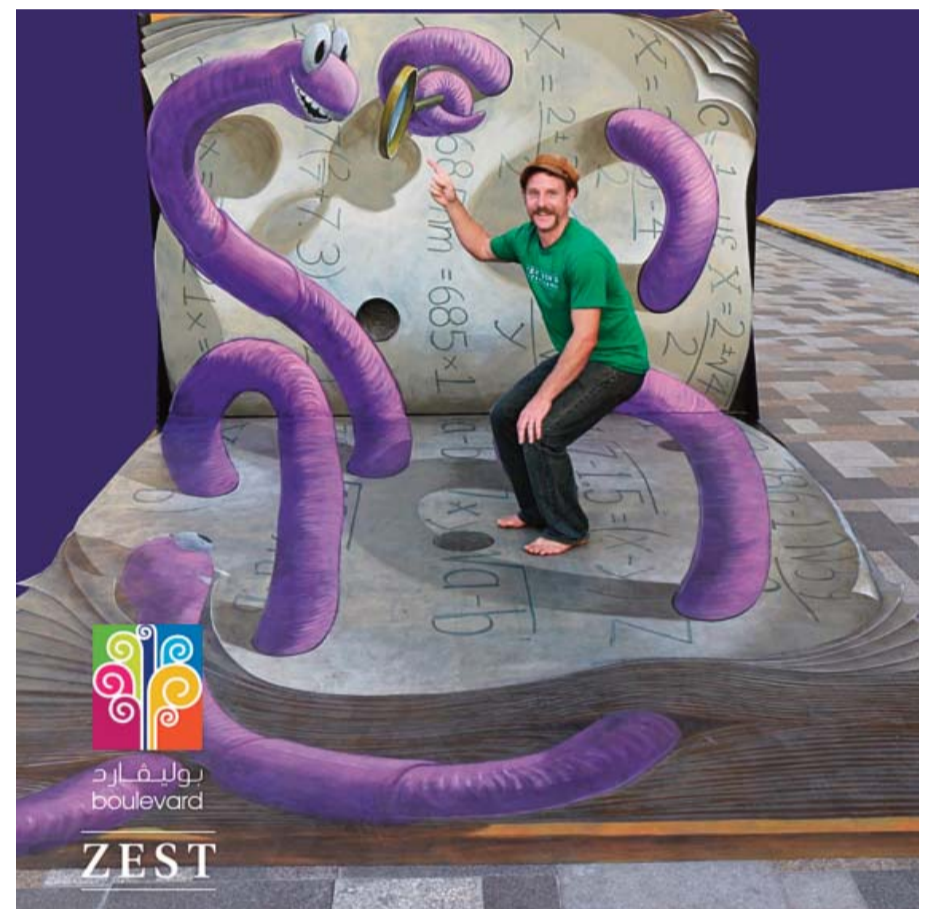
Dr Rawda Awwad, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

### AALE RENEWS ACCREDITATION FOR AUK COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

The Board of Trustees of the American Academy for Liberal Education (AALE) has renewed AUK's International Program accreditation for AUK's College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) for its second consecutive five-year term; the first was in 2011. Over the past academic year, CAS had conducted a comprehensive self-study to ensure best practices are maintained to achieve the liberal arts learning objectives. The AALE accreditation indicates that AUK is dedicated to sharing best practices for high student achievement of liberal arts learning objectives; promoting the importance of teaching and instructional practices suitable for liberal education; and developing innovative ways to foster life-long learning that prepares students for productive engagement with the world.

The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr Rawda Awwad, thanked all those who have contributed to the AALE Self-Study, and in particular members of the AALE Steering Committee, chaired by Dr Nicholas Scull, Assistant Dean for General Education and Student Academic Support. Dean Awwad also thanked the student council of AY 2015-2016 and the student body "whose perspective was invaluable."

She added, "The critical involvement and support of the university community in these processes, underscore all of our program accreditation initiatives-collaboration strengthens the college and institution, and places the "student" at the center of any conversation." "The accreditation and re-accreditation processes highlight the importance of student learning and program development, which is, and will continue to be a priority for the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.



#### WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All photos submitted for What's On should be minimum 200dpi. Articles must be in plain text and should include name and phone numbers. Articles and photos that fail to meet these requirements will not be published.

Please send them to [news@kuwaittimes.net](mailto:news@kuwaittimes.net)

## BOULEVARD ORGANIZES A 3D ART PAINTING FESTIVAL

For the first time in Kuwait, Boulevard is proud to organize a 3D art painting festival from 29th of November till 3rd of December - performed by award winning 3D artists from Australia, Jenny McCracken and Rudy Kistler. The artists will create incredible 3D illusions inside Boulevard mall and park on the lake area. Visitors can enjoy live paintings and get free KD 5 gift vouchers from the event sponsors Sears and Peak shops located at Boulevard. University students will also have the opportunity to learn new skills and gain invaluable experience while having fun with the international artists. Moreover, the participants will be given a written

reference after the event. Rawan Adnan - Marketing & Leasing Manager stated that this event is part of the unique entertainment activities that Al Salmiya Group for Enterprise Development Company is organizing at its huge project "Boulevard". Such Activities are set to redefine "Boulevard" as the must-go touristic place in the State of Kuwait and to support the talents and skills of youth. This is the first visit for the artists to the State of Kuwait. They have previously done many such festivals in UAE, Australia, USA and worldwide. In this special festival that will be held at Boulevard, the artists have prepared Arabic themed artwork in 3D to amaze the

visitors and audience of Boulevard. Rawan Adnan also added that "Boulevard" project provides commercial, entertainment and sports services to represent the perfect place for family and youth to spend their time and enjoy this unique festival. The project facilitates a huge commercial mall that consist of 2 floors with famous international and local brands, coffee shops and restaurants in addition to a huge green area that occupies 90% of the project area. It provides a perfect environment for joggers to enjoy beautiful views of trees. In addition to the above, the project also contains 2 lakes, a river and sports fields for football, tennis, basketball and cricket.



## MARINA HOTEL KUWAIT ORGANIZES BEACH CLEANUP DRIVE

Marina Hotel Kuwait recently organized a beach cleanup drive at the Marina Public Beach to create awareness and emphasis on the importance of protecting the environment. Nabil Hammoud, General Manager, Marina Hotel Kuwait thanked each and every employee who took part in the drive. He said "We are very happy with the active participation of our staff towards this worthy activity. This is a clear demonstration of their personal commitment to environmental protection." "Our aim is to encourage everyone to take responsibility for their environment through

a range of affordable actions. We are very keen to support and participate in activities that foster a greener, cleaner and healthier environment. Through the cleanup we intended to not only pick up every piece of trash that we could reach, but also take part in educating the public on the responsibility of keeping the surroundings clean." The cleaning campaign began at 02:00 pm with the hotel team distributing gloves, t-shirts, caps and trash bags and concluded around 05:00 pm with a Barbecue dinner for all the participants.

The stretch of the Marina public beach

was cleaned as part of the event. This involved the collection and removal of a full container of rubbish and debris including plastic bottles and plates, cans and several other items, leaving the beach cleaner and more beautiful. Marina Hotel Kuwait believes strongly in the importance of environmental initiatives that have a direct impact on the community. The hotel encourages organizations and individuals to take part in these eco-friendly causes, helping to increase the level of awareness amongst the community. For more information, please visit our website: [www.marinahotel.com](http://www.marinahotel.com)



## AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE AT SHERATON KUWAIT RESTAURANTS AT THE AVENUES

Exquisite dining experiences from Sheraton Kuwait Hotel to the Avenues Mall, one of the largest shopping mall in the region, where the visitors can enjoy our best dishes from different cuisines in the world according to the high quality of services which have been preserved by Sheraton Kuwait through a journey of fifty years of outstanding culinary excellence. While enjoying a unique shopping experience, indulge yourselves in an absolutely brilliant experience at any of our restaurants; where you can taste the delicious breakfast and the delectable

lunch and dinner International buffets from all over the world at Al Hamba restaurant at the Grand Avenue. Le Tarbouche Restaurant, where originality and traditional title, provides the spirit of Lebanese cuisine through the tastiest Cold Mezza, Hot Mezza and set menus like Jeita, Beit Eddine and Baalbek that are served in a traditional Lebanese atmosphere. For the Indian food fans, enjoy Bukhara Restaurant, with its wonderful spirit and distinctive condiments reflecting the authenticity of the Indian taste with the finest types of Indian spices.

Enjoy famous Iranian mix grills at the Shahrayar Restaurant providing you the utmost experience of traditional Iranian cuisine. For those seeking tranquility after a hectic shopping, The English Tea Lounge provides finest quality of tea, coffee and authentic British scones in a luxurious quiet family atmosphere. The Sheraton Kuwait and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait Hotels are introducing an extended hospitality by offering all in-house guests a discount voucher through an exclusive partnership with MH Alshaya retail outlets that are valid and redeemable at the Avenues Mall.













A visitor walks past a wax statue of Persian poet Mevlana Jaladdin Rumi at the world's 21st Madame Tussauds wax museum in Istanbul. — AFP photos



A visitor stands next to wax statues of Ottoman ruler Suleiman the Magnificent (left) and of Persian poet Mevlana Jaladdin Rumi (right) at the world's 21st Madame Tussauds wax museum in Istanbul.



People looking at a wax statue of Classical composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart at the world's 21st Madame Tussauds wax museum in Istanbul.



People posing next to a wax statue of US singer Beyonce.



Madame Tussauds Istanbul's Group general manager Sarper Hilmi Suner posing next to a wax statue of Turkish novelist Yasar Kemal.



A wax statue of Turkish international football player Arda Turan at the world's 21st Madame Tussauds wax museum in Istanbul.

## TURKISH HEROES MEET GLOBAL CELEBS AT ISTANBUL MADAME TUSSAUDS

It's the place in Istanbul where you can meet modern Turkey's secular founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and Ottoman ruler Suleiman the Magnificent, then pose next to Julia Roberts, or maybe, Turkish superstar actress Beren Saat. At the new branch of the iconic waxworks franchise Madame Tussauds, the brand's famous mix of global celebrities has a special Turkish flavor. The attraction, which opened on Monday, is situated in the heart of the European side of the city and hopes to help reverse a trend of declining tourism after a spate of terror attacks this year.

The very street where it is located, Istiklal Avenue, was early in the year hit by a suicide bombing blamed on jihadists and has seen numerous businesses close as visitors stayed away. On entering the museum the model of Ataturk, Turkey's national hero who founded the modern secular state out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, is the first figure the visitor meets. Getting Ataturk right was the number one priority, after a previous model on display at Madame Tussauds in London was accused of bearing little resemblance to Turkey's revered leader and called a "disgrace to the nation". "We think it is the best replica ever made so far," said Sarper Hilmi Suner, a general manager at Merlin Entertainments, the Britain-based company which runs the attraction. But there is no model of current Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan-at least for the moment.

### Turkish culture to Hollywood

One of Turkey's most celebrated novelists, Yasar Kemal, who died last year after battling heart problems, is also enshrined in wax. Wearing his trademark glasses, the white-haired Kemal is seen in his well-known shirt and jacket sitting in an armchair. "It has taken five months just to catch that pose," Suner told AFP. "We asked for help from his family, that grey jacket is the original one donated by his family," he added. Turkey's star midfielder Arda Turan of Barcelona is featured with the

Turkish national team's jersey and running in triumph after scoring. The waxwork of former basketball star Hidayet Turkoglu, the first player born in Turkey to play in the NBA, is exhibited slam-dunking in a red-and-white Turkish national team vest.

Iconic singer Zeki Muren who adored women's clothes, excessive makeup and is held up as a gay icon, stands in one corner of the museum in a shiny blouse. Those less knowledgeable of Turkish culture will also find familiar faces like Hollywood actors Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts or sports figures includ-

ing tennis champion Rafael Nadal and sprinter Usain Bolt. But some prominent Turkish soap opera actors and actresses on display like Kivanc Tatlitug and Beren Saat could attract foreign visitors, as Turkish soap operas take Arab and even Latin American countries by storm. "We created a mixture that could attract foreign and domestic tourists," said Aydan Alboga Uslu, marketing manager at Merlin Entertainments.

### Tourism boost for Istiklal

"Everything is really well done," said Michelle Petsch, a tourist from Canada who was one of the first visitors on Monday. "(Jamaican singer) Bob Marley was my favourite. Up close, it is like he is going to open his eyes and talk to you right there," she added. Istiklal Avenue's tourism is poised to get a boost from Madame Tussauds Istanbul following a spate of attacks as well as the July 15 failed coup. "Turkey is a country of tourism. There could be occasional ups and downs but we trust our Turkey's stability and that's why we keep on investing," said Merlin Entertainments' Suner.

As well as Madame Tussauds, Merlin runs a host of attractions around the world including Legoland, British theme park Alton Towers and the London Eye. Istanbul joins a network of two dozen Madame Tussauds museums in the world including London, Berlin, Amsterdam and New York. — AFP



A wax statue of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey.



A wax statue of Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt.



A wax statue of US actor Johnny Depp.



A man poses next to a wax statue of German-born physicist Albert Einstein.



A visitor stands near to a wax statue of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.



AWARDS



Filmmaker Oliver Stone accepts the IFP 'Tribute' Award at the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards at Cipriani Wall Street in New York. — AP/AFP photos



Actor Anya Taylor-Joy accepts the "Breakthrough Actor" Award for her performance in the film "The Witch".



Actor Aziz Ansari accepts the 'Made in New York' Award.



Actress Katie Holmes speaks at the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.

# 'Moonlight' shines brightest at Trump-focused Gotham Awards



Writer - director Barry Jenkins speaks after receiving the 'Best Screenplay' Award for the film 'Moonlight'.

**A**t a Gotham Independent Film Awards overshadowed by the election of Donald Trump, Barry Jenkins' coming-of-age drama "Moonlight" shined brightest. A celebrated film about a boy growing up gay, black and poor in Miami, "Moonlight," virtually swept the night, taking best feature, best screenplay, a special jury award for best ensemble and the audience award. The Gothams, which honor independent film, are essentially the kick-off to Hollywood's long awards season.

Monday night's ceremony, hosted in Manhattan by Keegan-Michael Key, also served as the first opportunity for the film industry - or at least a sizable chunk of its more East Coast, indie contingent - to formally gather since the election. It gave much of Hollywood (which overwhelmingly backed Hillary Clinton) a chance to commiserate over drinks, try out punchlines and make a rallying cry for art's political power. Key, half of the former Comedy Central duo "Key and Peele," opened, with deadpan sarcasm, with what he said was a 4-week-old monologue.

**Visibly shocked**

"Ladies and gentlemen, we are so grateful that we live in a country that celebrates diversity," said Key. Later, he gave up the guise and spoke earnestly. "Our voices need to be heard now," he said. It was fitting then that "Moonlight" dominated the evening. The string of awards had the cast - which features newcomers Trevante Rhodes, Ashton Sanders and Alex R. Hibbert playing the young protagonist in three chapters - frequently dancing arm-in-arm while

the Gotham crowd stood to applaud.

Though "Moonlight," based on Tarell Alvin McCraney's play, has some big-name backers (Brad Pitt's Plan B produced it), Jenkins played the role of the underdog. "When I made this film, I thought five people would watch it," Jenkins said. In limited release, the low-budget "Moonlight" has already made \$8.5 million, making it one of the year's biggest indie hits. Other top awards went to Casey Affleck, who won best actor for his performance in Kenneth Lonergan's "Manchester by the Sea," and Isabelle Huppert, whose turn in Paul Verhoeven's "Elle" took best actress over favorites such as Natalie Portman ("Jackie") and Annette Bening ("20th Century Women"). The French actress, visibly shocked, said she had been told the Gothams were very American in outlook, and so her chances were slim.

"I feel so American tonight," chuckled Huppert. "I feel good. I feel really good." Others sounded less enthused about their country and the president-elect who resides about 70 blocks to the north of Monday's awards. Oliver Stone, one of the night's four tribute honorees (the others were Amy Adams, Ethan Hawke and producer Arnon Milchan), gave a relatively muted speech, but told filmmakers in attendance: "You can be critical of your government. We've forgotten that." Damian Lewis, the British actor, presented the audience award with a tweak for the electoral college.

**Small panels**

"The film that receives the most votes ... is the winner," said Lewis with arch emphasis. "It's a brilliant idea." A number of expected Oscar contenders weren't nominated by the Gothams, which select their indie-centric nominees from small panels of industry figures and critics. Absent were late arriving studio releases like Denzel Washington's "Fences" and, most conspicuous of all, Damien Chazelle's Los Angeles musical "La La Land." That \$30 million production (perhaps a bit too pricey for indie qualification), is seen by many as the best picture front-runner.

But Oscar season is just getting started. A string of critics groups will announce their picks this week. And the biggest jolt to the race may have already come via the election. How Trump's victory will affect the mood of Hollywood - will academy members lean toward sunny escapism or more timely social dramas? - has already been one of the season's biggest questions. The Gothams, presented by the Independent Filmmaker Project, aren't historically a good Oscar predictor. But their last two top film picks, "Spotlight" and "Birdman," did go on to triumph at the Academy Awards. — AP



Actress Margot Robbie presents at the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.



Writer - director Barry Jenkins, center, accepts the Best Feature Film Award with the rest of the "Moonlight".



Director Roxy Toporowich speaks after receiving the deep euphoria Calvin Klein Spotlight on Women Filmmakers 'Live the Dream' grant at the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.



Actress Cate Blanchett presents The Film Tribute Award.



Actress Winona Ryder presents at the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.



Actor Ethan Hawke speaks after receiving The Film Tribute Award.

AWARDS



Actor Damian Lewis presents at the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.



Actor Danny DeVito presents a Film Tribute Award.



Actress Amy Adams speaks after receiving The Film Tribute Award.



Actress Natalie Portman presents at the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards.



Actor Casey Affleck accepts the Best Actor Award.



Producer Arnon Milchan accepts the Film Tribute Award.



Director Ezra Edelman accepts the 'Best Documentary' Award for 'O.J.: Made in America'.



Actress Cate Blanchett presents The Film Tribute Award to Amy Adams.



Mahershala Ali attends the 26th Annual Gotham Independent Film Awards at Cipriani Wall Street.



Ben McKenzie and Morena Baccarin



Zoe Deutch



Lela Loren



Kate Beckinsale



Krysten Ritter



Neve Campbell



Leslie Mann



Ethan Hawke



Natalie Portman, left, and Greta Gerwig



Janelle Monae, left, and Naomi Harris



Oge Egbuonu, left, and Ruth Negga



Malin Akerman



Amy Adams



Morena Baccarin

# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2016

'Moonlight' shines brightest at Trump-focused Gotham Awards

# 38



Models of the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show pose for a group photo before the celebrity-filled catwalk event of the year inside the Grand Palais, in Paris. — AP/AFP photos

## SEVEN THINGS ABOUT VICTORIA'S SECRET YOU WERE TOO AFRAID TO ASK

The US lingerie giant Victoria's Secret is holding its hugely hyped annual fashion show in Paris for the first time today. The brand has already flown in its "angels"—including supermodels Bella and Gigi Hadid and Kendall Jenner—in what it called the "world's most glamorous airplane" for the star-studded event at which Lady Gaga will perform. Here is everything you need to know about the blingiest event on the underwear calendar:

### Victoria who?

Victoria's Secret may be a household name in the US, but it is almost totally unknown in France, the country that invented lingerie. It has only one small shop at Paris Orly airport. Having a long tradition of high-quality sexy underwear, French women have so far been sceptical of its claims to make "the world's best bras and sexiest lingerie".

### Who are the angels?

Each year the brand assembles some of the most glamorous lingerie models for its show, with Lily Aldridge, Alessandra Ambrosio and Martha Hunt often featuring in its cast of "angels". This year supermodels the Hadid sisters and Jenner-Kim Kardashian's half-sister will join "veterans" on the catwalk, Adriana Lima, Josephine Skriver, Lily Donaldson and the aptly-named Joan Smalls.

### What's the secret?

Victoria's Secret has nothing to do with Queen Victoria's famously voluminous silk knickers. No "Victoria" ever existed, although the brand's name is a play on Victorian prudishness. It was the brainchild of Californian Roy Raymond who was so embarrassed about trying to buy lingerie for his wife that he set up a mail order company to save his blushes. He sold it in 1982 to its present owner Les Wexner for \$1 million, who sprinkled his stardust and upped prices. The rest is history, with sales hitting \$7.6 billion last year. While his old business boomed, Raymond had less luck and killed himself in 1993.

### Making a show

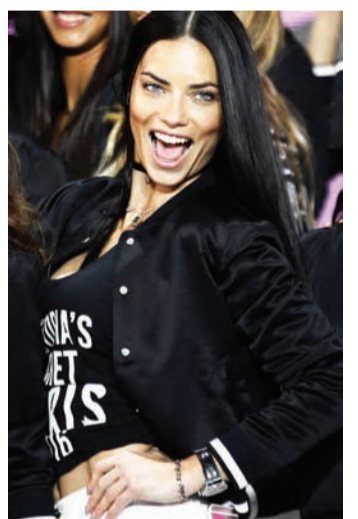
Victoria's Secret marketing centres on an annual star-studded fashion show and musical extravaganza. Now in



Models of the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, from left front row, US model Lily Aldridge, US model Martha Hunt, US model Gigi Hadid, US model Rachel Hilbert and US model Zuri Tibby, and US model Kendall Jenner, center back, pose for a group photo.



Models of the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, US model Jasmine Tookes, left and Swedish model Elsa Hosk pose for a group photo.



Model of the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, Brazilian model Adriana Lima poses for a group photo.

its 21st year, it will be shown in 190 countries from December 5. Alongside its winged "angels" modelling its colourful lingerie, the centrepiece of the show—which cost \$20 million in 2014 — is a concert featuring major music stars. This year's headliners are Lady Gaga, Bruno Mars and the Canadian electro star The Weeknd.

But the highlight of the night remains the unveiling of the year's jewel-encrusted "fantasy bra". This year is set with emeralds and diamonds and costs \$3 million.

### The perfect body

The brand has regularly faced criticism for presenting women with an unrealistic body image. In 2014 it caused a social media storm with its slogan "The perfect Body" for its new line of Body bras. Faced with the anger, it changed the slogan to "The Body for every body". This year former "angel" Erin Heatherton denounced the pressure to stay

ultra-slim and said she would no longer model for the brand.

Sports trainer to the stars Valerie Orsoni told AFP that some of Victoria's Secret models "have fantastic genes but few are what you would call healthily toned". The San Francisco-based coach said she suspected that to stay thin before shows many models use juice-based diets.

### Military preparation

To win their wings, Victoria's Secret models have to suffer. Casting starts months before the show, and this year the brand has hyped up the build-up on social media with the hashtag #trainlikeanangel, showing models working out to get in shape for the catwalk. Orsoni said it was a very clever piece of "marketing to make us believe they are just like us". The campaign is also about promoting the brand's new sportswear line, which has replaced its swimsuit range.

### Why Paris

Market leader in the US with nearly 1,000 shops, the brand is still a minnow in the lucrative European market. Industry analyst Yves Marin of consultants Wavestone said choosing Paris as its venue shows "they want to invest in the continent because apart from Britain, they are not really present in Europe."

And their timing could not be better. "It's a great brand and commercial leaders are looking for new brands," he said. — AFP

## 'Imagine' a picture book inspired by a John Lennon song

Imagine a new picture book based on a famous song. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt told The Associated Press on Monday that it was publishing "Imagine," inspired by the John Lennon classic of the same name and authorized by his widow, Yoko Ono. With illustrations by Jean Jullien, the book will feature Lennon's lyrics as it tells of a young pigeon's mission to advocate for peace.

"Imagine" comes out Sept 21, the United Nations' International Day of Peace. It will be released in partnership with Amnesty International, which will receive some of the proceeds. In recent years, Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" and Bruce Springsteen's "Outlaw Pete" have also inspired picture books. — AP



In this 1971 file photo, singer John Lennon appears during a press conference. Publisher Houghton Mifflin Harcourt said Monday that it was publishing 'Imagine,' inspired by the John Lennon classic of the same name. — AP