

When volunteering becomes a way of life



Britain's May to trigger EU divorce by end of March



US TV comedy skewers Clinton-Trump debate



Razor-sharp Spurs deal Guardiola first Man City loss



ZAIN SAUDI ARABIA OPERATING LICENSE EXTENDED FOR 15 YRS

LICENSE GRANTED BY CITC WILL NOW EXPIRE IN 2047



Min 19°
Max 36°
High Tide 00:59 & 13:27
Low Tide 07:27 & 19:38

SAUDI CONSUMER LOANS ORDERED TO BE RESCHEDULED

RIYADH/DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's central bank said yesterday it had given commercial banks instructions to reschedule consumer loans of customers hit by recent cuts in government spending due to low oil prices. The announcement underlined growing pressure on the Saudi economy and banking system as the government, its oil export revenues down sharply, struggles to curb a budget deficit which totalled a record 367 billion riyals (\$98 billion) last year.

Last week the cabinet said it would cut ministers' salaries by 20 percent and reduce financial allowances for public sector workers. About two thirds of working Saudis are in the public sector and many obtain as much as 30 percent of their income from such allowances. In addition to dampening consumer spending, the cuts look likely to make it harder for some consumers to service their loans, which totalled some 343 billion riyals at the end of June.

The central bank said it wanted to alleviate the difficulties of borrowers whose incomes had been reduced, and its instructions suggested commercial

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KUWAIT: Zain Group, the leading mobile telecom innovator across the Middle East and Africa announced that its mobile operation Zain Saudi Arabia has received a 15 Hijri year extension on its operating license that was originally granted in March 2008 for 25 Hijri years and, following the extension, will now expire in January 2047. This follows a notification from the Kingdom's Communications and Information Technology Commission, (CITC).

CITC will also migrate Zain Saudi Arabia to a unified telecommunication license that supports both service-neutrality and technology neutrality, allowing the company to provide all telecommunication services using appropriate technologies within Zain KSA's approved frequency bands. In addition, the CITC has allowed other Saudi-licensed telecom companies to obtain the same unified license.

A condition of the 15 Hijri year license extension will result in the KSA government's additional entitlement of 5 percent of Zain Saudi Arabia's annual net income throughout the extension period. The overall financial impact of the extension is expected to benefit Zain KSA's annual amortization by approximately SAR 433 million (\$115 million) per annum.

Commenting on this milestone, Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Group Vice-Chairman and Zain Saudi Arabia Vice-Chairman said: "We are sincerely appreciative to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's telecommunications regulator, CITC, and other authorities in the Kingdom for their professionalism and diligence in the process of this license extension. The positive impact of this 15-year

extension on the future sustainability and growth of Zain Saudi Arabia is enormous on multiple levels as it will allow us to invest more in network upgrades and expansion as we roll out to meet the ever increasing demand for vital telecommunications across the Kingdom."

The Vice-Chairman added: "I would like to acknowledge both the Zain Group and Zain Saudi Board Members and executive teams who have been very active in seeking this license extension, and we are all very confident of the future prosperity of the operation in the Kingdom, for the benefit of all our stakeholders."

Kharafi concluded: "The unified license will now enable fair competition in the mobile and fixed telecommunications services as it will allow operators to deploy fit-for-purpose and efficient technologies to meet market demand. The wisdom of the CITC's decision in unifying this license is strong indication that it wishes to further develop the telecommunications sector, particularly in the fixed space for the benefit of the Kingdom."

Since winning the license in 2007 in an auction bid and launching commercial services in the Kingdom in 2008, Zain Group has worked effortlessly with Zain Saudi Arabia in transforming the mobile operation that now serves 10.7 million customers. The operation's heavy investment in its state-of-the-art 4G LTE network is paying off as it has resulted in an impressive 57 percent rise year-on-year in data revenues (excluding SMS & VAS), representing 31 percent of total revenues as of 30 June 2016.



Bader Al-Kharafi, Zain Group Vice-Chairman and Zain Saudi Arabia Vice-Chairman



NEW YORK: This June 7, 1995 file photo shows real estate magnate Donald Trump posing for photos above the floor of the New York Stock Exchange after taking his flagship Trump Plaza Casino public. — AP

DID TRUMP AVOID TAXES FOR 18 YRS?

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump declared a loss of nearly \$1 billion on his 1995 income tax return, allowing him to legally avoid paying taxes for almost two decades, according to documents obtained by The New York Times. The revelations come after the outspoken Republican presidential candidate repeatedly refused to make his tax filings public, the first candidate to do so since Richard Nixon in the 1970s.

The billionaire's tax records show "the extraordinary tax benefits" that Trump derived "from the financial wreckage he left behind in the early 1990s through mismanagement of three Atlantic City casinos, his ill-fated foray into the airline business and his ill-timed purchase of the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan," The Times said in its

Sunday edition. While Trump's taxable income in the following years is unknown, "a \$916 million loss in 1995 would have been large enough to wipe out more than \$50 million a year in taxable income over 18 years," the report said.

The Times said it received the three pages of the tax returns via mail from an anonymous source, with a return address on the envelope as Trump Tower in New York, the real estate tycoon's headquarters. The newspaper said it verified the authenticity of the documents and had them reviewed by a tax expert.

Trump has never held political office, so the core of his campaign relies on his alleged acumen as a successful businessman.

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UN DECRIES ALEPPO'S 'LIVING HELL'

HOUTHJI REBELS POSE A THREAT TO SHIPPING

RIYADH: Houthi rebels in Yemen are posing a threat to shipping in the strategic Bab Al-Mandab strait, the Saudi-led coalition supporting the government said yesterday after an attack on an Emirati vessel. The coalition said Houthi militiamen had attacked the vessel "on its usual route to and from (the southern port city of) Aden to transfer relief and medical aid and evacuate wounded civilians". "Coalition air and naval forces targeted Houthi militia boats involved in the attack" near the Bab Al-Mandab, it said, while "coalition forces rescued civilian passengers following the attack" on Friday night.

"This incident demonstrates Houthi tactics of terrorist attacks against civilian international navigation in the Bab al-Mandab," the coalition said in a statement. The strait is a major shipping lane between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden leading into the Indian Ocean. The rebels, in a statement posted Saturday on their saba.news website, claimed the attack which it said targeted and "completely destroyed" an Emirati warship with rockets as it neared Mokha on the Red Sea coast.

The United Arab Emirates military acknowledged "an incident" involving a chartered vessel under its command in the Bab Al-Mandab as it was returning from a "routine" journey to Aden, further south, but it reported no casualties. The UAE is a key member of the coalition that has been battling the Iran-backed Houthis and their allies since March last year in support of President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi's internationally recognized government. Since March 2015, the coalition has pushed the rebels out of much of Yemen's south, but they still control nearly all of the country's Red Sea coast as well as swathes of territory around the capital Sanaa. — AFP

ALEPPO: Syrian regime forces advanced yesterday in Aleppo after Russia unleashed dozens of air strikes, as the UN's top aid official decried the "living hell" suffered by residents in the city's rebel-held east. The devastating five-year war in Syria has ravaged second city Aleppo, once the country's economic hub but now torn apart by fighting between government troops and rebel forces. The army of President Bashar Al-Assad announced a major push on Sept 22 to capture Aleppo's opposition-held east and has gained ground in the city with the help of ally Moscow.

Dozens of air strikes pounded multiple battlefronts in the city throughout yesterday but lessened as evening fell, AFP's correspondent said. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said rebel groups and regime forces exchanged artillery fire in several neighborhoods across Aleppo. The Britain-based monitor said Russian raids "helped regime forces to advance in the north of the city," where they reached the outskirts of the opposition-held Al-Heluk district. One person was killed in bombardment there, the Observatory said.

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DOUMA, Syria: The grandfather of Syrian siblings Hala (left) and Omar reacts over their bodies lying in a morgue yesterday following air strikes in this rebel-held town on the eastern outskirts of the capital Damascus. The siblings, who lost their father months ago in an air strike, were killed when a rocket hit the family house, severely injuring their mother. — AFP



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Shiites attend a ceremony during the 10-day Muharram mourning period in Dasma yesterday. The rituals culminate on Ashoura day and commemorate the 7th century slaying of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) grandson Imam Hussein in Karbala, Iraq. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

DIGITAL DILEMMA: WHO INHERITS A SELFIE?

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois: When a loved one dies, laws cover how their houses, cars, and other property are passed on to relatives. But the rules are murkier - and currently far more restrictive - when it comes to pictures on Facebook, emails to friends or relatives and even financial records stored in online cloud accounts. Google, Facebook and other companies have said a federal privacy law approved decades before digital storage became common prevents them from releasing electronic memories or records unless the account owner grants permission - even if the person is dead.

Without an estate plan, families must try to crack their loved one's passwords or take the costly step of litigating the matter to access photos and emails - and some have, with little success. The laws governing how to divide belongings after someone dies have not

caught up with the technological advances that have permeated the ways people communicate, but states have begun trying to bridge that gap. This year, Illinois was one of 19 states that passed similar laws to clarify what Internet companies can release after someone dies and when information should remain inaccessible.

"I post quite a bit on Facebook. I post a lot of photos. If something were to happen to me, maybe my wife would like to have access to those photos," said Rep Emanuel Chris Welch, a state legislator from suburban Chicago who sponsored Illinois' measure on the topic. With the new laws, unless a person expresses otherwise, companies will release basic information from a user, such as the person's email contact list, to help find friends or gather an inventory of a person's assets. But to get the actual contents of the emails - even

the subject lines - or photos and documents stored in a cloud service, people must proactively specify who they want to have their digital belongings.

The federal Electronic Communications Privacy Act, passed in 1986, doesn't anticipate the release of online information when executing wills. Because probate law is typically left to the states, the laws legislatures are passing could effectively set new rules. The Chicago-based Uniform Law Commission wrote the legislation states are passing with the support of internet companies, but that wasn't always the case. Initially, the commission wanted administrators of a person's estate to have access to everything from users' accounts in cases where someone did not leave instructions about what to do with their digital assets.

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KUWAIT: Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah received the Holy Mosque's imam, Dr Bandar Blailah and Moazen, Ahmed Younis Khoujah at his office. He then escorted them for noon prayers at the governorate's mosque.



KUWAIT: Ahmdi Municipality's inspection teams carried out an inspection campaign in the governorate's areas and removed many abandoned vehicles offered for sale on the streets. The team leader Faihan Al-Mutairi said the campaign resulted in removing 32 abandoned vehicles. They also towed away 20 vehicles from Fahaheel industrial area.

CALL TO SUPPORT KUWAIT FARMERS' COMMUNITY

AL-WATRI UNION'S LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: A number of Kuwaiti farmers urged His Highness the Prime Minister, ministers (namely Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh), the speaker of the house and lawmakers to support Kuwaiti farmers because of the critical role they play in maintaining food security of the country.

Speaking at a press conference held in response to reports about forming a committee to run the farmers' union elections, the farmers stressed that the current union leader Hadi Al-Watri is the legal representative of all farmers and that he had been appointed by a general assembly and a court order.

"We do not know what is going on at MSAL," they added. Former deputy manager of Credit Bank Sayed Sandouh urged the parliament to show more concern for farmers and protect

them. Rakan bin Hethleen, a farmer, said that the farmers' union is made up of volunteers who only work to serve farmers. He also called for exempting Kuwaiti farmers from the new electricity tariffs due to take effect next April, noting that increasing the rates from 2 to 10 fils would be too much for farmers, who work day and night to provide produce for consumers. "I am afraid that over 90 percent of farmers might sell their farms as a result," he warned. Also speaking at the conference, farmer Abdullah Mordhi Al-Shemmari stressed that it would be impossible for Kuwaiti farmers to work under such circumstances. Another farmer, Mutlaq Khaled Al-Masoud, said that his late father was the oldest farmer in Abdaly and that the family farm is only two kilometers away from the borders with Iraq. "I was born in Abdaly and we have been working on the farm for half a century," he said, urging the premier to look into the matter.

Riyadh meeting

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Fareed Emadi and his accompanying delegation took part in the 9th GCC endowments and Islamic affairs' permanent committee meeting at the GCC headquarters in Riyadh. Emadi explained that the meeting's agenda included discussing the progress of previous recommendations and a special proposal made by Qatar on endowments.

Special ceremony

MoE's assistant undersecretary for educational development and activities Faisal Maqseed said that the ministry would hold a special ceremony to celebrate World Teachers Day on October 5 in the presence of Minister Bader Al-Essa. He added that this year's ceremony would include big surprises for educators.

NBK ORGANIZES MEGA DRAWS EVENT

BANK CELEBRATES WINNERS OF ITS LARGEST CAMPAIGNS



KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) organized mega draws event to announce the winners of its largest campaigns this year. This huge event took place on September 30 at the Grand Avenue in The Avenues Mall.

NBK Mega Draws event includes the winner of 100 percent Cash back Summer Campaign and the winner of the KD 250,000 Al-Jawhara quarterly prize. The mega draws event also announced the winner of the new Range Rover Evoque for one of the lucky customers who has a salary transferred to NBK.

"NBK consistently delivers superior value to its customers", said Suresh Bajpai, NBK General Manager, Consumer Banking Group. "NBK's Mega Draws event at The Avenues will include three major draws of the largest campaigns NBK launched this year. We are keen to always exceed our customers' expectations."

NBK re-launched AlJawhara account, by offering customers more chances to win bigger prizes. A KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly and a grand prize of KD 250,000 quarterly draw.

During this summer, NBK launched its Summer Campaign offering NBK cardholders a chance to win 100 percent Cash back when using NBK cards in Kuwait and abroad. For every KD 1 spent in Kuwait with NBK Credit or Prepaid Cards, cardholders will earn a chance to enter the draw. Cardholders will triple their chances by using their NBK Credit, Prepaid and Debit Cards abroad or by shopping online through international websites. NBK cardholders have doubled up their chances for all transactions during the holy month of Ramadan.

NBK "Transfer your Salary" Campaign entitles new customers who transfer their salary to NBK a choice of getting a cash prize starting from KD 100 up to KD 10,000 instantly OR a 0 percent interest loan for up to three years for an amount up to KD10,000. The campaign also offers existing and new customers chances to win one of six brand new Range Rover Evoque throughout the year.

NBK Mega Draw event will also offer the crowd chances to win valuable instant prizes and participate in the various activities organized specially for this day.



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CHINESE TRADITIONAL MEDICINE THRIVING IN KUWAIT

GOOD TRANSLATORS BREAK LANGUAGE BARRIER

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Chinese traditional medicine is popular in Kuwait. "People in Kuwait respect traditional Chinese medicine. For over 40 years, we've been considered their partner in health and for putting a smile on their faces," said Dr Quing Gang, Team Leader at the Chinese traditional medicine department. Gang works here with a team of 15 medical personnel (seven doctors and seven nurses, plus an interpreter).

Recently, the department transferred to a new location after the old structure it occupied for many years was demolished. The new place is smaller, but is more organized and proactive. Gang said the new location usually receives around 100 patients daily. "Chinese doctors and nurses have been providing professional medical care from the time we established diplomatic relations in 1976," he said.

Chinese traditional medicines have proven to have positive effects on treating rheumatism, cervical spondylosis, lumbar disc protrusion, sciatica, facial palsy and obesity. The eleventh mission to Kuwait (the current team) will soon complete its two-year stay and is set to leave by the end of

the year. "Another batch of doctors and nurses is coming to take over this mission. We are tasked with providing traditional Chinese medical therapies such as acupuncture, cupping and massage," Gang said. The Chinese traditional medicine department accepts anyone with a prescription from any doctor. "We do not discriminate. People we've been treating here are recommended by doctors in Kuwait, and we do it by appointment," he added.

Cupping is equally famous

The majority of patients come for acupuncture. "Acupuncture relaxes the mind and body. So we highly recommend it to everyone. It's the most sought among the traditional therapies we provide. Traditional medicine recommends everyone to strike a balance - yin and yang must be equal. With acupuncture, we strive to make your body and spirit balanced," said Gang. While admitting that acupuncture cannot cure all diseases on earth, he said it can prevent and lessen the stress that damages the body. Gang also spoke about the challenges they usually encounter. "The language barrier is already shattered because we have a very good translator available. But what we

always experience is how to treat people with differing beliefs about the traditional medicine we offer. Some doctors recommend acupuncture to patients, but these people do not really understand the concept of acupuncture and cupping, so we need to explain it to them. All patients want is to be cured of their illness, and this is what we are doing every day," he said.

Chinese traditional medicine can help prevent various types of illnesses, and can also heal some major and minor diseases, especially when patients follow the doctor's advice. "Some patients want to know how the needles work in the body. If you think it is painful, maybe it is painful. But when I perform acupuncture, I know the right points to place the needle so you won't feel anything," he said.

According to Chinese medical theories, for acupuncture to be effective, the doctors need their patients' feedback on how they feel when the needles are inserted into their bodies in the acupuncture points. Traditional medicine is a precious treasure to many and an increasing number of people from all over the world are slowly discovering the wonders of Chinese traditional medicine.



KUWAIT: A Chinese traditional medicine specialist attends to a patient.

In my view

EMPLOYMENT LAWS AND RELATED ISSUES

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Unfortunately, the employment law has been one of the biggest issues in Kuwait from an international perspective. Fortunately, however, it has also been one of most improved legal sectors.

Kuwait's Labor Law was changed in 2010 when the government and parliament joined hands in order to come up with a comprehensive legislation to solve the issues that were then discussed. Because Kuwait has a unique demographic pattern where the majority of the population is non-Kuwaiti and hence a migrant working force, the labor law was and is highly important as it governs the circumstances of most expats in Kuwait. Their quality of life and the reason that they have chosen Kuwait as their home.

Therefore, I know I have repeatedly discussed labor law issues, but I think it's highly important to keep discussing these issues, so that maybe one day these discussions will pave the way for new legislations or executive bylaws that will solve these recurring issues.

Transfer from Visa 17 to 18?

Question: I am currently on an Article 17 visa and I want to transfer to Article 18 once the project is over, is this possible? From my understanding transfers are no longer available.

Fajer: Before I go ahead and answer, I just want to make it clear that it is not easy writing about visa regulations, as these regulations themselves aren't easy to grasp and keep changing on a regular basis.

As you may have already heard the regulations for transferring visas in Kuwait are becoming stricter but that does not mean that transfers are not available. As of now there are three possible ways for a transfer:

1. If the company the worker wants to transfer to is owned by the same owner as the company he or she is currently working for, regardless if the new job is not for a government contract. Here is a hypothetical example to make it easier for readers to understand: You are currently working for Company X that is building a spaceship for the Kuwait government. After building the spaceship, Company A, a sister company of Company X offers you a job position as a salesman for a store they own. You would be allowed to transfer.

2. If you are transferring to another job position for a government contract then you can do so if your current employer approves and signs a document for transfer that is available at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

3. If you entered Kuwait to work for the private sector, then you transferred to a government contract visa, you can retransfer back to the private sector regardless of your job. Example, you came to Kuwait to work as a clerk for a store, you then transferred to work for the government to help build a museum, you can then transfer back to work as a waiter (please note that these examples are extremely hypothetical and are just there to help you understand the situation better).

Question: Is there an easy way of calculating my termination indemnity? Can you please explain how I can calculate it?

Fajer: First of all I would like to make it clear that it is not a lawyer's job to do the actual calculations. Even through the legal procedures lawyers won't usually calculate, instead experts are called in to calculate the final amount (they are usually accountants).

With that said, the principle of the calculations is not that hard to master and I suggest that you calculate so you have a rough idea of your termination indemnity amount. This will depend on whether you have been terminated or you have terminated the contract.

In the event where you are terminated:
Less than 5 years of employment - 15 days pay of your salary
Between 5 to 10 years of employment - 30 days pay of your salary

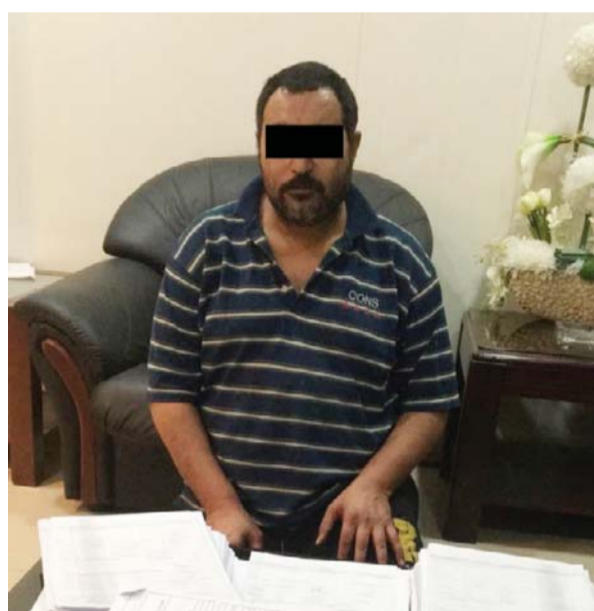
The total amount should not exceed an amount that is more than one year and a half of salary.
In the event where you have resigned and your contract was an indefinite term contract.

3-5 years of employment - half of the indemnity mentioned above
5-10 years of - two thirds of the indemnity mentioned above
10 plus years - you will be entitled to your entire indemnity

Question: I just started working at a new company and although my contract states that my salary is KD 800, my work permit says my salary is KD 600. Is that common?

Fajer: From my experience this is very common. Is it right though? No. Absolutely not. Fortunately though in the case of a labor dispute between the employee and the employer, the employee will have the right to prove that his/her salary was not as written in the work permit and the court shall take that into account. This makes a huge difference when termination indemnity, leave balances and so on are calculated. The court shall take into account the last six months' pay.

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



KUWAIT: The Egyptian expatriate with confiscated fake work permits.



KUWAIT: The Asian bootlegger with bottles of home-made liquor.

VISA TRADER, BOOTLEGGER ARRESTED

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: An Egyptian was recently arrested for issuing fake work permits in collaboration with a company representative (Mandoob) working for a farm owner, said security sources.

Case papers indicate that residency detectives found out that 145 laborers were registered as farm laborers and on summoning the owner, he said that only 14 of them worked in the farm. On arresting two of the laborers, they said that they had paid an Egyptian KD 1,600 each for the residency. The Egyptian was arrested, however the Mandoob had already fled the country.

Liquor trader

The Ministry of Interior's relations and security media department announced the arrest of an Asian in Salmiya with the possession of 48 bottles of home-made liquor, said security sources. When asked to pull over, the suspect abandoned his vehicle and tried to flee on foot. When caught, he offered the policemen a KD 952 bribe to release him.

GOVT TO BUILD EXCLUSIVE RESORT FOR THE ELDERLY

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Sabeeh disclosed the government intention to build an exclusive resort for the elderly where they can practice sports and receive medical treatment.

Al-Sabeeh added that the resort would be completed by 2020 along with a number of other clubs.

Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of the Al-Berr Club in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Al-Sabeeh said that the club was the first of its kind in the governorate and that it has the capacity of serving 64 senior citizens. This would provide them an opportunity to make use of their free time by learning crafts or attending social gatherings or practicing various folkloric games while being medically followed up. The assistant undersecretary for social care affairs, Dr Fatima Al-Mulla said that the center was being built in collaboration with NGOs and Kuwait Society for Islamic Sciences to provide better services for the elderly.

GCC AUDIT BUREAUS TO DISCUSS REPORT

KUWAIT: The 19th meeting of undersecretaries of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) State Audit and Inspection Bureaus resulted in pivotal suggestions concerning inspection services, a senior State Audit Bureau (SAB) official said yesterday. In a statement to the press, SAB's Undersecretary for Finance and Administration Essam Al-Mutairi said that the meeting in the Saudi capital Riyadh on September 21-22, was a prelude to the 14th meeting of the chairmen of GCC State Audit Bureaus, slated for October 26-27.

Moreover, he noted that the final draft of an inspection report is due to be discussed in the forthcoming meeting, to subsequently be used as a guide for GCC state audit bureaus. Speaking on the meeting, Al-Mutairi said it highlighted the importance of youth volunteerism and the need to routinely hold such conferences and events that allow increased interaction between the GCC audit bureaus.—KUNA

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of the day



KUWAIT CITY: A section of the Old Nayef Palace in Kuwait City.— KUNA

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Recently a £22m expansion has been accomplished; The Platinum Medical Centre, which provides an extensive outpatient and diagnostics facility, incorporating day case and outpatient surgical theatres. This state-of-the-art centre houses a large imaging department with access to the latest in diagnostic technology including MRI, X-ray, CT, Ultrasound and PET CT. In addition, The Platinum Medical Centre incorporates the integration of new cancer care facilities providing a 10-bedded chemotherapy unit run in partnership with Leaders in Oncology Care (LOC).



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BOOK SHEDS LIGHT ON KUWAIT'S ROLE TO FOSTER ISLAMIC CULTURE

KUNA RELEASES BOOK TO MARK KUWAIT AS CAPITAL OF ISLAMIC CULTURE

KUWAIT: Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) has released a book in Arabic, English and French on the occasion of celebrations of Kuwait as the Capital of Islamic Culture for 2016. The book sheds light on the role played by Kuwait in highlighting Islamic culture and achievements of civilization. The book includes five chapters; the first deals with the deep-rooted relationship between the State of Kuwait and Islam and Islamic values that characterize the Kuwaiti people and the defense they show for the just causes of the Islamic nation.

The second chapter sheds light on a number of Kuwaiti cultural institutions and their role in the Kuwaiti society and Muslim communities, while the third chapter touches on a number of Kuwaiti cultural beacons that left a distinct imprint on the Islamic cultural field and dissemination of Islamic culture and proper service of the Islamic nation.

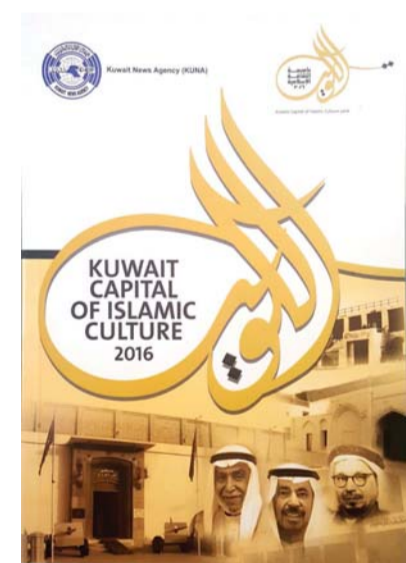
The fourth chapter is devoted to an analytical vision by Kuwaiti writer Abdulaziz Al-Babtain about the rationale for selecting Kuwait to be capital of Islamic culture. The fifth and last chapter deals with the great attention and keenness Kuwait attaches to Islamic culture besides the social, political and economic factors that led to make the Kuwaiti society an incubator for many of the cultural aspects and arts.

Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said in the introduction of the book that selection of Kuwait as capital of Islamic culture was not a mere coincidence or an unexpected surprise to followers of cultural affairs in the State of Kuwait in general and to those concerned with Islamic culture in particular.

He said the State of Kuwait has always been a pioneer in the field of cultural initiatives at the Arab and Islamic arenas and proactive in distinct Islamic projects aimed at promoting cultural awareness and

strengthen the links between Islamic peoples as well as contributing to upholding the banner of the nation, revive its heritage and highlight its civilizational achievements.

He said the chairmanship of His Highness the Premier Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah of the Supreme Committee for the celebration of Kuwait as capital of Islamic culture for 2016 confirms interest of the political leadership of the cultural work and to highlight



accomplishments of the country in human cultural development.

The minister pointed out that this important role has always had the support and generous care of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who have had and still have clear imprints in the consecration of the cultural aspect in Kuwait.

Sheikh Salman stated that the book is considered "a distinct brick" added to the many diverse activities included in such

festivity that seek to deliver an informational and civilized message on the Islamic cultural achievements of Kuwait which are still inspiring generations, especially that this book addresses readers in Arabic, English and French.

Chairman of the Board and Director-General of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) Sheikh Mubarak Duaij Al-Ibrahim Al-Sabah said in his speech that Kuwait has always been along its history of giving and accomplishments, a distinct cultural beacon that boasts its renaissance and development and is an incubator for a number of pioneers who always come up with initiatives in various spheres of life. He added that these initiatives represented everlasting imprints for this country that is tiny in its space but great in its cultural activities. He explained that these pioneering initiatives have been able to leave great effects in different countries and societies, particularly Gulf, Arab and Islamic ones and contribute to highlighting the outstanding achievements of the Arab-Islamic civilization and their innovations in theoretical and applied science.

Sheikh Mubarak said that stemming from the role played by (KUNA) in guiding the community and promote the process of cultural and intellectual awareness, it has been keen to keep abreast of Kuwait's celebration of being Capital of Islamic Culture and make strenuous efforts that are commensurate with the importance of this event, thus, it managed to issue this book in three languages. He expressed hope that this book would enrich the Arab and Islamic Library with a privileged reference and becomes a historical record for the current and future generations to learn about Kuwait's bright history and its achievements in the field of Islamic culture. The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) had chosen Kuwait to become the capital of Islamic culture for the year 2016.—KUNA

NATIONAL FUND FOR SMES DEVELOPMENT PLATINUM SPONSOR FOR ARABNET MEETING

KUWAIT: As part of their continuous efforts to build an inclusive and innovative ecosystem for entrepreneurs, The National Fund for SMEs has announced its participation in the ArabNet conference in Kuwait as a Platinum Sponsor, which will be held on October 4 and 5 at the Array Ballroom.

In fact, after the announcement of the KD 2 billion of Kuwait National Fund for SMEs in 2013, the Kuwaiti market has witnessed a surge in entrepreneurship sup-

port and institutions: funds, co-working spaces and angel investors. Also, the Kuwait market has turned out to be a prime market for the success of digital companies, with a robust national digital payment gateway, as well as high internet (91 percent), smartphone (93 percent) and social media (96 percent) penetration rates.

It is based on these insights and developments that the ArabNet will host an opening panel entitled: "Kuwait

Embracing Digital Entrepreneurship" to discuss the obstacles and opportunities for new entrepreneurs and the digital ecosystem in the presence of Kuwait's leading entrepreneurship advocates amongst whom are: Abdulaziz B Al-Loughani, Vice Chairman at The National Fund for SMEs Development, Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah, Undersecretary of State for Youth Affairs and Essa Al-Essa, Chairman at Mefazec as well as other personalities.

WHEN VOLUNTEERING BECOMES A WAY OF LIFE

THE STORY OF LATIFA AL-JUMAA, DIRECTOR OF YOUNG SCIENTISTS AND GIRLS SECTOR AT KUWAIT SCIENCE CLUB

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

Twenty five years ago, notices calling for volunteers were often distributed at local schools or posted on notice wall boards at the end of every school year. Volunteering is an integrated part of Kuwait's culture, where giving and charity are ingrained from childhood. There are hundreds of non-profit organizations in Kuwait and those who wish to volunteer can find activities from helping out at an animal shel-

Budding volunteer

So it wasn't a surprise when Al-Jumaa followed in her father's footsteps. From 2005 to 2007, she volunteered at the KSC, training young would-be astronomers.

After that, Al-Jumaa moved to the UK to pursue a masters in English and Science Education for Young Learners at Oxford University. But she took her volunteering spirit with her.

In Britain, there's a place to serve the community in every niche. Thousands of classes

directions," explained Al-Jumaa.

After moving back to Kuwait, Al-Jumaa added another role to her professional portfolio, that of budding entrepreneur. She founded an English learning center in Al-Faiha for a summer course to help children with their English.

Volunteering for life

But the desire to volunteer never left her. "In March 2016, I took my son to register at the Scientific Club but I was disappointed after I realized that both girls and young scientists sector was closed due to "maintenance". I submitted a proposal to volunteer to manage the maintenance work myself and created a training program as a test performance as a director. My suggestion was encouraged by Dr. Khalid Al-Fadhil, the General



KUWAIT: Latifa Al-Jumaa has made volunteering a central aspect of her life.

ter to organizing clothing drives for Syrian refugees. One woman, Latifa Al-Jumaa, has made volunteering a central aspect of her life.

"There was a large mirror in the living room of our house and my father used to cover it with volunteering notices that he would collect from different sources," Al-Jumaa told the Kuwait Times recently. "He hated to catch us doing nothing during the summer time, sitting aimlessly at home and would always try to push us to do something good, volunteer and be useful to others."

Al-Jumaa's father, who studied astronomy at the University of Birmingham and served as a manager of the astronomy sector at the Kuwait Science Club, engendered in his children a love and dedication to volunteering.

offered by the city council, absolutely free of charge in all areas and for all ages, even the elderly. "I volunteered to teach Arabic to new converts to Islam. During Ramadan, I would invite them home to break our fast together to encourage them to learn my native tongue," she explained.

During those years, Al-Jumaa also became a mother and added another full-time role to her busy life. Even with the added work and family obligations, however, she continued volunteering. But how did she balance all the demands on her time?

"When you keep a positive spirit all the way, time will reconcile between motherhood, studying and voluntary work. Good intentions will attract positive vibes and good people who will be willing to help you in all



Activity Director and the Secretary-General Adam Al-Mulla. The program was approved and here I am, added Al-Jumaa.

And so before she knew it, she'd gone from sometime volunteer to formally joining the family of the Scientific Club management.

Now as the director of young scientists and girls sector at the club, she sets up and oversees summer programs for kids, establishes scientific training courses including agriculture, mad science, dialogue skills, life applications and astronomy programs for kids aged 5 to 12 years. The programs are for Arabic and English speaking children.

She has also revamped the entire kids program and is focusing on building into the program an initiative aimed at encouraging future volunteers.

"I've designed training sessions to enhance communication and teaching skills in volunteers. Our youngest trainer is a 10th grader! My vision is to attract more talent from the schools of Kuwait, helping to teach children to embrace our scientific programs and encourage their creativity."



AMMAN: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah during a visit he paid to telecommunications firm Zain's branch in the Jordanian capital.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT HINGES ON YOUTH SUPPORT: SHEIKH SALMAN

AMMAN: Social development and prosperity is dependent on unbridled support to the youth, Kuwait's Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said.

Sheikh Salman made those remarks in a statement during a visit he paid to telecommunications firm Zain's branch in the Jordanian capital, known as ZAIN Innovation Campus (ZINC) on Saturday, along with his accompanying delegation. He underscored the Kuwaiti leadership's firm commitment to youth-related issues, describing the youth sector as "an integral part of a nation's development."

Meanwhile, CEO of Zain Jordan Ahmad Al Hanandeh informed the Kuwaiti delegation about some strategies the company has employed to ratchet up support of youth, much to the delight of Sheikh Salman who said it is an opportunity for youth to hone their skills and abilities.

ZINC, long a bastion of business, encourages entrepreneurs to translate their ideas into actual projects, as a slew of local and international personalities have shared their know-how with the Jordanian youth. The Kuwaiti Minister of Information was in the Hashemite Kingdom to attend the opening of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, the biggest sporting event to be hosted by Jordan. —KUNA



HEALTH INSURANCE TO BE MADE MANDATORY FOR ALL VISITORS

KUWAIT: A study was being currently conducted in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Interior to explore the feasibility of making health insurance mandatory for several categories of expats, high-ranking sources said.

The sources explained that the proposed insurance would cover all visitors coming to Kuwait be it family, tourists or visitors arriving on commercial visit visas. Those applying to get temporary residencies and those notified to depart will also come under the purview of the mandatory insurance scheme.

The sources explained that the new insurance scheme is introduced with a view to keeping all the expats under the cover of health insurance during their stay in Kuwait. Such an insurance product was introduced in many countries and that it would help increase the state's financial revenues as well. —Al-Anbaa

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Report

HEBREW-SPEAKING TOYS CONFISCATED

KUWAIT: Ministry of Commerce and Industry's inspection teams recently found Hebrew-speaking toys being sold in a toys store in the capital, said security sources. All the toys were removed from shelves and investigations have been launched against the owner.

Narcotic drugs seized

An Ethiopian female was recently arrested on arrival at Kuwait International Airport with the possession of Khat hidden in her luggage, said security sources. Separately, a citizen was arrested in Mahboula with the possession of one kilo of hashish and some illicit pills, said security sources.

Intimate moments

A Syrian and a female citizen were recently arrested while having moments of intimacy inside the man's vehicle in Nugra, said security sources.

Drinking session

Responding to a report that four people started fighting among themselves after a session drinking around a fire beside Al-Salmi highway, a police patrol rushed to the scene. However, the patrol found that the suspects had already fled on hearing their sirens leaving behind their bottles and personal effects.

Traffic violation case

A citizen reported that on renewing his Asian housemaid's residency, he was told that her file was blocked and that she had to pay fines for driving without a license and without a valid registration. The strange case was reported since the maid does not drive. The citizen filed a complaint at the undersecretary's office and an investigation was ordered to find out whether traffic violations were registered at random.

Search for policeman

A search is on for a policeman who let an Asian woman wear his military cap, then photograph her in uniform and post her photo on social media.

Workers fight

Three Indians and two Vietnamese working for the same company in Kated area were recently arrested for fighting, said security sources. The three of them were rushed to hospital with some injuries pending further investigations.

Brawl in clinic

Two citizens were recently arrested for fighting over turn while waiting at a clinic in Jahra to see a doctor, said security sources. —Al-Rai/ Al-Anbaa

News

in brief

Diplomat presents credentials as envoy to New Zealand

KUALA LUMPUR: Ambassador Ahmad Salem Al-Wuhaib submitted his credentials yesterday as Kuwait's Ambassador Extraordinaire to New Zealand. In a statement obtained by KUNA, Kuwait's embassy in the Pacific Ocean island nation said that Johanna Herman, an official from New Zealand's Foreign Ministry, extolled ties between both nations and wished Al-Wuhaib every success in his new post. Moreover, the Kuwaiti diplomat said he is gratified to have ascended to his new position and hoped that ties between the two countries would progress further.



Ahmad Salem Al-Wuhaib

Kuwait's mission in US attends students' graduation

WASHINGTON: The State of Kuwait Embassy has taken part in graduation of the third batch of Kuwaiti students who studied in the US as part of the professional development initiative, sponsored by the embassy, Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences, Kuwait's Ministry of Education in coordination with the US-Arabic chamber of commerce. The embassy said in a statement that the program provides year-long training for newly-graduated distinguished Kuwaiti students in some of the major American companies specialized in energy, investment, financing and business. The initiative has been launched with personal efforts by the State of Kuwait Ambassador Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the KFAS.

GCC officials seek to ensure consumers' rights

RIYADH: Chiefs of the GCC consumer protection agencies held in Riyadh yesterday their seventh meeting in a bid to issue a set of resolutions aiming at providing better protection for Gulf consumers' rights. During their meeting held at the GCC Secretariat's headquarters, they focused on a host of subjects and topics pertinent to raising consumers' awareness of rights and duties with a view to providing a sound and safe environment and services for consumers. They also addressed the statute of the GCC law on the protection of consumers' rights, which was adopted in Riyadh in 2015. Measures for implementing the Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz's vision for GCC consumers' protection were also on the agenda of the meeting.



So, now you can't call me SUGAR

—Al-Anbaa

THROAT SURGERY CONFERENCE TO BOOST HEALTHCARE: MOH

KUWAIT: Kuwait's first conference on throat and vocal cord surgery will be instrumental to developing the health care sector in the country, the Ministry of Health (MoH) said yesterday.

Those remarks were made in a speech given by the MoH's Assistant Undersecretary of Medical Services Dr Mohammad Al-Khashti, who spoke on behalf of Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi, to open a two-day conference on throat surgery organized by Al-Farwaniya hospital.

Moreover, Al-Khashti noted that the conference is part of efforts to examine the latest research pertinent to throat disorders, which includes symptoms and immunity measures. Speaking on the conference, he said that the MoH routinely puts together such events in an attempt to keep abreast of the latest medical facts and information, adding that the success of this conference would prove beneficial to the healthcare sector. Meanwhile, head of the conference

Dr Humoud Al-Arooj told KUNA that throat disorders are amongst the most prevalent in the country, noting that a contingent of international doctors are taking part in the conference. The conference is set to feature 13 lectures, in addition to three workshops and a discussion panel, all of which will tackle all forms of throat disorders, he added.

WHO meeting

Kuwait is to participate in WHO's 63rd Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean which will be held in the Egyptian capital of Cairo today. Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi will head a delegate to the meeting, along with 22 ministers and senior officials from different regional countries. This year's agenda will cover scaling up family practice and setting up strategic frameworks for strengthening health laboratories and blood transfusion services. The four-day meeting, October 2-

6, will also include progress reports on: eradication of poliomyelitis; emerging and re-emerging diseases, including dengue and dengue; haemorrhagic fever; prevention and control of non-communicable diseases; implementation of the International Health Regulations; universal health coverage and the development of a package of essential health services.

The meeting will also tackle proposed program budget for 2018-2019, the nomination of the committee's Regional Director, resolutions and decisions of regional interest adopted by the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly and the Executive Board at its 138th and 139th Sessions.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Kuwait will present the "State of Kuwait Prize" for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. —KUNA



—Photos by Joseph Shagra



INDIAN EMBASSY CELEBRATES GANDHI JAYANTI

KUWAIT: The Indian Embassy, Kuwait yesterday celebrated Gandhi Jayanti on its premises marking the birth anniversary of the 'Father of the Nation'. The celebration got off to a solemn start with the garlanding of the newly-installed

Gandhi statue at the entrance of the embassy, by Ambassador Sunil Jain at 9 am. A large number of Indian community members attended the event in addition to the embassy officials. Children from nine Indian schools partici-

pated in the celebration who sang popular patriotic songs such as 'Raghupati raghava rajaram'... etc paying rich tribute to the Mahatma. A flute concert by Tania Mirza enthralled the crowd. She was accompanied on tabla by Sajeev Kumar.

OUR DEMOCRACY IS BEING BURIED ALIVE

By Saleh Al-Shayegi

I keep wondering about the motives of some lawmakers to announce their intention to grill certain ministers. Is this part of the procedures followed on filing a grilling motion? I do not think so, and believe that what ought to be done is that a lawmaker files the reasons for his interpellation at the parliament's secretariat to take its turn without much hustle and bustle.

Without such organizational procedures, interpellations or grilling motions would surely have aims other than those they are actually filed for. Declaring intention about grilling motions by certain MPs are only for showoff purposes, achieving electoral publicity and propaganda for them and intimidating the concerned minister or the government in general so that an agreement could be reached at a high cost, of course. It is not a free ride.

I hope the innovative and hardworking Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem practices his authorities and prevent lawmakers from declaring intentions to grill any minister, so that the whole process could be done without any bombast. In addition, the press should block MPs wishing to promote themselves by discussing very farcical ideas and attitudes that create a great deal of public laughter and sarcasm.

The press should reform the society because it is supposed to have the upper hand in forming public opinion and ingraining profound concepts that would lead the society and develop it. It should not act as bullhorns or platforms for people with less important opinions and views that only lead to destroying the society.

Democratic countries that wish to increase their sources of enlightenment and highlight dark and gloomy spots are those that get rid of backward-looking people by killing their ideas. Our democracy, the one that these people have been enjoying for decades, did not land on us out of the blue or by a spaceship that landed in Safat or Nayef Squares. It is one that previous generations paid for dearly with their blood and being imprisoned. So, it is unacceptable that such sacrifices have been made to bring such obscurantist MPs to office to fight democracy from its own platform!

—Translated by Kuwait Times



Clinton could put away Trump by carrying North Carolina

BRITAIN'S MAY SAYS TO TRIGGER EU DIVORCE BY END OF MARCH



BOGOTA: Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos (C) casts his ballot in the referendum on a peace accord to end the 52-year-old guerrilla war between the FARC and the state yesterday. — AFP

COLOMBIANS VOTE ON HISTORIC PEACE DEAL

NO PLAN B IF VOTERS REJECT THE ACCORD

BOGOTA: Colombians voted in a referendum yesterday on whether to ratify a historic peace accord to end a 52-year war between the state and the communist FARC rebels. The accord will effectively end what is seen as the last major armed conflict in the Western Hemisphere. The war has killed hundreds of thousands of people and displaced millions.

The government of Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos says it has no Plan B if voters reject the accord-but polls indicate it will pass by a wide margin. "Colombia is betting everything on this plebiscite, socially, economically and politically," said Jorge Restrepo, director of conflict analysis center CERAC.

Colombians are sick of war, even though

many resent making concessions to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), which has carried out killings, kidnappings and extortion. Now citizens will vote on the question: "Do you support the final accord to end the conflict and to build a stable and lasting peace?"

Polls opened at 1300 GMT across the country and were due to close at 2100 GMT, with a result expected soon after. Around 35 million of Colombia's 48 million people were eligible to vote.

Resistance

Opinion surveys by pollsters Datexco and Ipsos Napoleon Franco, published on October

26, indicated the "Yes" vote would win by a margin of around 20 percent. Both polls indicated a "No" vote of about 35 percent. "October 2 is the only opportunity to correct these accords that Santos has rewarded the FARC with," wrote the leader of the 'No' campaign, former president Alvaro Uribe on Twitter.

"For my country, vote 'No'"

Santos insisted that "for the peace to be stable and lasting, it needs the seal of legitimacy and approval of the Colombian people." The government's chief negotiator in the peace talks, Humberto de la Calle, told AFP: "Voting 'No' and thinking that we can correct whatever we want (in the accord) is an illusion."

Disarmament, politics

The deal signed on October 26 by Santos and FARC leader Rodrigo Londono, known as "Timochochenko," calls for the rebels to disarm and convert into a political group. It will have at least 10 seats guaranteed for it in Colombia's Congress. The accord's main points include justice and compensation. There is an amnesty for some FARC members but not for those accused of the worst crimes such as massacres, torture and rape.

In the face of skepticism in the 'No' camp, the FARC promised in a statement on Saturday that it would provide "material compensation for victims" out of the force's collective assets.

The peace plan aims to replace the fields of coca in FARC territory with other crops. The South American nation of 48 million people is ranked by the UN as the world's biggest cocaine producer-a trade that has fueled the conflict. If voters approve the accord, FARC fighters must demobilize and disarm over the coming six months, monitored by the United Nations.

The force said on Friday it had 5,765 members. The accord is seen as virtually ending the conflict, even though the government has so far failed in efforts to start peace talks with a smaller leftist rebel group, the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Reconciliation

The FARC launched its guerrilla war on the Colombian government in 1964, after a peasant uprising that was crushed by the army. Over the decades, the ideological and territorial conflict drew in several leftist rebel groups, right-wing paramilitaries and drug gangs.

Colombian authorities estimate the conflict has left 260,000 people dead, 45,000 missing and nearly seven million displaced. The FARC have apologized to their victims and held emotional face-to-face reconciliations over recent days. One such encounter took place on Friday in La Chinita, northwestern Colombia,

where a FARC massacre at a fundraising party in 1994 left 35 dead. "Today this district has an opportunity to mend its social fabric," said Ciro Abadia, president of the victims' association Asovima. "We have to show the world that although we were massacred, we are here today in a state peace." — AFP

FEAR AND FAITH FOR DAUGHTERS OF PAKISTANI CHRISTIAN ON DEATH ROW

LAHORE: Esham and her sister Esha live largely in seclusion: fears they will be mistreated because they are daughters of the accused in Pakistan's most infamous blasphemy case make them reluctant to venture into the brimming streets of Lahore.

Their mother, Asia Bibi, has been on death row for six years in a case some have called a battle for Pakistan's soul as the state walks a razor-sharp line between upholding human rights and appeasing populist hardliners. The family have new hope of a reprieve-the Supreme Court has said it will hear an appeal for Bibi later this month.

Their fight has reached all the way to the Vatican, where Esham found herself face to face with Pope Francis in April last year as the head of Catholic church offered prayers for her mother. "He gave me blessings and I can't remember more," the 18-year-old told AFP. "I feel the Pope is praying for my mother and he will keep praying, and with his prayers my mother will be freed."

The allegations against Bibi date back to June 2009, when she was labouring in a field and a row broke out with some Muslim women she was working with. She was asked to fetch water, but the Muslim women objected, saying that as a non-Muslim she was unfit to touch the water bowl.

The women went to a local cleric and

accused Bibi of blasphemy against the Prophet Mohammed, a charge punishable by death under legislation that rights groups say is routinely abused to settle personal vendettas. Blasphemy is a hugely sensitive issue in deeply conservative, Muslim-majority Pakistan. Anyone even accused of insulting Islam risks a violent and bloody death at the hands of vigilantes.

Bibi was convicted and sentenced to hang in 2010, despite her advocates maintaining her innocence and insisting the argument was a personal dispute. The next year liberal provincial governor Salmaan Taseer, who spoke out in support of Bibi, was gunned down in broad daylight in Islamabad. The state hung his assassin Mumtaz Qadri earlier in 2016 in a Supreme Court decision that was hailed by progressives, but brought hardliners into the streets supporting Qadri and demanding Bibi hang.

Security forces braced for violence which never erupted. But Qadri's execution in March shrank the already narrow boundaries of Esham and Esha's world. "Papa used to tell me not to go out, the situation out there is very bad," Esham says of the days after the hanging. "We used to stay inside all the time." She is afraid, she says. "Someday someone will come and ask me, are you the daughter of Asia Bibi?" — AFP

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FATAL POLICE SHOOTING IN LOS ANGELES SPARKS SMALL PROTEST

LOS ANGELES: Officers shot and killed a man in south Los Angeles at the end of a car chase on Saturday, sparking protest by several dozen people frustrated by another fatal police shooting of a black man.

The chase began when officers tried to pull over a car with paper plates, suspecting the vehicle may have been stolen, and the driver refused to stop, Sgt. Barry Montgomery said. He said the passenger got out of the car during the pursuit and ran into the back of a house, where he was shot. The driver fled the scene and remained on the loose.

Early yesterday morning, the Los Angeles Police Department said in a statement that it found a handgun at the scene of the shooting. The depart-

ment did not provide any more information about the gun.

Black Lives Matter

The shooting drew several dozen people to the scene. As news of what happened spread, a group of several dozen protesters blocked an intersection near the house Saturday night. Some people waved signs that read "Black Lives Matter," and others shouted at officers standing behind yellow police tape and wearing riot helmets.

Tia Gonzalez, 36, told the Los Angeles Times that she came to the scene because she knew the community was "going to be hurting." She criticized shootings by police, saying officers should be better trained to avoid killing people.

"A police officer should not be the judge, the jury and the executioner," she said.

The demonstration is the latest sparked by a series of fatal shootings of black men by officers around the country. This past week, an unarmed black man was fatally shot by police in the San Diego suburb of El Cajon, triggering days of angry, sometimes unruly, protests. The fatal shooting of a black man armed with a knife by Pasadena, California, police on Friday led to two mostly peaceful protests.

Relatives of the dead man in Los Angeles identified him as 18-year-old Carnell Snell Jr., and they told the Times he was killed on the same street where he lived.

Snell's mother, Monique Morgan, appeared at

the protest Saturday night. "He was just at my house, and we got a phone call that said the police shot him five times in the back," she said.

Police have not said how many times Snell was shot or if he was shot in the back. Trenell Snell, 17, said she was outside with friends when she saw her older brother running from police. She said she started running too, and that she hit the ground when she heard gunfire.

When she got up, her brother was on the ground, handcuffed, she said. "At the end of the day, the cops came and shot my brother," she said. "Killed my brother." Snell's mother told reporters she asked authorities to let her see the dead man to confirm whether he is her son, but they wouldn't allow her to do so. — AP



CAIRO: In this Friday, March 16, 2012, file photo, an Egyptian activist shouts anti-military Supreme Council slogans during a demonstration in front of Cairo's high court. — AP

EGYPTIAN LAWMAKER'S CALL FOR VIRGINITY TESTS DRAWS FIRE TO COMBAT 'GAWAZ ORFY'

CAIRO: A women's rights group has filed a legal complaint against an Egyptian lawmaker who called for mandatory virginity tests for women seeking university admission, the Al-Masry Al-Youm newspaper reported yesterday.

It quoted Maya Morsi, head of the state-sanctioned National Council for Women, as saying the complaint demands the expulsion from parliament of Ilhami Agha and a criminal investigation into his actions. She said the lawmaker was harming the reputation of Egyptian women, men and the country itself.

Agha said in an interview last week that virginity tests were needed to combat the proliferation of informal marriages, known as "gawaz orfy," between students. Virtually expense free, such marriages have become more popular in recent years because of high youth unemployment and a shortage of affordable housing.

The gawaz orfy is widely viewed as a religiously sanctioned way of having premarital sex, a taboo in mostly conservative and majority Muslim Egypt. Muslim clerics have spoken out against such marriages. In Egypt, as in other conservative, Muslim countries, a young woman's virginity is widely seen as a matter of family honor, the loss of which could prevent her from getting married. The military was alleged to have conducted virginity tests on 19 women arrested after troops violently broke up a protest in Cairo's Tahrir Square in March 2011, shortly after longtime President Hosni Mubarak resigned in the face of a popular uprising.

Protecting the army
Three months later, Amnesty International said that Egypt's then-military rulers acknowledged carrying out the tests as a way to protect the army from possible rape allegations. The military pledged not to conduct the tests again, according to the London-based rights group. Agha's comments about women have sparked controversy in the past, including claims that some female lawmakers were not dressing modestly enough.

He sparked an uproar last month by saying that the practice of female genital mutilation, or FGM, was needed to curb women's sexuality and counterbalance allegedly widespread male impotence in Egypt. He claimed that 64 percent

of Egyptian men suffer from impotence, citing increased sales of Viagra. "If women are not circumcised, they will become sexually strong and there will be a problem," an imbalance leading to divorce, he added.

His comments about FGM followed the adoption by the Egyptian parliament of tougher penalties for the practice, allowing for a maximum of 15 years in prison for offenders if a child dies and up to seven years for performing the procedure. The centuries-old practice, misguidedly believed to reduce a woman's libido, was criminalized in Egypt in 2008. However, it remains widespread and an estimated 90 percent of Egyptian women have undergone some form of the forced procedure. — AP

ISRAEL BARS PALESTINIANS FROM ENTERING DURING JEWISH HOLIDAY

JERUSALEM: The Israeli military says it will prevent Palestinians from crossing into Israel from the West Bank during the Jewish new year because of security concerns.

It said the closure yesterday would remain in place for the duration of Rosh Hashanah, which ends Tuesday night, but that humanitarian cases would be allowed in. Israel has imposed similar holiday closures in recent years, fearing militant attacks during the reli-

gious festival, when thousands of visitors flock to the Holy Land.

A wave of Palestinian attacks that began this time last year has killed 34 Israelis and 2 visiting Americans. Around 218 Palestinians died during that period. Israel says the vast majority of them were attackers, but the Palestinians and rights groups have accused Israeli security forces of using excessive force. — AP

4 STUDENTS FROM SAME HIGH SCHOOL FOUND DEAD IN A MONTH

BRENTWOOD, NEW YORK: The school year in one suburban New York community has started with funerals, fear and frustration.

Four teenagers from Brentwood High School on Long Island have been found dead within the past month, all suspected victims of gang violence. While police are releasing few details about their investigation, students are saying they're afraid to walk alone in their community and school administrators are warning students not to wear the wear clothing that could risk offending vicious street thugs.

Alexis Portillo, 16, was devastated when he learned of the killings: "Like, who else is going to be next, you know?" One Brentwood teen who wouldn't give his name, saying he feared gang retaliation, said many students are nervous. "They don't play around. If they don't like you and if you do something to them, they will come after you," he said. "I'm not going to walk anywhere. We're definitely more cautious about that. I don't go out at night anymore."

A law enforcement official told The Associated Press that said the Salvadoran gang MS-13 is suspected, although police have not made arrests. The official was not authorized to talk publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Like many suburban areas, Long Island has become a home to street gangs. At least 30 people have been killed by MS-13 gang members on Long Island since 2010. "There's definitely been an uptick, but we always have had bad crews operating here," the official said.

Heinous killing

In one particularly heinous killing, four MS-13 gangsters were convicted in the 2010 killing of a Long Island woman and her toddler son. Prosecutors say the mother had allegedly shown disrespect to the gang. Her child was murdered simply because he was with her.

In Brentwood, Nisa Mickens' brutally beaten body was found on a tree-lined street Sept. 13, the day before her 16th birthday. A day later, the beaten body of 16-year-old Kayla Cuevas was discovered in the wooded backyard of a nearby home. The teenagers had been inseparable, lifelong friends who shared an interest in basketball.



BRENTWOOD, NEW YORK: In this Sept. 27, 2016 photo, a memorial for Nisa Mickens and Kayla Cueva is located near the locations where their bodies were found. — AP

TURKEY POLICE DETAIN GULEN'S BROTHER IN COUP PROBE: MEDIA

ISTANBUL: Turkish police yesterday detained a brother of the US-based preacher Fethullah Gulen who is accused of masterminding the failed July coup aimed at ousting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, state media said. Kutbettin Gulen was detained by police acting on a tip-off at the home of a relative in the Gazimir district of the western Izmir province, Anadolu news agency said. He is the first of Gulen's siblings to be detained after the coup bid. He is accused of "membership of an armed terror group", Anadolu said, without giving further details.

Kutbettin Gulen is currently being questioned by anti-terror police. Fethullah Gulen, a former Erdogan ally who has lived in self-imposed exile in the United States since 1999, is accused by Turkey of orchestrating the July 15 coup plot.

Gulen denies the claims and his supporters ridicule the description of his group by the Turkish authorities as the Fethullah Terror Organization (FETO), saying he merely runs a peaceful organization called Hizmet (Service).

Some 32,000 people have been arrested since the attempted putsch over alleged links to Gulen by the authorities, in a relentless crackdown that has caused international concern. According to previous Turkish media reports, Gulen has five brothers: Seyfullah and Hasbi, who are dead, and Mesih, Salih and Kutbettin. He also has two sisters, Nurhayat and Fazilet. Their current whereabouts are not known.

In July, the authorities arrested Gulen's nephew Muhammet Sait Gulen in the eastern city of Erzurum, long seen as one of the hubs for his supporters. Another nephew, Ahmet Ramiz Gulen, was arrested in August in the southeastern city of Gaziantep. But this is believed to be the first time a brother has been detained.

Turkey has asked the US authorities to extradite Gulen to face justice back home and expressed impatience with the slowness of the procedure. But Washington has insisted the full judicial process should be observed. — AFP

HAITI, JAMAICA PREPARE FOR POWERFUL HURRICANE MATTHEW

KINGSTON: Hurricane Matthew, the most powerful Caribbean storm in a decade, churned towards Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba yesterday on a path forecasters said could take it to the eastern United States.

At 0900 GMT "powerful Hurricane Matthew" was slowly moving northwestward from the Caribbean coast of Colombia and Venezuela at a speed of five miles (seven kilometers) per hour, the Miami-based National Hurricane Center said.

Briefly a furious Category 5 storm at the top of the

1-5 Saffir-Simpson scale late Friday, Matthew has now weakened into a still dangerous Category 4 hurricane. That makes it the strongest Caribbean storm since Hurricane Felix in 2007.

On its current forecast track Matthew's center on Monday will glance past Jamaica-dumping heavy rain on the island-as it makes landfall on Haiti. The storm is then expected to continue north, tearing across southern and eastern Cuba between Monday and Tuesday as it heads towards the Bahamas.

Matthew was located 345 miles (555 kilometers) south-southwest of the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince, and nearly same distance southeast of Kingston, Jamaica, the NHC said at 0900 GMT. The hurricane is forecast to dump 15 to 25 inches of rain over southern Haiti, "with possible isolated maximum amounts of 40 inches." The storm is also expected to drop 10 to 20 inches (25-50 cm) of rain over eastern Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and eastern Cuba, "with possible isolated maximum amounts of 25 inches (64 centimeters)."

"This rainfall will likely produce life-threatening flash floods and mud slides," it warned. Matthew was packing winds of 150 miles (240 kilometers) per hour, with higher gusts. Current weather models showed it could eventually affect the US mainland. "It is too soon to rule out possible hurricane impacts from Matthew in Florida," the NHC said.

Haiti, Jamaica batten down

Jamaicans waited in long lines at supermarkets, hardware stores and gas stations Saturday to stock up on essentials before the storm's arrival. "This is not a joking matter," Desmond McKenzie, minister of local government and community development, warned island residents. "There is no room for any mischief to be made as we face one of the most severe natural disasters in quite a long while," he said. Some Jamaicans said that in the past they had hunkered down with supplies only to see the storm to pass. "I am tired of wasting my money buying food, gas, boarding up my house," said Michael Franklin, a taxi driver in Montego Bay. "Then all we get is just a lot of rain and we can't get back our money," he said. — AFP



KINGSTON, JAMAICA: Fishermen pull a boat out of the water at the waterfront before the arrival of Hurricane Matthew on Saturday. — AFP



WASHINGTON: Delegations presided over respectively by Josefin Vidal Ferreiro, Director General of the US Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Mari Carmen Aponte, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, and Jonathan Finer, Chief of Staff and Director of Policy Planning for the Secretary of State, met on September 30 on the occasion of the fourth meeting of the Cuba-US Bilateral Commission.

FOURTH CUBA-US BILATERAL COMMISSION

Delegations presided over respectively by Josefin Vidal Ferreiro, Director General of the US Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Mari Carmen Aponte, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, and Jonathan Finer, Chief of Staff and Director of Policy Planning for the Secretary of State, met on September 30 in Washington on the occasion of the fourth meeting of the Cuba-US Bilateral Commission. During the meeting, a review was made on the implementation of the agreements reached at the third meeting of the Commission held in May in Havana and both parties identified the bilateral steps that they intend to take before the end of this year.

The meeting found that there had been progress in the areas of diplomatic relations and cooperation on issues of common interest, namely, the exchange of high level visits; the resumption of scheduled flights between both countries; the adoption of agreements in the areas of health, the combat of drug-trafficking and the deployment of air marshals on board of charter and scheduled flights; the holding of technical meetings on environmental issues, geodesics and hydrography, air safety and security, terrorism, drug trafficking, traffic in persons and migration fraud, legal cooperation, flow of persons and goods safety and cybersecurity; as well as the implementation of the program to teach English in Cuba. During this period, dialogues on regulations and mutual compensations continued to be held and negotiations between Cuba, the United States and Mexico to delimit the Eastern Gap in the Gulf of Mexico were initiated.

The Cuban delegation emphasized that little results have been achieved in the economic area due to the enforcement of the blockade and reaffirmed that in order to move forward in the economic, commercial and financial relations, this

policy needs to be eliminated, as was expressed by the Cuban representatives to the first Economic Dialogue -the mechanism created by the Bilateral Commission to address these issues-, on September 12 last. Likewise, it insisted that in order to advance towards the improvement of relations, it will also be necessary that the territory illegally occupied by the Guantanamo Naval Base be returned to Cuba and other interfering policies which are harmful to our sovereignty and are still in force be eliminated, such as the implementation of programs aimed at promoting internal changes in Cuba and the use of ICTs with political purposes. The current US preferential migration policy, expressed through the application of the Cuban Adjustment Act, the wet foot/dry foot program and the Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program, which encourage illegal and unsafe migration of our citizens, deprive Cuba from vital human resources and create increasing difficulties to other countries need to be modified.

For the next three months both delegations agreed to continue promoting high level visits, move on to the negotiation of new agreements in areas such as seismology, meteorology, land protected areas, marine pollution resulting from spills of hydrocarbons and other substances, law enforcement and search and rescue; celebrate technical meetings on cybercrimes and money laundering and between Cuban Border Guard and the US Coast Guard Service; as well as hold dialogues on disarmament and non-proliferation and human rights. The Cuban delegation reiterated the Cuban Government willingness to continue moving on in the bilateral relations in the next few months and suggested to hold the fifth meeting of the Bilateral Commission in December, 2016, in Havana. (Cubaminrex).

With the compliments of the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba.

CLINTON COULD PUT AWAY TRUMP BY CARRYING NORTH CAROLINA

SUPPORT FOR TRUMP IS LOWER THAN USUAL

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA: Republican Donald Trump can do little to stop Democrat Hillary Clinton from winning the presidency if she carries North Carolina, where their close race reflects the national liabilities of both candidates.

Trump is struggling with conservative Democrats, especially women in the big and booming suburbs of Charlotte and Raleigh-Durham, who've long been part of the GOP's winning formula in North Carolina. Clinton has her own worries: Younger voters who helped Barack Obama win the state in 2008 and come close in 2012 are far more hesitant to back her.

In a scenario playing out across the most contested states, Clinton's pursuit of new supporters is aided by a huge, data-driven ground force in North Carolina, while Trump is sticking with his come-what-may plan. "Both candidates have problems here," said Paul Shumaker, an adviser to U.S. Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., who is seeking re-election. "But I think the Clinton people are more attuned about fixing their problems than Trump's are."

Polls suggest North Carolina, Ohio and Florida are among the most competitive states expected to decide the final steps on the path to the 270 electoral votes required to win the White House. In all but one of the past nine presidential elections, the Republican nominee has taken North Carolina. Clinton's apparent strength in once reliably Republican Virginia and swing state Colorado may mean a perilously narrow route to an electoral majority for Trump.

If Clinton captures North Carolina, Trump would have to carry perennially tight Ohio and Florida, plus Democrat-leaning Pennsylvania, and sweep less populous close states that appear increasingly out of reach.

Lower than usual

Shumaker says GOP support for Trump is lower than usual in North Carolina, as estimated in private GOP and public polling. 2012 nominee Mitt Romney received more than 90 percent of the GOP vote in North Carolina, according to exit polls; Trump appears markedly short of that. Trump promised to win over conservative Democrats, who are common in Cary, a suburb of roomy brick homes and newer retail developments west of Raleigh.

Such a voter is Sunday Petrov, who is grudgingly backing Clinton. "It's more like I'm voting against Trump," she said. "What bothers me most is his disrespect for Hispanics, for Muslims, his unprofessional demeanor." Trump has little outreach aimed at specific voter groups in North Carolina; Clinton does. She meets it with younger people, with whom her polling margins pale next to Obama's in 2008 and 2012.

After last Monday's debate with Trump, she pleaded her case during a rally at Wake Tech Community College. The election, she said, "is

more about the future of young people and children than it's ever been," and she talked about her plan for government-subsidized, tuition-free college. Later in the week, Clinton's daughter, Chelsea, visited Asheville and Greenville, stopping at Eastern Carolina University to focus on college debt.

"North Carolina feels like Virginia in 2012," said Dan Kanninen, the Clinton campaign's top adviser in the state. Obama won Virginia in 2008 and 2012, after 10 consecutive GOP victories there, by attracting younger, ethnically diverse and more educated adults, especially those flowing into northern Virginia's tech and defense sectors.

Clinton is putting that same strategy to work in North Carolina. Universities, high-tech companies such as Cisco Systems and the financial

Perhaps the biggest unknown heading into the Nov. 8 election is whether African-Americans will turn out for Clinton at near the historic levels they twice did for Obama, the first black president.

Clinton dominates Trump among African-Americans, who make up 22 percent of North Carolina's voters, the biggest share of any of battleground state. Trump has done little to turn around long-standing support for Democrats by black voters.

Clinton has organizers on or near campuses of the state's 12 historically black colleges and universities.

Moreover, early-voting restrictions enacted in 2013 by North Carolina's Republican-controlled Legislature and GOP Gov. Pat McCrory were overturned after being ruled discriminato-



RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA: In this Sept. 27, 2016, photo, Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speaks during a campaign stop at Wake Technical Community College. — AP

sector, including Fidelity Investments, have attracted thousands of young professionals to the Raleigh area alone since 2012.

In the past four years, North Carolina has added roughly 300,000 voters, mostly in metropolitan areas that account for half of the state's vote. They are predominantly college-educated, which is good news for Clinton in a close race. "Trump's biggest problem is college-educated whites," said Republican strategist Michael Luethy, who charts legislative races. "If he solves his problem there, he wins. Easier said than done."

ry toward black voters. McCrory is up for re-election in November and trails Democrat Roy Cooper in a rare case where a down-ballot race could generate turnout for the presidential campaign.

"I think Democratic intensity on that issue - the attempt at voter suppression - is going to keep African-American turnout at the levels we've had lately," said Ken Eudy, a Democratic campaign strategist. Shumaker, the GOP senator's aide, said that may be enough to lift Clinton in a close race. "It's going to come down to the wire," he said. "And we're a 2-point state." — AP

NJ TRANSIT HAD 150 ACCIDENTS IN 5 YEARS

HOBOKEN: New Jersey Transit trains have been involved in more than 150 accidents that caused more than \$4.8 million in damage to tracks or equipment since 2011, and the commuter rail has paid more than \$500,000 to settle safety violations, according to federal data.

Federal Railroad Administration information shows that NJ Transit settled 183 safety violations - ranging from employee drug and alcohol use

operations, a US official told The Associated Press on Saturday.

The official, who was familiar with the railroad administration audit, spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the official wasn't authorized to speak publicly about an ongoing investigation.

The railroad administration began an audit in June after noticing an uptick in rail incidents and found "dozens of safety violations" that need-

ed to be fixed immediately, the official said. The commuter rail agency was fined as a result of the audit, the official said, adding that federal agencies are continuing to work with the railroad to ensure compliance with federal rail safety guidelines.

Run-down of accidents

There were 25 accidents in 2015 and 10 in the first seven months of 2016, but none caused injuries or

death, federal data showed. Most of the incidents occurred at low speeds and more than half were in train yards. On Thursday, a commuter train smashed through a steel-and-concrete bumper and hurtled into the station's waiting area, killing a woman on the platform and injuring more than 100 other people. The train's engineer, Thomas Gallagher, who was among those injured in the crash, has been interviewed by the National Transportation Safety Board, officials said, but the agency provided no further details about the interview in a news release Saturday.

The NTSB also retrieved an event recorder from the locomotive at the rear of the train and investigators are waiting to download speed and braking information it contains. Investigators haven't been able to extract a second recorder from the forward-facing video camera in the train's mangled first car because it is under a collapsed section of the train station's roof. The signals on the tracks leading to Hoboken Terminal appear to be working normally and officials completed a walking inspection of the track, finding nothing that would have affected the performance of the train, the NTSB said in an update Saturday. Investigators have obtained video from other trains that were inside the train station when the crash occurred.

Signs posted at a New Jersey Transit maintenance facility in Hoboken, dated February, said there had been 10 incidents involving trains in the prior two months, including five derailments. The sign said the "serious incidents reflect a dangerous trend" and that the main cause of the incidents appeared to be caused by human error.

A spokesman for New Jersey Transit didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. — AP



HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY: In a photo provided by William Sun, people examine the wreckage of a New Jersey Transit commuter train that crashed into the train station during the morning rush hour on Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016. — AP

to violations of railroad operating rules or practices - since Jan. 1, 2011. The settlement payments include about \$70,000 for more than a dozen safety violations in 2014 and 2015. Statistics for the current year are not yet available.

Months before Thursday's deadly commuter train crash in Hoboken, New Jersey, federal rail officials found dozens of violations during an audit focusing on NJ Transit's safety and

KAINE, PENCE PREPARE FOR UNDERCARD DEBATE

RICHMOND: Tuesday's vice presidential debate in Virginia will be the only time Mike Pence and Tim Kaine get the nation's political attention all to themselves.

Each largely undefined candidate will get a chance to make a mark. Pence is Donald Trump's running mate and he's taken a decidedly un-Trump-like approach - he prepared for the event with mock debates and numerous study sessions.

Kaine is Hillary Clinton's running mate and he's been cramming, too. Voters always have a reason to size up running mates. The 2016 presidential candidates are older than the norm. Though their doctors say they are fit to serve, Hillary Clinton will be 69 before the election and has had several health problems in recent years. Donald Trump is 70 and held off disclosing much about his fitness. — AP



WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA: In this Sept. 6, 2016, file photo, Democratic vice presidential candidate, Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va speaks. — AP

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BOSNIAN SERB ELECTION PITS SEPARATISTS AGAINST EU BACKERS

SARAJEVO, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: Bosnians voted yesterday in municipal elections marked by a battle in the Bosnian Serb half of the country between a pro-European Union coalition and the pro-Russia separatist party that has ruled that region for more than a decade.

Some 3 million voters will choose mayors and municipal councils in both of Bosnia's two semi-autonomous regions. Those areas - the Republika Srpska and the Bosniak-Croat Federation - have their own governments, presidents and parliaments, but are linked by shared federal-level institutions.

In Republika Srpska, the ruling Alliance of Independent Social-Democrats campaigned on a promise of Serb secession from Bosnia - something many nationalist Serbs have been seeking since Yugoslavia collapsed during the 1990s. The party is led by President

Milorad Dodik, who has dominated the Bosnian Serb political scene for years but now faces political setbacks.

Dodik's opponents - the equally nationalistic Alliance for Changes - see the future Republika Srpska as a semi-autonomous region within a Bosnia that is an EU member. They have focused on bread-and-butter economic issues while accusing Dodik of corruption and of throwing the region into poverty.

"If we vote for change, things will get better," said Slavko Maslovaric, a resident of the Republika Srpska capital of Banja Luka. If the same people stay in power "it could get even worse."

Dodik tried to shift voters' attention away from the corruption accusations by holding, a week before this election, a divisive Bosnian Serb referendum over a disputed Republika Srpska holiday that the country's constitutional court had banned because it discriminates against



SARAJEVO, BOSNIA: A Bosnian woman casts her ballot at a polling station yesterday. —AP

non-Serbs. The court also banned the referendum, but Dodik conducted it anyway. Voters overwhelmingly approved the holiday, although non-Serbs mostly boycotted the vote. The West threatened him with sanctions but he received support from Russia.

The state prosecutor issued him a summons for Monday but he said he won't go. Another Banja Luka resident, Biljana Sevo, said this attitude only strengthens Dodik's popularity among Serbs. "I think most people are in favor of him ... I think he will stay in power," she said. Tensions are high. Locals in the Bosnian Serb town of Prnjavor got into a fistfight overnight with young men who arrived from Serbia. Bosnian Security Minister Dragan Mektic told journalists the Serbians were paid by a local tycoon "to cause incidents." Local media identified the businessman as an ally of Dodik's. —AP

BRITAIN'S MAY SAYS TO TRIGGER EU DIVORCE BY END OF MARCH

PM WILL NOT OFFER A RUNNING COMMENTARY



BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND: Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May arrives ahead of a TV interview at BBC studios. —AP

BIRMINGHAM: Prime Minister Theresa May said she would trigger the divorce procedure to leave the European Union by the end of March, offering the first glimpse of a timetable for a shift that will redefine Britain's relations with its biggest trading partner.

Britain's shock vote to leave the European Union propelled May to power and the former interior minister has since been under pressure to offer more details on her plan for Britain's departure, beyond her often-repeated catchphrase that "Brexit means Brexit".

In a move to ease fears among her ruling Conservatives that she may delay the divorce, May will tell members at the party's annual conference in Birmingham, central England, that she is determined to move on with the process and win the "right deal".

Invoking Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty will give Britain just a two-year period to clinch one of the most complex deals in Europe since World War Two with the other 27 members of the EU. "We will trigger before the end of March next year," May told the BBC's Andrew Marr show. "Now that they know what our timing is going to be ... (I hope) that we'll be able to have some preparatory work so that once the trigger comes we have a smoother process of negotiation," May said.

Britain's decision to leave the European Union in the June 23 referendum sparked turmoil in financial markets as investors tried to gauge what the impact would be on both the world's fifth largest economy and the European Union. Britain's allies fear that its exit from the EU could mark a turning point in post-Cold War international affairs that will weaken the West in relation to China and Russia, undermine efforts toward European integration and hurt global free trade. Sterling plunged to a 31-year low after the vote and is now trading around 40 US cents - or 25 percent lower than the six-year highs it reached in mid-2014.

'Great repeal act'

For some businesses, May's reluctance to offer what she describes as a "running commentary" on her strategy, has deepened fears that they could end up paying higher costs if operating from Britain. "There's actually a difference between not giving any commentary and giving a running commentary. What I am doing today is setting out some further detail on the timing and the way we are going to approach this whole question," May said.

Some Conservative lawmakers said triggering Article 50 so early could put pressure on Britain as elections in France and Germany in 2017 could change London's negotiating partners in the middle of talks.

"It's not just important for the UK, it's important for Europe as a whole that we are able to do this in the best possible way so we have the least disruption for businesses ... and when we leave the EU we have a smooth transition away from the EU," May said.

She will also unveil at the conference a much anticipated move to repeal next year the 1972 European Communities Act, the act that took it into what is now the European Union, to make Britain "a sovereign and independent country".

But even members of her own Conservative Party said that what May has billed as the 'Great Repeal Act' was little more than a technicality, used to paint the picture that May was moving on with Brexit to satisfy impatient voices.

"It is very technical and it's not a big deal," said Anna Soubry, a Conservative who is the former small business minister. "But triggering Brexit as early as March really concerns me, it troubles me hugely," she told ITV television, citing the French and German elections.

But May was clear that she had to deliver on what Britain wanted and that meant limiting migration into the country, while trying to balance the need of businesses for tariff-free access to the EU's single market.

"I want the right deal for trade in goods and services and what we are doing at the moment ... is listening to businesses here in the UK, listening to different sectors, finding out what it is that is most important to them," she said. "To me it's not just about leaving the EU, it is about that essential question of the trust that people can have in their politicians. The people have spoken, we will deliver on that." —Reuters



MALAGA, SPAIN: In this grab taken from video, provided by Wikono, emergency services stand outside the cafe La Bohemia, after an explosion on Saturday. —AP

EXPLOSION AT CAFE INJURES 90 AT FESTIVAL IN SOUTHERN SPAIN

MADRID: Authorities say an explosion at a cafe in southern Spain has injured 90 people at a local festival, five of them seriously. The Saturday night explosion occurred at around 7 p.m. in Velez-Malaga, a small town neighboring Malaga, a popular tourist destination in Spain's southern Andalusia region. Authorities have not confirmed that a gas leak caused the explosion

but said a leak may have caused glass on the cafe's windows and doors to explode.

The Andalusia emergency service said 57 of the injured were taken to a nearby hospital and about 15 were discharged, while 33 others were taken to local clinics and treated for cuts or bruises. Mayor Antonio Moreno Ferrer said the city will open an investigation. —AP

SOMALI PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE TAKES AIM AT CORRUPTION

HELSINKI: Running to become president of a country always comes with challenges - but facing death threats from militants and fearing you may never see your four children again are not the usual hurdles.

Despite those enormous obstacles, Fadumo Dayib, 44, plans to leave the safety of Finland, where she arrived as a refugee 26 years ago, to run for president in Somalia. She will be one of dozens of candidates vying to rule the troubled Horn of Africa nation, whose government has been struggling against the al-Shabab extremist group, which is trying to impose a strict version of Islam. When her children are mentioned, a worried frown crosses her face. "I'll have to tell them they may never see me alive again," Dayib tells The Associated Press. "That is going to be a tough, tough thing to do as a mother."

After her own mother fled adversity in Somalia, Dayib was born in neighboring Kenya and arrived in Finland as an 18-year-old refugee. Educated in health care and nursing in this Nordic country and in public administration at Harvard University, she has set her goals high for conservative Somalia - aiming to eradicate the stranglehold on power held by the country's four major clans. "My aim is to tackle this structure. My aim is to destroy it," she says. "It has no place in the 21st century."

Any Somali citizen above age 40 can run for president as long as his or her parents are both ethnic Somalis and the candidate has had higher education and work experience. Candidates do not represent regions and run on their own platforms.

Dressed in long flowing trousers and a blue-black headscarf, Dayib sips a latte in a Helsinki cafe. She could hardly be further away from the bloodshed in Somalia, where al-Shabab is waging a guerrilla war

after being pushed out by African Union peacekeeping forces from major cities and towns, but the violence is never far from her thoughts.

Danger awareness

During a recent visit to the Somali capital of Mogadishu, Dayib became only too aware of the dangers after a trip to the waterfront. People had been enjoying a quiet Thursday afternoon until al-Shabab fighters attacked the beach, killing several people - after she had posted beach pictures on social media. "I felt that if I hadn't put those photos on social media, perhaps that attack would not have happened," she says, her voice trailing off. "But then someone said to me they would have done it anyway and you could have been one of those killed." —AP



HELSINKI, FINLAND: Somali Fadumo Dayib, who is living in Finland, pictured during an interview on Thursday Sept. 22, 2016. —AP

SEVERAL DEAD IN ETHIOPIA STAMPEDE AFTER POLICE TEAR GAS PROTESTERS

BISHOFTU, ETHIOPIA: Several people were killed in a stampede near the Ethiopian capital yesterday after police fired tear gas at protesters during a religious festival, according to an AFP photographer at the scene.

Several thousand people had gathered at a sacred lake in the town of Bishoftu to take part in the Irreecha ceremony, in which the Oromo community marks the end of the rainy season. Some participants crossed their wrists above their heads, a gesture that has become a symbol of Oromo anti-government protests. The event quickly degenerated, with protesters throwing stones and bottles and security forces responding with baton charges and then tear gas grenades. The tear gas caused panic and at least 50 people fell on top of each other into a ditch. The AFP photographer saw between 15 and 20 unmoving bod-

ies some of which were clearly dead. Police demanded that the photographer leave the scene, where rubber bullets were strewn on the ground.

"This government are dictators, there is no equality or freedom of speech. There is only TPLF. That's why we must protest today," said Mohamed, referring to the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front. In 1991 the TPLF, then a rebel group, overthrew Mengistu Haile Mariam's dictatorship and now, as a political party stands accused of monopolizing power.

Every year millions of people in the Oromo region mark the Irreecha festival on the shores of Lake Harsadi, which they consider sacred. Ethiopia is facing its biggest anti-government protests in a decade. They started in the central and western Oromo region in 2015 and spread in recent months to the northern Amhara region. —AFP

POPE FRANCIS ENCOURAGES RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN BAKU

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN: Pope Francis traveled to Azerbaijan yesterday for a 10-hour visit aimed at encouraging the country's inter-religious harmony while likely overlooking criticism of a referendum that extends the president's term and powers.

Francis' first stop was to celebrate Mass for Azerbaijan's tiny Catholic community. The Caucasus nation - the second-largest Shiite Muslim country after Iran - has fewer than 300 Azeri Catholics. Several thousand foreigners make up the rest of its Catholic community, and Azeri Jews, Zoroastrians and other minorities round out Azerbaijan's religious mix.

"Some may think that the pope wastes so much time: travelling so many kilometers to visit a small community," Francis told more than 400 people in the church and another 450 who followed the Mass outside in the courtyard. But he said he was merely doing as God did in delivering Jesus among the Jews of Jerusalem. "In this, the pope imitates the Holy Spirit. He also descended from heaven to a small community."

"Have courage! Go on, without fear! Go ahead!" Francis was to meet with the region's Muslim sheik and representatives of all the main faiths as well as President Ilham Aliyev before heading back to Rome after a weekend Caucasus visit that first took him to Georgia.

Denouncing violence

Francis has denounced the use of violence in God's name and has stressed the need for greater interfaith dialogue. In many ways, the Vatican sees Azerbaijan as a model of religious tolerance given the interfaith harmony that characterizes relations among its Muslims, Christians and Jews.

The Catholic Church where Francis celebrated Mass, for example, was built with the financial help of Muslims and Jews, according to the Salesian priests who preside there. The Azeri government donated a plot of land on the outskirts of the capital of Baku after St. John Paul II visited in 2002, but it took the help of non-Christians to get the structure built. "I cannot contain my boundless joy," parishioner Eva Agalarova, 61, said of Francis' visit. "It is both joy and happiness that the faith gives me."

The half-dozen Salesian priests who minister to Azerbaijani Catholics gave Francis a hand-woven carpet depicting both the church and the Maiden's Tower, a 12th-century bastion in Baku's walled Old City that is probably Azerbaijan's most recognizable structure. Azerbaijan is famed for its magnificent carpets.

Its politics, however, are another story. Last week, Azerbaijan's Central Election Commission said more than 80 percent of voters in the former Soviet republic backed a constitutional amendment extending the presidential term from five to seven years. Other provisions granted the president the right to dissolve parliament, create new vice presidential jobs and cancel age limits.

Aliyev's opponents, as well as human rights organizations including Amnesty International and Freedom House, said the moves cement a dynastic rule in the oil-rich Caspian Sea nation.

The Azerbaijani government has rejected the criticism, saying the constitutional amendments aimed to cut the red tape and speed up economic reforms.

It wasn't known if Francis would press Aliyev on the issue or broader criticisms of alleged rights

abuses and suppression of dissent. The Catholic Church enjoys good relations with the government.

Francis' visit to Azerbaijan comes after a June visit to neighboring Armenia, where he appealed for peace between two former Soviet republics over Nagorno-Karabakh. The region is officially part of Azerbaijan, but since a separatist war ended in 1994, it has been under the control of forces that claim to be local ethnic Armenians but that Azerbaijan claims include the Armenian military.

Zemfira Mamedova, 70, said a hoped-for call for a peaceful resolution was the key expectation of the pope's visit. "The pope already was in Yerevan several months ago," Mamedova said. "Now we are expecting his call for peace and for the return of our land in Karabakh. This is our most main expectation."

Local Azeri media hasn't given much attention to the visit, but Baku's Muslim residents still welcomed Francis' presence. "Islam is a tolerant religion and it accepts all faiths," a Muslim woman, Aygun Mikayilova, said. "I will welcome the pope's visit if he is bringing a message of peace, calm and tolerance."

Aliyev, in office since succeeding his father in 2003, has firmly allied the Shiite Muslim nation with the West, helping secure its energy and security interests and offset Russia's influence in the strategic Caspian region. —AP



BAKU, AZERBAIJAN: Pope Francis arrives yesterday for a 10-hour visit. —AP

NOT POT: US HEMP FARMS TAKE ROOT UNDER STATE PILOT PROGRAMS

EATON, NEW YORK: A lush field of cannabis growing on a secluded hilltop in central New York may look and smell like marijuana, but its myriad uses don't include getting high. New York's first legal hemp farm in decades has taken root under a pilot program that's part of a national resurgence of a plant that's prized for making food, clothing and shelter but long banned along with its smokable cousin.

"The versatility of this crop is amazing," said JD Farms co-owner Mark Justh, who left an international finance career to grow organic hay and pastured beef cattle and pigs on farmland 170 miles northwest of New York City. He added organic hemp to the mix this summer under a research partnership with Morrisville State College. Because of its resemblance to marijuana, the hemp field at JD Farms had a prominent "No Trespassing" sign that advises "No THC." Even if marijuana plants were hidden among the hemp, cross-pollination would render the pot impotent.

Multi uses

Hemp has been used for millennia as a source of oil, protein and fiber used in clothing, rope and paper. Modern uses include cosmetics, nutritional supplements, biofuels, building materials and pharmaceuticals. Justh was thinking of growing it simply as a cover crop - a crop

grown for soil enrichment - when he met Dan Dolgin, who was looking to partner with a farmer to grow it for its broad market potential. Dolgin, who had worked in national security in Washington, fell in love with the farm and bought into it. He's now renovating a farmhouse there near the log cabin where Justh and his wife and teenage sons live when they're not at their home in Brooklyn's Park Slope.

"Hemp is a triple-value crop, with a multitude of products made from the seeds, stalks and fiber," Dolgin said. "We hope the results of what we're doing here will convince other farmers that this is a great opportunity."

The trade group Vote Hemp estimates the value of hemp products in the US at \$600 million. But that's based on imports because US farmers weren't allowed to grow it until now. Since the "reefer madness" war on marijuana in the mid-20th century, the US has been the only industrialized nation where hemp farming was illegal. Industrial hemp and marijuana are both forms of cannabis, but hemp lacks the active ingredient THC.

The 2014 US Farm Bill, which defined hemp as distinct from marijuana, cleared the way for states to regulate it for research and pilot programs. Since then, 29 states have passed hemp legislation and nine have established pilot programs licensing production, according to



EATON, NEW YORK: In this Sept. 25, 2016 photo, a sign beside an industrial hemp field warns off trespassers at JD Farms. —AP

the trade group Vote Hemp. About 12,000 acres were planted this year, primarily in Colorado, Kentucky and Tennessee, the group said.

Under New York hemp regulations finalized earlier this year, farmers must partner with a university to get a license. The 30-acre hemp plot at 1,200-acre JD Farms, the state's only hemp farm so far, is paired with nearby Morrisville State

College, which is conducting hemp research. The requirement for a university partnership has deterred some farmers from getting into hemp.

"I'd love to be able to get into it right away, but the research partnership complicates things," said Phil Hodges, a friend of Justh who splits his time between Wall Street bond trading and a crop and cattle farm he's developing upstate. He

hopes to plant some hemp next year if the state begins to license farmers directly. "It's a huge opportunity for farmers, an untouched market."

Some others are more skeptical. "It's a challenging crop to harvest," said Luke Gianforte, whose family has been growing organic grain for decades in central New York. Gianforte harvested the crop at JD Farms last week. "It's a strong-fibered crop, doesn't break or cut easily."

Gianforte said he's interested in exploring the potential but will wait for more crop and market research results. "Farmers are leery about new crops coming along that have the world promised behind them," Gianforte said. "Seems like every 10 years some new thing comes along that's the latest and greatest."

Justh said farms growing corn or soybeans already have the equipment needed for hemp, which could bring at least twice as much income per acre. Hemp seed harvested at JD Farms will be processed for oil and protein powder, and some of the stems will be used by a company that makes building products from biomass. "Hemp can come across as a panacea among its fervent proponents - everything from curing cancer to solving deforestation," Dolgin said. "Is it going to save humanity? No. But it's a valuable crop anyone can include in their crop rotation." —AP



This file photo taken on April 4, 2016 shows an aircraft operated by Turkish Airlines on the tarmac after landing at Hanover airport, 2016, carrying among its passengers 16 Syrian refugees from Istanbul. —AFP

TURKEY'S AMBITIOUS AIRLINE SEEKS TO WEATHER 2016 TURBULENCE

ISTANBUL: Even by the fraught standards of global aviation, 2016 has been tough for Turkish Airlines. In June, its main hub Ataturk International Airport in Istanbul was hit by suicide bomb attacks blamed on jihadists, and then on July 15 putschists seeking to oust President Recep Tayyip Erdogan tried to take control of Ataturk.

Both incidents caused the temporary closure of Turkey's biggest airport, but the airline managed to resume flights the subsequent day, in a crucial message of business as usual and a symbol of Turkish Airlines' importance for the country's image and economy. Yet while Turkish Airlines proudly boasts of its resilience in the face of the repeated attacks and the coup bid, Turkey's traumatic 2016 has taken its toll on the group and its ambitions.

After years where it was one of the few global airlines to reliably make profits, it recorded a \$647 million loss in the first half to June, even before the effects of the coup are taken into account. Meanwhile, brakes have been slammed on its exponential growth, which has seen the ambitious carrier move from being a low-scale outfit taking just 10.3 million passengers in 2002 to 61.2 million in 2015.

Growth this year has been far slower and the company expects to take a total of 63.4 million passengers in 2016, with most of that increase coming in domestic flights. "In the last decade Turkish Airlines was one of the most profitable airlines in the world," company chairman Ilker Ayci told journalists including AFP in Istanbul on Thursday. "Turkish Airlines will continue to be an engine of growth," he vowed. "But this year is a hiccup, a very challenging year."

"We are very determined to continue our double digit growth but unfortunately not this year," he said, adding that the company is "financially very solid". Turkish Airlines stock has lost over 30 percent of its value on the Istanbul exchange so far this year, even though it has traded relatively flat over the last month. On Friday its shares closed at 5.15 lira compared with 7.39 lira at the start of the year.

'Behind Erdogan'

Ayci revealed that the company was suspending some routes in southern Europe for the winter to better use capacity-includ-

ing Bordeaux, Pisa and Genoa-but insisted the routes were not being closed and the airline would return.

"2017 will be like 2015 - not 2016," said Ayci. Turkish Airlines was transformed into a major international player after privatization from 2004-2006 that left the government with a minority stake of just over 49 percent. But it remains a national champion and, as Turkey's biggest exporter, its expansion is a cornerstone of the drive by Erdogan to make the country one of the world's top 10 economies by 2023.

The airline strongly backed Erdogan in the wake of the failed coup, putting messages on its websites and in-flight screens thanking the "commander-in-chief" for defeating the putsch.

Travellers even found colour brochures celebrating the defeat of the coup, along with the usual in-flight magazine, in their back seat pockets. "If they (the plotters) had succeeded we would have lost tens of thousands of people... we would have lost the legally-elected government," said Ayci.

'Excited for new airport'

Tourism however has plunged in Turkey due to this year's crises, with foreigner arrivals down almost 38 percent in August, and a dispute with Russia, a key market, not resolved in time to save the season.

Also the failed putsch has led to a government crackdown on suspected sympathizers of the coup-plotters which "has added significantly to concerns about personal security for foreigners as well as Turks, especially those living abroad," Alexander Kazbegi, an analyst at Renaissance Capital, said in a note in August, Bloomberg News reported. "Unless these conditions change, we don't see travel picking up in months to come."

Ozgur Altug, economist at BGC partners, said in a note Friday that "the recent normalization with Russia might alleviate the pain in the sector to some extent, but hopes are saved for next year."

While the airline remains hugely dependent on the security situation, it is still ploughing on with its growth plans, opening new routes to Havana, the Seychelles and even Zanzibar in the next months, with Ayci revealing a plan for Mexico City. — AFP

AFGHANISTAN SEEKS AID TO REBUILD NATION IN BRUSSELS

PRESIDENT WILL MEET WORLD POWERS

BRUSSELS: Afghanistan's president will meet world powers at a major conference in Brussels next week in a bid to secure financial aid from the international community up to 2020 to rebuild the war-ravaged nation.

The meeting on October 4 and 5 will try to drum up support from an international community suffering from aid fatigue as it grapples with conflicts in Syria and Iraq plus the worst migration crisis since World War II. US Secretary of State John Kerry and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon are among those who will join hosts Afghan president Ashraf Ghani and EU President Donald Tusk. Financial support is "crucial" in order "to bring about a new strategic shift towards stabilization and possibly peace" in Afghanistan, despite the country not having "been in the headlines for many years", officials said ahead of the conference. "Nobody can afford for Afghanistan to destabilize again," a senior EU official added. More than 70 countries and 25 international organizations will attend the event, which comes just before the 15th anniversary of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks. Afghanistan is still struggling to negotiate peace with the Taliban and other militant groups who continue to wage a bloody insurgency.

Tokyo, London, Brussels

The Brussels conference follows up from a meeting in Tokyo in 2012 where the international community agreed to provide four billion Euros a year in funding until the end of 2016. It also comes two years after the London Conference on Afghanistan at which then newly-elected president Ashraf Ghani vowed to build a more self-reliant Afghanistan.

Ghani said last week in Kabul that "in Brussels, your government will represent all of you women, men, all of you. In Brussels the world is going to reiterate their economic commitments again". He added: "We are taking Brussels very seriously. After we return from Brussels we have to work together, this is the importance of it." The international community will make pledges for the next four years but officials would not be drawn on the level of funding in comparison to the four billion Euros a year agreed in Tokyo. "The pledging exercise

remains a difficult one and very fluid until the last moments," one EU official said. "The three billion mark is passed, but we don't know where we'll end up." The EU itself will sign a state building contract of 200 million Euros for 2017-2018 at the conference, honoring its commitment to an annual budget for that amount for Afghanistan. But payouts will depend on whether Afghanistan meets its political and financial reform commitments, as well as political transparency.

'Speed of reforms'

The conference comes after NATO countries agreed at a summit in Warsaw in July to maintain troop numbers in Afghanistan and uphold a pledge of \$5 billion a year for local security forces for the next four years. EU officials expressed some optimism about Afghanistan's

human development. Under the country's new unity government, "the speed of reforms has significantly increased when compared to previous administrations", said an EU official. "The Afghan government has by and large delivered on our expectations and exceeded them," he added. A recent diplomatic success for the country was the signing of a peace accord on September 22 with the Islamic organization Hezb-i-Islami, led by former premier Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The country has also made progress in areas of women's rights, anti-corruption measures and revenue collection. EU officials denied that the pledges would have conditions attached, after the leak of an EU memo in March that suggested that financial pledges would be made in return for Afghanistan accepting 80,000 asylum-seekers deported from EU countries. —AFP



KABUL: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani signs a peace deal with Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who was displayed on a video projector screen, at the Presidential Palace in Kabul on September 29, 2016. —AFP

ELECTIONS IN BRAZIL POINT TO POST-IMPEACHMENT FUTURE

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilians across the country appeared to be in a kick-the-bums-out mood yesterday as they voted for the first time since President Dilma Rousseff was removed from office.

The vote in more than 5,500 cities was

expected to help measure voter anger over the slumping economy in Latin America's largest nation, disgust at endemic corruption and divisions over Rousseff's impeachment, as well as local issues. Polls show outsiders running well in big cities like Sao Paulo, where the front-runner

is a businessman Joao Doria, who once hosted "The Apprentice Brazil" and promises to upend politics-as-usual by employing business efficiency. More traditional candidates, such as Sao Paulo incumbent Fernando Haddad, are simply hoping to garner enough votes to force a second round of voting later this month. In Rio de Janeiro, the frontrunner is Sen. Marcelo Crivella, an evangelical pastor who has run and lost previous mayoral and gubernatorial elections. Known for religious songs on YouTube with titles like "Jesus Cures" and "I'm Israel," Crivella appears to be getting a serious look this time around. "All the candidates are weak except for Crivella. He's the only one who could do what he promises," said Jayr Silva, a 70-year-old mechanical engineer who added he was attracted to Crivella because of all the corruption during the 13 years Rousseff's Workers' Party was in power.

In August, the Senate removed Rousseff for illegally shifting funds between federal budgets. She denies wrongdoing and says Brazil's elites are trying to roll back social gains brought by her leftist party. In the background of the nearly year-long impeachment fight was a cascade of revelations from a corruption probe at state oil company Petrobras. Several businessmen and politicians from several major parties have been jailed in the kickback scheme that authorities say resulted in more than \$2 billion in bribes.

"Politicians are a terrible race unto themselves," said Regina Fontes, a 64-year-old retired school teacher in Rio who had yet to decide who she was voting for. "They make all kinds of promises and then what do they do? They steal!" —AP



SAO PAULO, BRAZIL: Joao Doria, mayoral candidate with the Brazilian Social Democracy Party shakes hands with polling station inspectors before voting in the municipal election yesterday. —AP

SIX PALESTINIANS CHARGED OVER ISLAMIC STATE TIES

JERUSALEM: Israeli authorities have charged six Palestinians suspected of belonging to the Islamic State jihadist group and of plotting attacks, police said yesterday. The alleged IS cell, operating out of Shuafat refugee camp in occupied east Jerusalem, was "preparing a series of attacks mostly in Jerusalem", police said in a statement. Police said those arrested were a religious and ideological leader and other members tasked with preparing attacks, without naming the sus-

pects. The arrests followed a six-week operation, police said. Several Palestinians and Arab Israelis have travelled to neighboring Syria to join IS, but authorities say the jihadists' influence has been limited in the Jewish state.

The Shin Bet internal security service, however, said in recent months that some Palestinians who have carried out attacks were apparently inspired by IS. In a recent poll, 88 percent of Palestinians said IS does not represent Islam. —AP

THOUSANDS PROTEST STEEL PLANT OVER VIETNAM FISH DEATHS

HANOI: Thousands of Vietnamese protesters surrounded a Taiwanese steel plant yesterday, some scaling walls and holding signs demanding its closure, as anger flares against the firm for dumping toxic waste into the ocean killing tons of fish.

Huge crowds on motorbike and foot gathered at the Formosa plant in central Ha Tinh province, with some holding signs saying: "Authorities, please close Formosa plant for the future of the nation" as others chanted angrily. Dead fish and other marine life began washing ashore in central Vietnam in April, the country's worst ecological disaster in decades

that devastated livelihoods in coastal towns where fishing is the main source of income.

Taiwan's Formosa, which is building a multi-billion dollar steel plant in the area, was blamed for the disaster and fined \$500 million. The government said it would start paying affected fishermen in October and confirmed last week that payouts would range from \$130 to \$1,600 per person depending on losses calculated between April and September.

Yesterday's demonstrators demanded additional compensation. "The protestors, who were directly

hit by the Formosa scandal, asked for compensation and required the plant to close," witness Hoang Sy Son told AFP. Photos and video on social media showed protesters, led by a Catholic priest, surrounding the steel plant in Ky Anh township and chanting bible passages. "A lot of security people and vehicles were deployed here, but no clashes were seen," Son added, speaking from the rally.

AFP could not reach authorities for comment yesterday. The rallies came days after fishermen in the area filed more than 500 lawsuits demanding additional compensation from the government over

the disaster. Demonstrators have held rare protests in several cities across the authoritarian country after the mass fish deaths, with police breaking up some rallies and jailing scores. Protesters blamed officials for dragging their feet on investigations into the scandal. Formosa is no stranger to controversy in Vietnam. In 2014, three people were killed when anti-China riots took place at the same Ha Tinh steel plant, where a scaffolding collapse also killed 14 last year. The conglomerate has paid millions of dollars in fines over environmental mishaps elsewhere.—AFP



HELSINKI, FINLAND: Finnish President Sauli Niinistö makes a press statement about testifying of air defense system BUK missiles in Finland to help the investigation of the downing of Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 flight MH17 over Donetsk region on July 2014, in Helsinki, on September 30, 2016.—AFP

PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR MH17 'CONFIRMED' BY 2017

SYDNEY: The names of people being investigated for playing "an active role" in the downing of flight MH17 will be confirmed by early 2017, Australia's foreign minister said yesterday as she raised the prospect of a Lockerbie-style prosecution.

Australia is part of the Dutch-led criminal inquiry into the crash of the Malaysia Airlines jet in conflict-torn eastern Ukraine in July 2014, which killed all 298 people on board including 38 Australian citizens and residents. The initial findings released earlier this week concluded the Boeing 777 aircraft was shot down by a missile transported from Russia.

The investigation also "identified approximately 100 people" believed to have had an "active role" in transporting the missile system. "I expect that by the end of the year, maybe early next year, the list of those that we believe should be held accountable will be confirmed and then there must be a prosecution," Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"At this point we're calling on Russia to cooperate, to ensure that it provides all assistance possible to the joint investigation team so that those responsible are held to account," Bishop said there were several options available if Russia vetoed the investigators' push for support from the UN Security Council, including a tribunal set up by the international community, a "Lockerbie-style prosecution", or a domestic prosecution in the Netherlands.

An international tribunal involving a special Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands was set up to look into the explosion of Pan Am flight 103 over the Scottish village of Lockerbie in 1988. Libyan Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed al-Megrahi was found guilty in 2001 — the only person ever convicted of the bombing. He maintained his innocence until his death in 2012.

"I think a domestic-style tribunal would possibly be easier to establish but you'd have to make sure that it had all the necessary powers," Bishop said, adding she had been in talks with foreign ministers of the nations involved in the investigation, which include Belgium, Malaysia and Ukraine. "For example, extradition to be able to absolutely hold those responsible for this atrocity to account."

Canberra has long been vocal about its desire to find those who committed the atrocity. Former PM Tony Abbott vowed to "shirtfront" an Australian Rules football term in which a player charges an opponent-Russian President Vladimir Putin over the crash.—AFP

CHINA, BRITAIN, FRANCE SIGN PACT FOR NEW UK NUCLEAR PLANT

LONDON: Officials from China, Britain and France have attended a signing ceremony to mark the final approval for the construction of the new Hinkley Point nuclear power station in southwest England.

The 18 billion-pound (\$23 billion) project will be financed by Chinese nuclear power provider CGN and French energy group EDF. It will be Britain's first new nuclear plant in more than two decades. French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault and Chinese Energy Minister Nur Bekri attended Thursday's ceremony.

British Business Secretary Greg Clark said the signing marked a crucial moment in Britain's effort to upgrade its energy supplies. New Prime Minister Theresa May had delayed approval of the project while reviewing its security implications and other matters. The government says future foreign investment in infrastructure projects will face tighter reviews.—AP



LONDON: From left: Jean-Bernard Levy chairman of EDF Group, French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, Greg Clark Secretary of State for Business, Chinese Energy Minister Nur Bekri and Energy and Industrial Strategy and He Yu chairman of CGN at a signing ceremony in London to finalise the deal to build Hinkley Point, England, the first new UK nuclear power station in a generation.—AP

AS WINTER NEARS, N KOREA FLOOD AREA NEEDS HELP

ONE MONTH AFTER FLOODS HIT

PYONGYANG: One month after devastating floods caused by a typhoon hit a remote area of North Korea, Red Cross officials said yesterday that more help is needed for thousands of displaced people before harsh winter conditions set in.

The Red Cross estimates that 70,000 people were made homeless in North Hamgyong province by the flooding caused by Typhoon Lionrock at the end of August. Officials estimate that more than 130 people died and another 400 are missing, and that 30,000 homes were destroyed. The flooding also damaged roads and railway lines.

Red Cross video from a four-day trip to North Hamgyong this past week shows people living in temporary shelters amid rubble and mud-caked areas of destruction left in the wake of the flooding. North Korean authorities have launched a major reconstruction effort, but have asked international humanitarian organizations for help. The Red Cross has sent supplies to construct temporary shelters and provide daily necessities for people who lost everything in the flooding. Patrick Elliott of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies flew up from Pyongyang to North Hamgyong on Tuesday. He said Sunday that North Korea's Red Cross has taken the supplies "and have been able to build temporary shelters, in their locations or close to their locations, until they can get a permanent solution."

But winter is coming soon, meaning snow and plummeting temperatures will make life more difficult for thousands of displaced people still living in very basic conditions. Even in good weather, the area is very remote, with most normal access only on unpaved roads. Another Red Cross official, Chris Staines, who was among the first international humanitarian workers to reach the area in early September, said better shelter and more supplies are now needed to deal with the coming of winter. "Well, the disaster hit in



HOERYONG CITY, NORTH KOREA: In this image made from TV made available yesterday, local officials and people labor to build new homes at a construction site on Thursday Sept. 29, 2016, as most people are still living in temporary shelters amid rubble and mud-caked areas of destruction left in the wake of massive flooding.—AP

many ways at probably the worst time," he said Sunday. "It affected crops just a couple of weeks before harvest, and of course with winter closing in, and now less than a month before the first snows are expected at the end of October,

it's an area where the temperatures plunge... That's why we need much more permanent solutions in terms of shelter, in terms of the health services and the access to food, and sorting out issues around safe water."—AP



HONG KONG: Forensic officers process a crime scene where police opened fire on a gang of men fighting in the Yau Ma Tei district yesterday.—AFP

HONG KONG POLICE FIRE SHOTS IN KNIFE ATTACK, THREE INJURED

HONG KONG: Three people were injured yesterday after Hong Kong police fired shots to stop a knife attack on a man, in a rare case of violent street crime in one of Asia's safest cities.

Police said those wounded were two assailants and the man being attacked, and that all three were of "South Asian" origin. "Five to six...men, with some carrying knives, were attacking another man," police officer Ma Wai-hing told reporters at the scene of the incident in the city's commercial district of Yau Ma Tei.

No further details were given about the attack. "After verbal warnings were ignored, four shots were fired. Two men were shot," he said. The pair were arrested and hospi-

talized with wounds to the forearm and waist. They, along with the knife attack victim, are in a stable condition, Ma said.

Footage uploaded to the website of Chinese language newspaper Apple Daily showed a uniformed officer pointing a gun at a group of men—some of whom were wielding knives over a man on the ground—before shots were fired. The officer can be heard yelling "put down your weapon" in Cantonese.

Police said four shots were fired as the first shot was "ineffective" in stopping the attack. An AFP reporter at the scene said a road intersection was cordoned off around noon, with detectives gathering evidence and two fillet knives lying on the ground.—AFP

THREE INDONESIAN HOSTAGES RELEASED IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

JAKARTA: Three Indonesian hostages have been released in the southern Philippines after being held by their Abu Sayyaf captors for three months. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi says the men, crew members of a tugboat who were kidnapped in June, were freed just before midnight Saturday.

Marsudi said Sunday that the three were undergoing health exams in the southern Philippine province of Sulu. She said they

would be transferred to the city of Zamboanga before being handed over to Indonesian officials and being flown back to Indonesia.

Two other Indonesians are still being held by Abu Sayyaf militants. Three Indonesian fishermen were freed two weeks ago along with a Norwegian man and two Filipinos. The Abu Sayyaf has been blacklisted as a terrorist organization by the US and the Philippines.—AP

DUTERTE APOLOGIZES TO JEWS, BUT DEFIANT

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte yesterday apologized to Jews for comparing himself with Adolf Hitler but said he did nothing wrong and reiterated his desire to kill millions of drug addicts. Duterte, whose bloody war on crime had already drawn international condemnation, sparked fresh outrage on Friday when he likened his deadly crime war with Hitler's efforts to exterminate Jews.

Duterte said he was merely reacting to critics who drew comparisons between him and the Nazi leader. "So I said, 'sure I am Hitler, but the ones I will kill are these (drug addicts)'; Duterte said in a speech broadcast on national television. "But it is not really that I said something wrong. But rather they do not really want to tinker with the memory so I apologize profoundly and deeply to the Jewish (people). 'It was never my intention but the problem was I was criticized using Hitler, comparing to me. But I was very emphatic. I will kill the three million.' Duterte, 71, won elections in May in a landslide after a campaign dominated by his pledge to eradicate drugs in society by killing tens of thousands of people.

1,200 people killed

Since taking office on June 30, police have killed more than 1,200 people and about 1,800 others have died in unexplained circumstances, according to official

figures. While issuing his qualified apology on Friday, Duterte continued to lash out at Western critics and warned he was willing to kick all American troops out of the Philippines. "The Americans, I don't like them... they are reprimanding me in public. So I say: 'Screw you, fuck you, everything else. You are stupid,'" he said. Duterte threatened to cancel a defence accord with the United States, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), that went into force in January. That agreement, sealed under the administration of Duterte's predecessor, Benigno Aquino, allows US forces access to five Philippine bases to help counterbalance a growing Chinese presence in the South China Sea. "This EDCA is an official document... but it does not bear the signature of the president of the republic," Duterte said. "Better think twice now because I will be asking you to leave the Philippines altogether."

The United States and the Philippines are longtime allies bound by a mutual defence pact. However Duterte has repeatedly threatened to move away from the United States and forge closer ties with China and Russia. Duterte last month branded US President Barack Obama a "son of a whore". Duterte on Sunday also hit out at the Europeans saying: "These stupid lawyers in the EU... well, screw you. I will kick you."—AFP



DAVAO, PHILIPPINES: Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte delivers a speech at the Davao international airport terminal building early on September 30, 2016, shortly after arriving from an official visit to Vietnam.—AFP



SANAA: Smoke rises after a Saudi-led airstrike hits an army base as tribesmen loyal to Houthi rebels (bottom) chant slogans during a gathering aimed at mobilizing more fighters into battlefronts in several Yemeni cities yesterday. —AP

DID TRUMP AVOID TAXES FOR 18 YRS?

Continued from Page 1

The Trump campaign issued a statement that said nothing about the veracity of the report, and did not address the \$916 million loss. "Mr Trump is a highly-skilled businessman who has a fiduciary responsibility to his business, his family and his employees to pay no more tax than legally required," the statement said. "That being said, Mr Trump has paid hundreds of millions of dollars in property taxes, sales and excise taxes, real estate taxes, city taxes, state taxes, employee taxes and federal taxes," it added, giving no specifics. The campaign attacked The Times as "an extension of the Clinton Campaign, the Democratic Party and their global special interests".

"BOMBSHELL," wrote Clinton campaign spokesman Brian Fallon on Twitter. "Trump's returns show just how lousy a businessman he is AND how long he may have avoided paying any taxes." Clinton's campaign manager Robby Mook with barely suppressed glee, noted in an interview yesterday that this latest campaign trail "bombshell" follows an abysmal few days for the real estate mogul. "Trump has had a really bad week: He failed in the debate. He has spun out of control subsequent to that. Insulting (Venezuela-born beauty queen Alicia) Machado. His 3 am tweet storm," Mook said, recounting other Trump controversies that dominated headlines last week. "You know, his campaign is spinning out," he said.

Soon after the news broke late Saturday, Trump appeared agitated and veered off message repeatedly at a rally in Manheim, Pennsylvania. Trump showed up more than 1.5 hours late to the event, then repeatedly rambled off on tangents, talking about his now-cancelled reality TV show "The Apprentice," "crazy" Bernie Sanders, the "dopes at CNN," "phony pundits" and how Clinton "could actually be crazy", The Washington Post reported.

Yesterday, Trump responded to The Times on Twitter, saying: "I know our complex tax laws better than anyone who has ever run for president and am the only one who can fix them." He then claimed to have created "tens of thousands of jobs," while "Hillary has only created jobs at the FBI and DOJ!" (Department of Justice).

Former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani, a key Trump surrogate on the campaign trail, called the revelations

proof of the New York tycoon's "absolute genius." "You have an obligation when you run a business to maximize the profits and if there is a tax law that says I can deduct this, you deduct it," Giuliani told ABC News, suggesting investors in Trump's company probably would have sued him had he done otherwise. Sanders, Clinton's vanquished Democratic presidential primary foe who now supports her, took the opposite view. "If everybody in this country was a 'genius,'" he told ABC, "we would not have a country," the Vermont senator said.

Trump's Democratic rival Hillary Clinton said Saturday she raised a record \$154 million in September for her White House bid, up from \$143 million raised in August. Campaign donations usually increase as the Nov 8 election approaches, and the money raised is actually divided between Clinton's campaign and the Democratic Party. In August, Trump raised \$90 million but his campaign has not yet released a figure for September.

Individual Americans can donate up to \$2,700 to a candidate in a general election. Larger donations are distributed among the network of state parties. Clinton and her Democratic allies begin the month of October with a war chest of \$150 million to blitz TV, radio and the Internet with ads. Clinton relies more than Trump on elite private fundraising events in which one ticket can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Barbara Bush - one of Republican former president George W Bush's two daughters - was the surprise guest at a Clinton fundraiser for expats in Paris, CNN and Politico reported. Barbara Bush even posed for a selfie group photo with Clinton confidant and top aide Huma Abedin and others, including a prominent fashion industry insider.

The Bush family has shown no love towards Trump, and Barbara's 92 year-old grandfather, ex-president George H W Bush, reportedly said that he is voting for Clinton. Clinton has seen her fortunes rebound after her strong Sept 26 presidential debate performance. The latest average posted by RealClear Politics shows Clinton ahead of Trump by three percentage points, 43.8 percent to 40.9 percent. The former secretary of state is expanding her lead after Trump's popularity rose to within margin of error territory in many polls, and had crept ahead in some surveys. — Agencies

SAUDI CONSUMER LOANS ORDERED...

Continued from Page 1

banks would be required to assume substantial costs in the rescheduling process. Banks must obtain customers' approval to reschedule loans and they cannot add extra fees or change the interest rate, the central bank said.

In some cases, banks will be allowed to reschedule loans without sticking to the usual maximum loan maturity of five years, but they cannot deduct more than a third of customers' monthly net income to make loan payments. Local media had said banks were lobbying for permission to deduct up to 40 percent. The central bank will assess what decisions should be taken regarding other financing products affected by austerity policies, it said.

One local economist estimated the government would save about 50 billion riyals annually with the pay cuts announced last week, but it is not clear whether that sum, and drastic reductions to spending on state projects introduced early this year, would reduce the budget deficit sufficiently. Some economists believe that to retain the confidence of financial markets, the government is aiming to shrink the deficit to near 10 percent of gross domestic product this year from 15 percent in 2015.

That could require further austerity measures, perhaps new fees or taxes on the kingdom's large workforce of foreigners. The Saudi stock market plunged 3.1 percent yesterday to its lowest close since March 2011 partly because of fears that such steps could be imminent. — Reuters

DIGITAL DILEMMA: WHO INHERITS A SELFIE?

Continued from Page 1

Only one state, Delaware, managed to pass that version of the commission's proposal, but 27 legislatures tried and failed in 2014. Carl Szabo, senior policy counsel at NetChoice, an industry group that represents the interests of such companies as Facebook, Google and PayPal, said the revised legislation "balances the needs of the bereaved with the privacy interests of the account holders and the people with whom they corresponded."

West Virginia, Utah, and Iowa are among the dozen other states that have drafted bills seeking to join the 19 that enacted laws. Facebook allows users to choose a "legacy contact" to access their account, and Gmail has an "account trustee" option. In instances where people use those options, the companies' agreements with them will supersede the state laws. Even with the new laws, planning is necessary at a time when many still don't think about the contents of their Internet accounts as property. "This is one of those many examples where the law really gets its power by giving people the knowledge that it exists," said Washington state Sen Jamie Pederson, the sponsor of the law passed there this year.

The promise of privacy companies offer users has led to heartache and frustration for the families of account holders who have had to go to court for the right to access their relative's emails and photos. In 2005, Yahoo turned over more than 10,000 pages of emails in a CD to the family of Lance Cpl Justin Ellsworth, a marine from Michigan whose family went to court for the material. But others have not been successful.

The family of John Ajemain in Massachusetts has been unable to get his emails from Yahoo after his death in 2006. And in 2012, Facebook quashed a subpoena from the family of Sahar Daftary, a model who fell to her death from an apartment building in Manchester, England, in 2008. In Virginia, after Ricky Rash's 15-year-old son, Eric, killed himself in 2011, Facebook provided a CD with the contents of his account but not his password. Rash still struggles with the notion that for decades people have stumbled upon mementos while cleaning out a late parents' home, but in the digital age those keepsakes can be out of reach.

"What is the difference of the shoebox full of letters and pictures under the bed or in the attic?" Ricky Rash asked. "You go in as a child taking care of your parents' estate, you may find something in those memoirs that surprises you." — AP

UN DECRIES ALEPPO'S 'LIVING HELL'

Continued from Page 1

If loyalist fighters seize Al-Heluk, Bustan al-Basha and Sakhur - all rebel-controlled neighborhoods in Aleppo's north - they will confine opposition factions to a small section of the city's southeast. Assad's Russian-backed military campaign in Aleppo has sparked international outrage, particularly after two barrel bombs hit the largest hospital in the city's east on Saturday. United Nations aid chief Stephen O'Brien fiercely criticized the attack on the M10 hospital, and called yesterday for immediate action to end the "living hell" of civilians in Aleppo's east. "The healthcare system in eastern Aleppo is all but obliterated. Medical facilities are being hit one by one," O'Brien wrote.

O'Brien said the latest indiscriminate bombings subjected residents to "a level of savagery that no human should have to endure. The clock is ticking. Stop the carnage now," he added. At the bombed hospital Saturday, an AFP journalist saw bloodstained beds and dented equipment lying in disarray beneath blown-out windows. M10 had already been hit on Wednesday along with the second-largest hospital in the area, M2.

That bombardment badly damaged the two facilities and left only six fully functional hospitals in east Aleppo, according to the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), which supports the facility. On Saturday, European Parliament president Martin Schulz called the hospital bombing a "war crime", tweeting that the international community "must unite to prevent (the) city's annihilation". The World Health Organization has called Syria the world's most dangerous place for health workers, and Aleppo in particular has seen much of its medical infrastructure destroyed or heavily damaged. Syria's armed forces yesterday called on rebel fighters in east Aleppo to abandon their positions "and let civilians live their normal lives". "The Russian and Syrian armies will

secure safe passage and aid" to any opposition fighters that defect, said the statement, distributed on Syrian state news agency SANA. Damascus has made similar offers in the past, but activists and rebels say they are afraid of being detained or tortured if they leave opposition-held zones.

Syria's conflict broke out in March 2011 with anti-government protests but has since turned into a complex civil war drawing in world powers. North of Aleppo city, Turkey-backed rebel factions pressed an offensive yesterday against the Islamic State group, edging closer to the jihadist-held town of Dabiq, the Observatory said. Dabiq, which according to a Sunni Muslim prophecy will be the site of an end-of-times battle between Christian forces and Muslims, has become a rallying cry for IS.

In central Hama province, Russian strikes killed six members of the Jaish al-Lzzah rebel group, which has received US backing, according to the Observatory. And at least four civilians were killed, including two siblings, in government shelling of the opposition-held town of Douma near Damascus. Diplomatic efforts to put an end to Syria's war, which has killed more than 300,000 people, have all but collapsed.

Russia and the United States brokered a ceasefire deal in early September, hoping it could open a path to peace - but the truce fell apart a week later. Relations between the two world powers have since been strained, but their top diplomats have continued to seek a way forward. Russia said its Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov spoke to his American counterpart John Kerry on Saturday and they "examined the situation in Syria, including the possibility of normalizing the situation around Aleppo". They spoke again later that evening, the foreign ministry in Moscow said yesterday, without providing additional details. — AFP

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MH 17 SHOT DOWN BY BUK MISSILE BROUGHT FROM RUSSIA, SAY INVESTIGATORS ...



KERN GAMBLER ON FAR RIGHT'S POPULIST TACTICS

By Francois Murphy

Four months after he took over a coalition government stunned by the far-right Freedom Party's electoral success, Austria's new chancellor has taken a populist turn, adopting positions remarkably close to those of his anti-immigration rivals. But Christian Kern's new tactics, on Turkey joining the European Union and a trade deal with Canada, have yet to erode the Freedom Party's lead in opinion polls. And trying to beat the anti-immigration party at its own game could backfire. "He is trying to cast out the FPO demon by using Beelzebub, to put it biblically," said political scientist Anton Pelinka. "He is trying to defeat the FPO by taking over its policies."

Austria has attracted worldwide attention over its botched presidential election, in which a Freedom Party (FPO) candidate narrowly lost the runoff in May only for a re-run to be ordered, and for the re-run to later be delayed until December. The FPO candidate could yet win and become the EU's first far-right head of state. But while that campaign drags on, Chancellor Kern is preparing for a more important election, for parliament, and reaching for the FPO playbook.

As his centrist government returned to the sort of disputes that shredded its popularity under his predecessor and helped fuel the FPO's rise, Kern unexpectedly suggested in August that the EU should break off accession talks with Turkey. That proposal has fallen flat with other EU leaders, who would have to approve it, but it was a safe bet at home, where polls regularly show a large majority of voters oppose Turkey joining the EU, as does the Freedom Party.

He followed that up by conducting a survey of his Social Democratic Party's (SPO) members on an EU trade deal with Canada, which was largely rejected by respondents and which he now opposes in its current form. FPO presidential candidate Norbert Hofer has long called for a referendum on any US trade deal and now says the same about the Canadian pact.

"These are two issues where the chancellor can be certain that the majority of public opinion is behind him," said political analyst Peter Filzmaier, adding that foreign policy was safer ground on which to take these stands. He said foreign policy questions were less risky because Kern could blame other countries for any setbacks while on domestic policy he had to take responsibility as chancellor.

Two Birds

Another target of these forays appears to be Kern's foreign minister, 30-year-old Sebastian Kurz, who is widely expected to take over the People's Party (OVP), the junior coalition partner, before the next parliamentary election. When that election will come is not clear - the government's term runs until 2018 but if the SPO and OVP cannot work together, a snap election will be held, and there has been much speculation about when that might happen.

Kurz, the foreign minister, and Kern have at times seemed to be trying to outbid each other in their criticism of the EU's dealings with Turkey. Both are slick public speakers who are much more popular than their own parties. That popularity could go some way towards explaining recent moves by Kern, including meeting members of the public in a tram and having his picture taken while jogging in New York with British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson.

The aim is to use his popularity "in the hope that he pulls the party up before the party pulls him down", Pelinka said. Polls show FPO support at more than 30 percent, followed by Kern's SPO in the mid-20s and the OVP on around 20 percent. While opting for a more personal style, conveyed through social media channels that the Freedom Party has long dominated, seems relatively safe, moving towards the FPO's policies is not without risk.

Kern says he opposes the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada particularly because it could allow companies to sue governments. But the deal has been negotiated and is due to be signed this month. "If you go into an issue in a populist way, you also have to be prepared to take the last step," political analyst Thomas Hofer said, calling Kern's populist turn a "serious mistake". "The last step on this issue is not to sign (CETA). How he can solve that in October I don't know," Hofer said. And populism is a game best played when not in government. "There is a level on which the FPO, as long as it is in opposition, will always be faster and more populist," he added. — Reuters

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TORIES HEADING DOWN OPEN ROAD TO BREXIT

By Florence Biedermann

Turmoil in the political opposition has given Britain's governing Conservative Party free rein to implement Brexit in its own way, but Prime Minister Theresa May is at the mercy of her own awkward squad, analysts say. May, who addressed the party's annual conference for the first time as leader yesterday, is "hugely bolstered by the absence of a strong and meaningful opposition", said Jane Green, a professor of political science at the University of Manchester.

May announced that her government will trigger Brexit negotiations by the end of March, putting the country on course to leave the European Union by early 2019. "Had the (main opposition) Labour Party been able to hold the May government to account, we would, I imagine, be seeing more detail on what she is aiming to do" in taking Britain out of the European Union, Green told AFP.

Labour has been embroiled in a bitter leadership contest since Britain's June 23 referendum vote to leave the EU. It remains in turmoil following the re-election of leftist leader Jeremy Corbyn at its annual conference last week, against the wishes of the vast majority of Labour's members of parliament. The party is also divided on mass immigration - the key issue in the referendum.

Labour Demolition Mission

At the Conservatives' annual conference in Birmingham, central England, May should have "one thing in mind: the

destruction of the Labour party," said James Frayne, strategy director of the Policy Exchange think-tank. Her keynote speech, due on Wednesday, "should mark the beginning of a process to completely dominate the political mainstream, pushing the Labour party out to the fringes," he wrote on the Conservative Home website.

May, who became Britain's second woman prime minister in July, has pledged to govern in the inclusive "One Nation" style of conservatism, which dates back to 19th-century premier Benjamin Disraeli. Reinterpreted for 2016, it means dominat-

ing the centre ground left uncontested by Labour, who many believe is further from power than at any time in more than 30 years. Voters have far more confidence in May than Corbyn to prop up the public health service, reduce mass immigration and strike post-Brexit trade relationships, according to a Britain Thinks opinion poll on September 22.

And a YouGov poll for The Times newspaper on Friday put the Conservatives on 39 percent, ahead of Labour on 30 percent. Opinion polls since July have regularly given the Conservatives a double-digit lead.

However, she has ruled out capitalizing on their advantage by calling a general election before one is due in 2020.

Handling Hardcore Brexiters

But not everything is going swimmingly for May, according to Matthew Goodwin, a professor of political science at Kent University. With only a slender majority in the House of Commons, "potentially, it could be very difficult for Theresa May to pass through controversial legislation in the future linked to Brexit," he told AFP. May, who gave qualified backing for Britain to stay in the EU in the referendum, said Sunday that Britain would start the EU exit process between the New Year and the end of March.

She will need to maintain unity in the cabinet she has chosen between those wanting a so-called "soft Brexit" and those backing full divorce from Brussels, including withdrawing from the single market. "That is a huge opportunity for a One-Nation Conservative party to demonstrate our relevance beyond our core vote to those around the country who have clearly felt so marginalised," George Freeman, chairman of the Conservative policy board, told the left-wing New Statesman magazine.

"It also creates a question for the Conservative Party: will we turn in on ourselves and generate our own arguments, or unite and reach out into the space that Corbyn has vacated?" Whatever the wishes of the hardcore Brexiters, whether in cabinet or on the Conservative backbenches, May and her government are about to enter uncharted territory. — AFP



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May delivers a speech on the first day of the Conservative party annual conference at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham, central England, yesterday. — AFP

SOCIALIST BLOODLETTING OPENS WAY FOR SOLUTION

The drama within Spain's opposition Socialist Party which saw the resignation of Pedro Sanchez as leader could now finally unblock months of political paralysis, analysts predict. Sanchez quit Saturday after high-ranking party members staged a rebellion against him for his staunch refusal to back a government under Popular Party head Mariano Rajoy. Conservative Rajoy, who took office in 2011, has despite corruption allegations surrounding his party clung on at the head of a minority administration after two inconclusive elections in less than a year.

Sanchez has been unyielding in his refusal to have his Socialists (PSOE) back Rajoy - but that stance has divided his own party. The dam broke Saturday after Sanchez, who had insisted that "no means no" in his rejection of Rajoy, lost a vote on the contentious issue at a tense gathering of more than 250 members of the party's federal hierarchy in Madrid. He announced the resignation of the PSOE's federal executive committee as well as his own and promptly left the stage. An interim executive will now take over and could direct party lawmakers to abstain in a parliamentary vote of confidence on Rajoy staying as prime minister, rather than vote against as they did last month under Sanchez's guidance. The weekend contretemps has spilt blood on the Socialist carpet - yet now they face metaphorically having to roll out another for the PP in an attempt to end a nine-month impasse.

El Pais gave the Socialist bust-up front page treatment yesterday, depicting an exasperated, finger-wagging woman in angry exchanges with one party heavyweight. "Pedro Sanchez resigns and leaves behind a more divided and defeated PSOE," read the El Pais headline. "Broken" and "devastated" were other choice media adjectives for the state of the party. December and June elections left the PP as the largest party but without a majority as two newcomers to the political scene, the radical leftist Podemos and the liberal Ciudadanos, gnawed away chunks of the traditional parties' votes.

'Years of Hegemony'

With the PP garnering 137 seats out of 350 they require the 85-strong PSOE contingent to abstain in order to form a viable administration. If the deadlock persists beyond Oct 31 there will have to be yet another election in December. Sanchez had hoped to bring together sufficient support for a leftist-led government rather than bow to another term

of PP rule characterised by austerity-led fiscal policy following the economic crisis which broke in 2008.

Opponents of Sanchez took the line that the PSOE risked being seen as holding up matters and also losing votes to Podemos, who have emerged as a serious threat to the party. Given the evident deep split in the party, political analyst Pablo Simon of Madrid's Carlos III University believes those risks reduce still further any chance PSOE might have of forming an alternative to the PP. "There remain only two choices - abstain or else fresh elections," said Simon. "And after the bloodletting we have seen I think the PSOE knows that to present itself once more at the polls would be suicidal." Therefore, the hypothesis of abstention has hugely gained ground.

Abstention across the PSOE the parliamentary caucus,

would leave Rajoy's PP in a very strong position, not least as a substantial proportion of PSOE voters would likely abstain. "The year started without a government and will finish with the renaissance of Senor Rajoy," predicts Ignacio Escobar, director of leftist online daily eldiario.es. The split in PSOE ranks "will mean years of hegemony by the Right," one source close to Sanchez told AFP ahead of the weekend's cataclysmic events for his party.

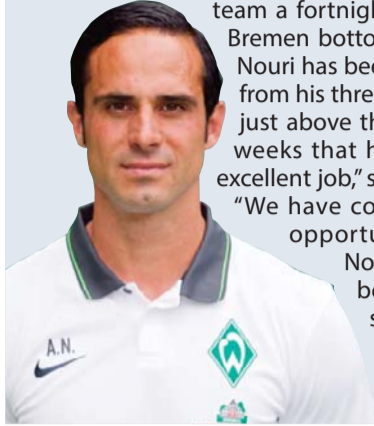
To avoid another election the Socialists face having to back a tough budget after Brussels ordered more belt-tightening to reduce a soaring public sector deficit. In the meantime, Javier Fernandez Fernandez, who favors abstention, will be the PSOE's interim leader with a meeting of the federal committee expected within days to decide on its position regarding the PP. — AFP



Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) leader Pedro Sanchez leaves after a press conference at the PSOE headquarters in Madrid following his resignation as party head during an extraordinary meeting of the PSOE Federal Committee on Saturday. — AFP

BREMEN GIVE CARETAKER COACH NOURI UNTIL MAY

BERLIN: Werder Bremen have given caretaker coach Alexander Nouri a full-time contract until the end of the season with the 37-year-old charged with keeping them in Germany's top flight. Having been in charge of the club's under-23 side, Nouri was appointed head coach of the senior team a fortnight ago when Viktor Skripnik was sacked with Bremen bottom of the table after four straight defeats. But Nouri has been rewarded after picking up a win and a draw from his three games in charge to steer the club up to 15th-just above the relegation places. "He has shown in recent weeks that he can connect with the team and done an excellent job," said Bremen's director of sport Frank Baumann. "We have come to the decision that he should get the opportunity to continue the work he started." But Nouri is far from assured of remaining in charge beyond next summer. "We have never made a secret of the fact that in our requirements for the job description, experience plays an important role," added Baumann.—AFP

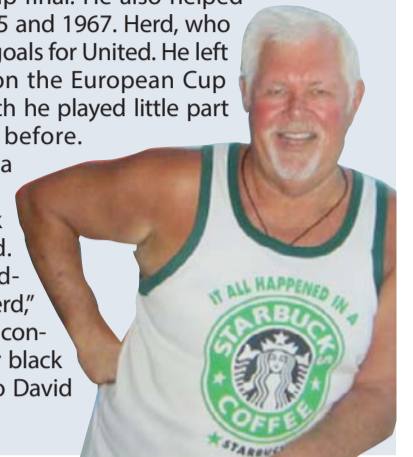


MODRIC FACES MONTH OUT AFTER KNEE SURGERY

MADRID: Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric is set to be sidelined for a month after undergoing surgery on a left knee cartilage injury yesterday. "Modric has today undergone successful arthroscopic surgery in his left knee to remove a patellar chondral fragment," Madrid said in a statement. The club refused to state how long Modric will be sidelined, but various Spanish media outlets reported the former Tottenham Hotspur playmaker faces a month out. Modric had already been ruled out of Sunday's La Liga clash with Eibar, but is now set to miss Croatia's World Cup qualifiers against Kosovo and Finland. After the international break, Modric is also expected to sit out league meetings against Real Betis, Athletic Bilbao and Alaves, as well as a Champions League clash with Legia Warsaw. Modric's stunning performances over the past two years have made him one of Madrid's most important players alongside the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo and Gareth Bale. However, coach Zinedine Zidane has a wealth of creative midfield options in Isco, James Rodriguez and Marco Asensio to fill in during Modric's absence.—AFP

EX-MAN UTD STRIKER HERD DIES AGED 82

LONDON: Former Manchester United and Scotland striker David Herd has died at the age of 82, his old club announced yesterday. Herd played a key role in United's revival following the 1958 Munich air disaster and scored twice in their 3-1 win over Leicester in the 1963 FA Cup final. He also helped United win the English league title in 1965 and 1967. Herd, who previously played for Arsenal, scored 145 goals for United. He left United for Stoke a month after they won the European Cup against Benfica in 1968, a success in which he played little part having suffered a broken leg the year before. United and Stoke were involved in a Premier League match yesterday, with players from both clubs wearing black armbands as a mark of respect to Herd. "Everybody at Manchester United is saddened to hear of the passing of David Herd," the club posted on manutd.com. "We can confirm that both United and Stoke will wear black armbands this afternoon to pay tribute to David Herd, who played for both clubs."—AFP



SEPAANG: Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain leaves his car after an engine failure during the Malaysian Formula One Grand Prix at the Sepang International Circuit in Sepang, Malaysia, yesterday.—AP

HAMILTON DEMANDS ANSWERS OVER MALAYSIAN GP FAILURE

SEPAANG: A furious Lewis Hamilton demanded answers from his Mercedes team after an engine failure cost him victory in yesterday's Malaysian Grand Prix and severely dented his chances of winning this year's Formula One drivers' championship.

Hamilton was leading with 16 of 56 laps remaining at the Sepang International Circuit when his engine blew in spectacular style, with flames shooting from the rear of the car. It handed the race lead to Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo, who went on to take his first race victory since the 2014 Belgian Grand Prix, leading a one-two finish with his teenage teammate Max Verstappen.

More painfully, it gave Hamilton's Mercedes

teammate and title rival Nico Rosberg - who finished an impressive third - a 23-point lead in the championship. Rosberg had to fight back from 21st place after lap one when he was the innocent party in a collision with Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel.

With five races left in the season, it will be difficult for Hamilton to make up the deficit to the ultra-consistent Rosberg in the championship fight. The frustrated Briton felt victimized by circumstances, and he hinted at perhaps more than that.

"My question is to Mercedes," Hamilton said. "We have so many engines made for drivers, but mine are the only ones failing this year. Someone needs to give me some

answers because this is not acceptable. We are fighting for the championship and only my engines are failing. It does not sit right with me. "Someone doesn't want me to win this year, but I won't give up. I will keep pushing." Red Bull and Ricciardo took a lucky victory, given the circumstances that afflicted the Mercedes pair, but were in the right place to capitalize and make up for the win the Australian felt robbed of in Monaco when a team pit-stop misunderstanding cost him victory. "Told you I'd win one. Sometimes you just need things to swing your way," said Ricciardo, whose tears during the Australian anthem played after the race mixed freely with the copious sweat generated in the tropical condi-

tions, which generated track temperatures that consistently topped 50 degrees (122 F).

"It's been an interesting, I would say, two years since my last victory and it feels awesome for sure. I am so grateful for it," he said. Ricciardo delighted many fans, and disgusted quite a few others, by celebrating victory with his newly adopted tradition of pouring the celebratory champagne into his sweaty race shoe and then drinking it - something he calls the 'Shoey'. Not only that, he also convinced team principal Christian Horner, plus Verstappen and Rosberg to also drink from the unconventional vessel. Asked to comment on the flavor, Ricciardo said it had a fruity taste, but Rosberg deadpanned: "I hope he does not win any

more races this year." Rosberg held onto third place despite incurring a ten-second penalty for an aggressive passing move on Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen on lap 38. Raikkonen finished fourth, extending Ferrari's winless streak this season. Williams driver Valtteri Bottas made a one-pit stop strategy work to take fifth place, as did Renault's Jolyon Palmer who finished tenth for his first ever points finish in F1.

Force India's Sergio Perez and Nico Hulkenberg took sixth and eighth places respectively, separated by McLaren's Fernando Alonso, who did well to finish seventh after starting the race from last on the grid. Alonso's teammate Jenson Button was ninth in his 300th grand prix start.—AP

PALMER POINT A BOOST FOR HIS F1 FUTURE PROSPECTS

SEPAANG: Jolyon Palmer made a strong case to be retained by the Renault team in 2017 as he scored his first ever Formula One points by finishing tenth in yesterday's Malaysian Grand Prix.

The British driver was the only one to start the race on the hardest-compound tire and made the most of a one-pitstop strategy to take the last points place.

"It feels good, I'm really happy," Palmer said. "The race was really smooth; I wish it was always so straightforward. The car gave me everything I needed, we handled the tires well and the team did a great job with strategy and pit stops. Finally everything came together and we got it home to P10."

Palmer's future at Renault is in doubt, with the team chasing an experienced driver in 2017 as it seeks to make a leap forward under the sport's new design

regulations. While the team had reportedly chased Force India's Sergio Perez, the Mexican was expected to announce in the coming week that he was staying put. That increased the likelihood that Renault will retain at least one of its current driver pairing: Palmer and Kevin Magnussen.

Magnussen finished in the points in the previous race in Singapore and was considered the more likely of the pair to be retained, but Renault team principal Fred Vasseur was impressed by Palmer's performance yesterday.

"After a disappointing qualifying yesterday he got his head down and delivered a very good race," Vasseur said. "We ran to an aggressive strategy and Jo did everything required to make this work so a great effort from him and the team today."—AP

RICCIARDO WINS MALAYSIAN GP

SEPAANG: Daniel Ricciardo led a Red Bull one-two as a distraught Lewis Hamilton's hopes of regaining the world championship lead went up in smoke at a dramatic, action-packed Malaysian Grand Prix yesterday.

Hamilton was leading with 15 laps to go when his engine exploded at the Sepang International Circuit. "No, no," cried the Englishman as flames appeared at the back of his car, leaving Ricciardo to take the lead ahead of teammate Max Verstappen.

Championship leader Nico Rosberg survived a first-bend spin involving Sebastian Vettel and a 10-second penalty to take third place and extend the gap over Mercedes teammate Hamilton to 23 points with just five races remaining. Hamilton was almost in tears with his head in his hands after the dramatic end to his race which has dealt a severe blow to his chances of securing a third drivers' championship in a row.

He had looked all set to snatch back the lead from Rosberg, who was relegated from second on the grid to 21st after he was hit by Vettel on the first bend.

Vettel was forced to retire with a broken front suspension in the incident that also involved Verstappen. Hamilton had got away cleanly from pole position and sped off into the distance, clear of the trouble behind him. He looked to be heading for a comfortable win until his engine let go in the most spectacular fashion.

An ecstatic Ricciardo celebrated his first win of the season on the podium with a "shoey"-drinking champagne from his driving boot.

"It was a race of challenges," said Ricciardo. "Lewis got the lead and had his problems. It went the other way in Monaco, and I will take this today," said the Australian, referring to his botched final pit stop which handed Hamilton victory in Monaco earlier in the season.

EMOTIONAL RICCIARDO

"It has been two years since (my) last win, and it has been a bit emotional. I said two weeks ago we would win one and we did."

Verstappen, who turned 19 on Friday, celebrated his podium finish and his birthday by also drinking the sweaty cocktail.

The Red Bull pair battled thrillingly wheel-to-wheel through six bends at one point, with Ricciardo just managing to hold off the



SEPAANG: Red Bull Racing's Australian driver Daniel Ricciardo (L) and his teammate Max Verstappen (R) celebrate with their trophies after the Formula One Malaysian Grand Prix in Sepang yesterday.—AFP

teenage Flying Dutchman. "We were pushing the whole race," said Verstappen. The defensive move proved crucial as it gave Ricciardo track position at the final pit stop under the virtual safety car caused by Hamilton's demise. Ricciardo was then able to hold onto the lead comfortably till the end.

Meanwhile Rosberg sliced his way back through the field imperiously after the first corner drama and was surprised to make the podium. "I thought the race was all over, so I am really happy to fight back all the way to the podium," Rosberg said.

"I wished for a better day but that is the way it goes sometimes."

Hamilton now has to pick himself up quickly ahead of next Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix. Mercedes non-executive chairman Niki Lauda

said the team had "let down" Hamilton. "I am really upset. We should not let him down with an engine failure. It was a fairly new engine, it was not old in the car," Lauda told Sky Sports television. "What went wrong I do not know and we will work to correct it."

"I am taking him to Japan tomorrow in my plane. I hope I can (cheer) him up. The championship is over when the last race is over, 23 points is a lot but you never know."

Hamilton's failure to finish and Rosberg's third place mean that Mercedes missed a chance to clinch the constructors' championship in Sepang. They have 553 points but Red Bull, who picked up 43 points for the one-two, have closed the gap to 194 points with a maximum of 215 up for grabs in the remaining five races of the season.—AFP

CHINA'S QIAO BIN WINS KOREA OPEN

SEOUL: Rising Chinese star Qiao Bin won the final round of the men's singles at the Badminton World Federation Korea Open Sunday after crushing South Korean veteran Son Wan-Ho. The 23-year-old unseeded player, currently world number 41 in men's singles, defeated the sixth seed, world number eight Son 21-11, 21-23, 21-7. "I'm so thrilled. I have no words to express my feelings," Qiao said. "I have learned my game by watching many of my seniors. First of all, I should mention Lin Dan and Chen Long as my models," he said, referring to two top Chinese players.

Sunday's game also saw South Korean superstar Lee Yong-Dae retire from international matches after winning the men's doubles with Yoo Yeon-Seong. The duo staged an upset against China's Li Junhui and Liu Yuchen-champions at last week's Yonex Open Japan — 16-21, 22-20, 21-18 in a nail-biting 85-minute thriller.

"It was a difficult match...but I am glad that I was able to finish my international career with such a good game," Lee said after the match. Lee, with 43 titles under his belt, is the second most successful Superseries badminton player after Malaysian legend Lee Chong Wei. The 28-year-old multiple Olympic medallist, including gold in mixed doubles at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, has been a poster boy of South Korean badminton and been widely popular in Asia. In the women's tournament, Japanese seventh seed Akane Yamaguchi defeated South Korea's Sung Ji-Hyun 20-22, 21-15, 21-18. South Korea dominated the doubles games, with Jung Kyung-Eun and Shin Seung-Chan beating China's Luo Ying and Luo Yu 21-13, 21-11 in women's doubles. In mixed doubles, another South Korean pair Ko Sung-Hyun and Kim Ha-Na defeated China's Zheng Siwei and Chen Qingchen 21-14, 21-19.—AFP

INDIAN BOARD REJECTS SEVERAL KEY REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS

MUMBAI: The Indian cricket board (BCCI) has rejected some of the Supreme Court's key recommendations aimed at administrative reform, a move that could bring sanctions from the country's highest judicial body. The Court accepted in July most of the recommendations of the Lodha Committee, a three-member panel it set up to look into the opera-

tions of the world's richest cricket board, which is run by politicians and businessmen and has been criticized for a perceived lack of transparency.

In their report, former chief justice of India RM Lodha and two of his colleagues recommended age and tenure restrictions for top officials, as well as banning them from serving successive

terms. The BCCI, after a marathon special general meeting on Saturday, said in a statement it had adopted "important recommendations" made by the committee but made no mention of the age and tenure recommendations nor a "one state/one vote" policy.

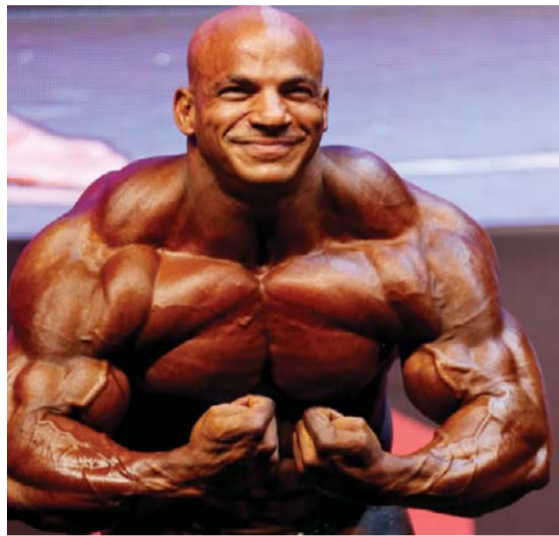
"Wherever they (members) find legal challenges and practical difficulties, they

have given their viewpoints and have not accepted those recommendations," BCCI President Anurag Thakur told reporters.

The BCCI said it would not be able to provide a 15-day gap between the India team's matches and the Indian Premier League Twenty20 tournament in 2017, as per the recommendations, as the

Champions Trophy in England is scheduled around the same time. Thakur said a detailed report would be sent to the Lodha Committee and submitted to the Supreme Court, which has scheduled the next hearing in the case for Thursday. The Court had earlier said all of the committee's recommendations must be adopted by the BCCI. —Reuters

BIG RAMI WINS KUWAIT BODYBUILDING CHAMPIONSHIP



KUWAIT: The Egyptian Bodybuilding champ, Rami Al-Seba'ee (AKA: Big Rami) who works at Oxygen Institutes in Kuwait, recently won Kuwait Championship for professional bodybuilders that was recently held at the Ice Skating Rink for the first time in Kuwait, GCC and the Middle East. —Al-Qabas, Photo by Yasser Al Zayyat

DU PLESSIS CENTURY SETS UP BIG VICTORY

JOHANNESBURG: South African captain Faf du Plessis overcame a thumb injury to hit an aggressive century and set up a 142-run win over Australia in the second one-day international at the Wanderers Stadium yesterday.

Du Plessis made 111 as South Africa piled up 361 for six wickets after being sent in to bat. Australia made a bad start and were bowled out for 219 in reply, leaving them 2-0 down in a five-match series.

Du Plessis praised his team for what he described as "almost a perfect batting and bowling performance. The batsmen laid the basics well and the bowlers were exceptional".

He singled out opening bowlers Dale Steyn and Kagiso Rabada, who both claimed an early wicket and put Australia's batting under immediate pressure.

Australian captain Steve Smith said he felt South Africa's total was only 20 or 30 runs above par, given the history of the Wanderers pitch.

"But if you are chasing that sort of target you need a good start and you need things to go your way. Every game's a must-win for us now," Smith said.

Du Plessis was struck on the left thumb by a throw from Aaron Finch as he raced through for a quick single to score his first run. He immediately went down clutching the thumb and required lengthy treatment on the field before resuming his innings.

The injury did not stop him playing some powerful drives as he went to his half-century off 42 balls. He reached his sixth one-day international century off 84 deliveries with 13 fours. He was eventually caught on the boundary after facing 93 balls, without adding to his boundary tally.

"Lucky I don't use that thumb on my bat," he said.

On a field renowned for high scoring, a run riot seemed in prospect when Quinton

de Kock and Rilee Rossouw made 41 runs off the first five overs, bowled by international newcomers Chris Tremain and Joe Mennie.

But the bowlers came back reasonably well in ideal batting conditions, conceding only 107 runs off the next 20 overs before Du Plessis and JP Duminy lifted the scoring rate in a third wicket stand of 150 off 111 balls. Duminy hit 82 off 58 balls with 10 fours and three sixes. Australia were soon in trouble in reply, with Steyn and Rabada building up good pace.

Finch top-edged a catch to square leg off Rabada in the second over and Smith fell to Steyn, with De Kock taking a brilliant diving catch when the Australian skipper glanced the ball to leg.

David Warner kept Australia's hopes alive until he was fifth out for a relatively restrained 50, pulling off-spinner Duminy to midwicket.

Travis Head made a maiden international half-century and put on 59 for the sixth wicket with Matthew Wade before Rabada came back to dismiss Head leg before wicket for 51.

Tremain and Mennie replaced Scott Boland and Daniel Worrall after De Kock mauled the Australian bowlers in hitting 178 as South Africa chased down a target of 295 in the first match in Centurion on Friday.

There was no repeat from De Kock, however. He made 22 off 24 balls before he was caught at mid-on off John Hastings. Rossouw, who faced most of the bowling in an opening partnership of 70, went on to score 75 off 81 balls, with 10 fours.

It was a second successive half-century by Rossouw, who kept his place in an unchanged team despite regular one-day opener Hashim Amla having recovered from illness which kept him out of Friday's match. — AFP



KOLKATA: Indian cricketer Rohit Sharma shapes up to sweep a delivery on the third day of the second cricket test match against New Zealand in Kolkata, India, yesterday. —AP

SHARMA HELPS INDIA BUILD BIG LEAD AGAINST N ZEALAND

KOLKATA: Batsman Rohit Sharma's dominant half-century put India firmly in command of the second Test against New Zealand as the hosts stretched their lead to 339 on the third day in Kolkata yesterday. India were 227 for eight at stumps in their second innings with Wriddhiman Saha on 39 and Bhuvneshwar Kumar on eight at the crease. New Zealand bowlers Matt Henry and Mitchell Santner took three wickets each. Sharma, who scored 82, put on 103 runs for the seventh wicket with Saha to get their second innings back on track after the New Zealand seamers rattled the Indian top-order with regular wickets.

Fast bowlers Henry and Trent Boult shared five wickets between them to strike back on the two-paced pitch after the visitors conceded a 112-run lead. "I think over the last two days, you may have seen the wicket that it's not a typical Kolkata wicket. They have relaid the surface and you may see uneven bounces occasionally," Sharma told reporters.

"The conditions were not easy... you can't relax," Henry, who had returned with figures of 3-46 in the first innings, sent opener Murali Vijay (4) and Cheteshwar Pujara walking back to the pavilion soon after the lunch break.

Henry trapped Pujara lbw for 7 on a pacy in-cutter that hit the outside of the batsman's front pad, but TV replays suggested that the ball might have missed the leg stump.

Boult joined forces to get Shikhar Dhawan, who got a nasty blow on his thumb early on in the innings against the left-handed pacer, trapped lbw for 17. Boult's big wicket was that of India skipper Virat Kohli, who struck a purposeful 45 to lift India from 43/4. The star batsman was trapped lbw. Kohli's departure once again raised New Zealand's hopes of a fightback but Sharma made sure the hosts kept up the good work of stretching their lead further.

Sharma tackled the New Zealand bowling with aplomb as the middle-order batsman struck 9 fours and 2 sixes during his 132-ball stay at the crease.

SCOREBOARD	
KOLKATA, India: Scoreboard at stumps on day three of the second test between India and New Zealand at Eden Gardens:	
India 1st Innings: 316	India, 2nd Innings
New Zealand, 1st Innings (Overnight 128-7)	Shikhar Dhawan lbw b Boult 17
Martin Latham lbw b Kumar 13	Murali Vijay c Guptill b Henry 7
Tom Latham lbw b Shami 1	Cheteshwar Pujara lbw b Henry 4
Henry Nicholls b Kumar 1	Virat Kohli lbw b Boult 45
Ross Taylor c Vijay b Kumar 36	Ajinkya Rahane c Boult b Henry 1
Luke Ronchi lbw b Jadeja 35	Rohit Sharma c Ronchi b Santner 82
Mitchell Santner lbw b Kumar 11	Ravichandran Ashwin lbw b Santner 5
BJ Watling lbw b Shami 25	Wriddhiman Saha not out 39
Matt Henry b Kumar 0	Ravindra Jadeja c sub (Neesham) b Santner 6
Jeetan Patel c Shami b Ashwin 47	Bhuvneshwar Kumar not out 8
Neil Wagner lbw b Shami 10	Extras: (10b, 1lb, 2w) 13
Trent Boult not out 6	Total: (for eight wickets) 227
Extras: (9b, 4lb, 5w, 1nb) 19	Overs: 63.2. Minutes: 301.
TOTAL: (all out) 204	Still to bat: Mohammed Shami.
Overs: 53. Batting time: 241 minutes.	Fall of wickets: 1-12, 2-24, 3-34, 4-43, 5-91, 6-106, 7-209, 8-215.
Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-18, 3-23, 4-85, 5-104, 6-122, 7-122, 8-182, 9-187.	Bowling: Trent Boult 14-5-28-2 (1w), Matt Henry 15.2-2-44-3, Neil Wagner 13-2-43-0 (1w), Jeetan Patel 8-0-50-0, Mitchell Santner 13-1-51-3.
Bowling: Bhuvneshwar Kumar 15-2-48-5, Mohammed Shami 18-1-70-3 (5w), Ravindra Jadeja 12-4-40-1 (1nb), Ravichandran Ashwin 8-3-33-1.	

INDIA'S BATTING DEPTH

Sharma got good support from number-eight Saha, who scored an unbeaten 54 in the first innings, as the batting duo entertained the raucous home crowd at Kolkata's Eden Gardens. "That depth gives you a leverage to play your shots and be aggressive and more expressive," Sharma said while talking about India's lower-order batting strength.

Santner's left-arm spin finally got through Sharma's defenses after the batsman was caught behind to Luke Ronchi, who kept wickets in place of BJ Watling. Saha and Kumar then played through the final few overs in fading light until the umpires called it a day.

"I think anything that is set, is definitely achievable," said Boult about the New Zealand

squad's mindset. "We got to take small steps at a time. If we can set small goals of batting for half a session and then a session."

Earlier Indian pacers Kumar and Mohammed Shami helped bowl out New Zealand for 204 in response to India's first innings score of 316. Overnight batsmen Jeetan Patel, who top-scored with 47, and Watling put together a fighting 60-run eight-wicket stand before the Indian bowlers struck back. "He did very well... all 11 of us can take a leaf out of his book and apply ourselves like he did because they were valuable runs," Boult said of Patel's defiant knock.

Kumar (5-48) and Shami (3-70) shared eight wickets between them to hand over the advantage to India, who won the first Test in Kanpur to go 1-0 up in the three-match series. —AFP

UK CRICKET CLUB LIFTS CHAMPIONS CUP OF FRIDAY CRICKET LEAGUE

KUWAIT: In a tensed and nail biting match where fortunes kept changing at regular intervals, UK Cricket Club held on to their nerves and confidently sailed through to claim the Championship title of FCL-Season 3.

After winning the toss and electing to bat first, TCC United started off well but lost the plot midway until all-rounder Farhan Meer took them to a respectable total of 109 after the allotted 16 overs with the loss of 7 wickets.

For UKCC it was once again Mohammed Sadiq who continued his amazing form in the tournament and did not disappoint in the finals too. Spirited bowling by TCC did give a few hiccups but it was their fielding that really let them down. Drop catches and you lose matches and this is exactly where the plot was lost. The confident batting lineup of UKCC saw their team through in the last over of the game.

The tournament, in its 3rd season organized by Friday Cricket League had 30 teams with more than 600 participating players. After the league matches and the playoffs, it drilled down to two of the best teams UKCC and TCC United; fighting for the title in the grand finale. The match turned out to be a true fit for the finals with all the tension, thrill, fun and excitement.

The event was graced by prominent personalities who gave their precious time to boost the morale of all teams and players. In the presentation, Director of Friday Cricket League, Asif Abdullah, welcomed and thanked the Chief Guest, The Honorable Deputy Chief of Mission, Indian Embassy, Kuwait Shri Shubashis Goldar who was accompanied with the well renowned Dr Abdul Razzak Rumane. He also thanked the

Chairman of MGCC Mahmoud Abdullah for providing the ground and for being there to encourage the players. Also present for the event was Arif Kazi who is a known celebrity in the world of cinema. A producer, director and actor, he is also the president of Fankar Arts and has been entertaining Kuwait for the

last 30 years. Other guests who made the event special with their presence were Gulam Mohammed Thakur, Anand D'souza, Aslam Thakur and many more. The presentation ended with distribution of token of appreciations to all guests of honor followed by a photo session.



Winning Team - UK Cricket Club



Runner-Up Team - TCC United

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play in the second One Day International between South Africa and Australia yesterday in Johannesburg, South Africa.

South Africa Innings		D. Warner c Miller b Duminy	50
Q. de Kock c Tremain b Hastings	22	S. Smith c de Kock b Steyn	14
R. Rossouw c sub b Hastings	75	G. Bailey b Parnell	9
F. du Plessis c Smith b M. Marsh	111	M. Marsh c de Kock b Parnell	19
J. Duminy b M. Marsh	82	T. Head lbw b Rabada	51
D. Miller c Zampa b Hastings	26	M. Wade c Duminy b Parnell	33
F. Behardien c Warner b Tremain	13	J. Hastings c Miller b Phehlukwayo	23
W. Parnell not out	8	J. Mennie b Tahir	1
A. Phehlukwayo not out	13	A. Zampa b Phehlukwayo	8
Extras (lb-1 w-10)	11	C. Tremain not out	0
Total (for 6 wickets, 50 overs)	361	Extras (lb-4 w-6)	10
Fall of wickets: 1-70 Q. de Kock, 2-146 R. Rossouw, 3-296 J. Duminy, 4-308 F. du Plessis, 5-334 F. Behardien, 6-347 D. Miller.		Total (all out, 37.4 overs) 219	
Did not bat: D. Steyn, K. Rabada, I. Tahir		Fall of wickets: 1-3 A. Finch, 2-29 S. Smith, 3-55 G. Bailey, 4-87 M. Marsh, 5-114 D. Warner, 6-183 T. Head, 7-185 M. Wade, 8-204 J. Mennie, 9-213 J. Hastings, 10-219 A. Zampa.	
Bowling: C. Tremain 10-0-78-1 (w-2), J. Mennie 10-0-82-0 (w-1), J. Hastings 10-0-57-3 (w-1), M. Marsh 10-0-68-2 (w-1), A. Zampa 8-0-54-0, T. Head 2-0-21-0 (w-5).		Bowling: D. Steyn 7-0-37-1 (w-1), K. Rabada 7-0-31-2 (w-4), W. Parnell 7-0-40-3, A. Phehlukwayo 6.4-0-59-2 (w-1), I. Tahir 7-1-31-1, J. Duminy 3-0-17-1.	
Australia Innings		Result: South Africa won by 142 runs.	
A. Finch c Behardien b Rabada	1		

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MAKATI: In this Friday, Sept 30, 2016 photo, a Filipino trader looks at an electronic board showing the exchange rates and a downward graph during afternoon trading at the Philippine Stock Exchange in the financial district. —AP

UNCERTAINTY OVER DUTERTE ALARMS INVESTORS

UNPREDICTABILITY SLOWING LONGER-TERM FOREIGN INVESTMENT

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's bloody anti-drug war and his foul-mouthed outbursts in defense of the campaign have unnerved foreign investors in one of Asia's fastest-growing economies. Analysts and businessmen point to uncertainties about Duterte's policies and flip-flopping pronouncements as largely to blame for foreign selling in the stock market and the peso's plunge to a seven-year low, reversing the initial optimism after his June 30 inauguration. Some experts say unpredictability is slowing longer-term foreign investment in the Philippines. Photos and reports in the media of killings of suspected drug dealers and users - more than 3,000 since July 1 - have contributed to sagging confidence.

"We can all deal with risks. We can put measures in place to provide for risks," said Guenter Taus, the head of the European Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines. "But uncertainty is a factor that we do not like in business, and that is exactly what we're experiencing right now because we don't know where we are heading."

Taus said several companies that had intended to establish operations to the Philippines now prefer to wait and see what happens under Duterte. He declined to say which companies had changed their plans. He said investors unsure about the Philippines may choose to look at other Southeast

Asian countries to gain access to the region's common market of more than 600 million people.

The American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines said this month that while the country's economic fundamentals are strong and its potential high, there is growing concern that Duterte's policies and behavior could affect long-standing optimism by American businesses in the Philippines. The chamber said that the large number of deaths in the anti-drug campaign is harming the Philippines' image, and that some investors are asking if the drug war "reduces the rule of law." In addition, traditionally excellent bilateral relations between the US and the Philippines have recently been strained by language from Philippine leaders, the chamber said.

Profane insults

Earlier this month, before heading to a regional summit in Laos where he had been scheduled to meet with President Barack Obama, Duterte used the Tagalog phrase for "son of a bitch" as he told Philippine reporters he wouldn't accept questions from Obama about extrajudicial killings that have occurred during the drug crackdown. Obama cancelled the meeting.

After the European Parliament recently called for an end to the drug killings and expressed con-

cern over the scale of deaths, Duterte hit back with a profane insult and raised a fist with his middle finger thrust out. And this week Duterte said US-Philippine joint military exercises end this year, though his foreign minister said later that they will continue until 2017 as previously agreed.

On several fronts, Duterte has had an uneasy relationship with Western countries, including the United States, an important treaty ally. He has said he's charting a foreign policy that is not dependent on the US, and has taken steps to bolster relations with Russia and revive ties with China that had been strained under his predecessor, Benigno Aquino III, over territorial conflicts.

He said he won't allow government forces to conduct joint patrols of disputed waters near the South China Sea with foreign powers, apparently scrapping a deal Aquino reached with the US military earlier this year. Duterte has also said he wants US forces out of the southern Philippines, saying minority Muslims there resent the presence of American troops. All of this has raised concerns about a Philippine economy that grew 7 percent in the second quarter and 6.9 percent over the first half of the year compared to the same periods last year - among the fastest rates in the region.

The credit-rating agency S&P Global warned last week that the stability and predictability of policy-

making in the Philippines "has diminished somewhat under the new presidency." It kept the country's credit rating at investment grade, with a stable outlook, but said that rating was unlikely to rise over the next two years. Last Monday, the peso hit its lowest level against the dollar since September 2009. It fell further Friday, closing at 48.50 pesos per US dollar.

External and domestic factors

Central bank Deputy Gov Diwa Guinigundo said foreign direct investment continues to grow. It stood at \$4 billion for January to June this year compared to \$2.2 billion for the same period a year ago. He noted that while Duterte became president June 30, his election victory came nearly two months earlier.

"As far as fundamentals are concerned I think they are outstanding fundamentals, but then the sentiment is something else," he told reporters late Wednesday on the sidelines of an economic forum. Sentiment is driven by both external and domestic factors and it's difficult to attribute negative sentiment to a specific factor like Duterte's statements, he added.

Guinigundo said the government's economic program follows the broad strokes that have produced 70 quarters of economic growth, low and

stable inflation and a healthy banking system. "And yet the stock market is dropping and the exchange rate is moving consecutively down such as we are now the worst-performing currency in the region," he said.

Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno said Wednesday that the depreciation of the peso is a result of the strengthening of the dollar more than the weakening of the local currency, and should not be a cause for concern. But Joey Cuyegkeng, ING Bank's senior economist in Manila, said the peso was the only Asian currency that slid last week from a week earlier, despite favorable economic reports, including an increased balance of payment surplus in August.

Presidential spokesman Martin Andanan said that the fundamentals of the economy are solid and strong, and that the anti-drug campaign will enhance the Philippines' image to attract more foreign investment. In a speech to troops the day after the S&P Global warning was released, Duterte shrugged off the agency's remarks. He said if business and the economy are affected, "so be it." "Get out, then we start on our own," he said, apparently referring to Western investors. "I can go to China. I can go to Russia. I had a talk with them. They are waiting for me. So what the hell." —AP

IRAN OFFERS HOTEL TAX BREAKS IN ATTEMPT TO BOOST TOURISM

TEHRAN: Iran offered up to 13 years of tax holidays to hoteliers at an international tourism summit yesterday as it seeks to boost visitor numbers and revamp its dilapidated hotels. "All economic activities related to... tourism will enjoy 100 percent tax holidays between five to 13 years depending on the region," deputy economy minister Mohammad Khazaei told hoteliers from 18 countries who had gathered in Tehran, many from Europe.

Since the lifting of international sanctions under last year's nuclear deal, the moderate government of President Hassan Rouhani has made tourism a top priority for rebuilding Iran's struggling economy. Visitor numbers have already boomed in recent years thanks to a partial thaw in the country's relations with the world, rising from 2.2 million annually in 2009 to 5.2 million in 2015. By 2025, they are hoping to reach 20 million visitors a year. The government

hopes to see 300 new hotels over the next five years as it seeks radical improvements to its low-quality tourist accommodation.

It is hoped a rejuvenated tourism sector can create some 140,000 new jobs, with around half coming from Iran's handicrafts sector, said the minister for roads and urban development, Abbas Akhoundi. Projects to build some 170 four- and five-star hotels are already under way, he added. "We are working actively on 10 to 15 projects in Iran," Christophe Landais, chief operating officer for France's Accor Hotels in Iran, told AFP.

Religious tourists

Accor was the first international company to open hotels after the historic nuclear deal - an Ibis and Novotel outside Tehran's Imam Khomeini airport last September. Landais said the group also hopes to tap the huge religious tourism market of Iran's second city, Mashhad, which hosts the mausoleum of a key figure in Shiite history, the Eighth Imam. "Mashhad is the destination for pilgrims. Actually Mashhad receives more pilgrims than Mecca in Saudi Arabia - about 25 million," he said.

A hotel operator from the United Arab Emirates said he was also about to sign a contract in Mashhad. "We've been invited by many, many investors, many developers" to join in partnerships there, Imad Elias, chief of the Dubai-based Roda Hotels and Resorts, told AFP. "We had Iran as a potential spot for expansion even before the lifting of sanctions. Iran is a gold mine, a jewel that needs to be explored," he added.

Akhoundi said the government had also finalized plans for \$10 billion worth of rail projects to help improve the country's connectivity. Tourism made up 7.6 percent of Iran's GDP in 2015, "which we hope to increase to about nine percent in 2016," he added. —AFP

SAUDI BILLIONAIRE SELLS TORONTO FOUR SEASONS

RIYADH: Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal's company has sold the luxury Four Seasons hotel in Toronto for \$170 million, it said yesterday. Kingdom Holding Company said it sold the hotel for 225 million Canadian dollars (152 million euros) to Shahid Khan, the Pakistani-American businessman who founded auto parts maker Flex-N-Gate and owns English Premier League club Fulham.

KHC said it had made a profit of 17 million Canadian dollars from the sale of the hotel, which it bought four years ago for 200 million Canadian dollars. "This transaction marks yet another success for KHC's value realization strategy from our high-quality

hospitality investments," said Prince Alwaleed.

"We are particularly pleased to be passing ownership of this property to Mr Shahid Khan who is known for his passion for the Four Seasons brand," he said in a statement. "Kingdom continues to be a stakeholder in this asset through our interest in the management company Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts which will continue to operate the hotel." Prince Alwaleed owns 95 percent of KHC, a vast global investor with shares in the Euro Disney theme park, Apple, News Corporation and the US banking giant, Citigroup. The company also owns a string of luxury hotels including the George V in Paris. —AFP

KFH: SALE OFFERS FOR 5 YEARS SETTLEMENT PERIOD AS CASH PRICE



KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House KFH is offering a wide array of financing promotions in collaboration with renowned car dealerships within the framework of a marketing campaign themed "sale offers at the price of cash for 5 years settlement period".

The campaign encompasses numerous auto brands; JAGUAR, BMW, AUDI, INFINITI,

HONDA, TOYOTA CAMRY, and LAND CRUISER, in addition to special and exclusive discounts on boats and marine equipment in collaboration with specialized dealerships which are YAMAHA, Al-Ghanim Marine and Al-Ghanem motors.

Clients can avail such discounts when visiting KFH showrooms in Shuwaikh, Dhajji,

AlAhmadi, and Alrai, or when visiting KFH team who is accessible at all showrooms of car dealerships. Moreover, clients can avail this opportunity to decide on the suitable car of the mentioned list with financing price of cash. The offer lasts until end of October for some brands and while stocks last for others.

Personal finance offered by KFH satisfies customers' financial needs in compliance with the principles of the Islamic Sharia. Clients can purchase numerous commodities and services, or get personal finance facilities, at very competitive rates.

KFH is keen on continuing its support to local market and create new partner-

ship with car dealerships and companies to reinforce strategic relationships with all sectors in the local market including furniture, electronics, kitchens, constructions materials and vehicles in order to achieve mutual interests and enable customers to achieve their needs and meet their ambitions.

AUB SEMINAR ON CHANGES APPLIED AROUND CORPORATE INHERITANCE TAX

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) announced yesterday that it will organize a special seminar for its Private Banking clients, on the "Changes applied around corporate inheritance tax for unregistered companies owning real estate property in the United Kingdom". The initiative to organize this seminar reflects the Bank's keen interest in communicating with its elite clients on such tax and related legislative changes - the latest being an inheritance tax on properties owned indirectly by nonresidents in the UK through unregistered companies (offshore).

The seminar will be held at the Bank's Head Office on Tuesday 4 October at 12:00 pm, and will include a number of clients who own property in the UK through offshore companies.



Senior managers will also be present including Mr. Medhat Tawfik, AUB's Private Banking and Wealth Management General Manager. In addition, Mr. Piers Master, Partner at Charles Russell Speechlys, a London-based law firm will lead the seminar, and shed light on the impact of changing tax rates for investors along with the challenges they potentially face.

Mr Medhat Tawfik said, "AUB is keen to keep its clients informed at all times through the pro-

vision of the latest updates across the financial and real estate investment sectors, locally and internationally. This is as part of the Bank's philosophy of safeguarding its clients' varied financial and investment interests. AUB is committed to providing a high quality service to its clients. Specifically, in this instance, in relation to the latest changes taking place in tax legislations in the UK, an important destination for real estate investors from Kuwait and many other countries. AUB continues to lead the way in organizing important seminars and discussions for its clients. The Bank organizes a series of integrated seminars and discussions throughout the year, which focus on a number of important topics relating directly to the interest of clients.



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BURGAN BANK LAUNCHES NEW DRAW

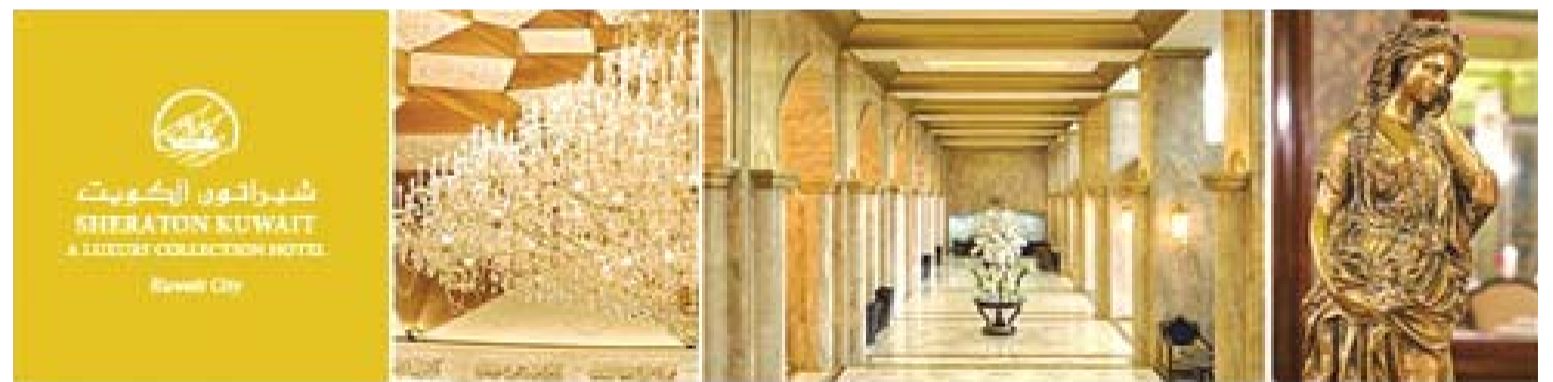
KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the re-launch of Al Thuraya Salary Account draw where customers can now win a Nissan Patrol car every month. With the introduction of this new draw, customers transferring their salaries will automatically enter the draw, whereby every KD 10 in the account provides a chance to enter the monthly draw.

Greatly increasing the frequency of the draw demonstrates the bank's philosophy of providing greater chances of rewarding loyal customers while encouraging new account holders to benefit from the bank's unique offerings.

The Al Thuraya Account's features

range from the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and any other major currencies, access to account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards and much more. The account has been further developed in response to offering more benefits and increasing chances to win.

Customers wishing to open an Al Thuraya account can do so by simply visiting the nearest Burgan Bank branch and obtain all the necessary details, or simply call the bank's call center on 1804080. For further information, customers can also visit the bank's website on www.burgan.com.



LIFE IS A COLLECTION OF EXPERIENCES
LET US BE YOUR GUIDE

SHERATON KUWAIT WINS 'KUWAIT'S LEADING HOTEL' AWARD

KUWAIT: The Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel won the prestigious "Kuwait's Leading Hotel" Award held by World Travel Awards for the sixth consecutive year which has been preserved by Sheraton Kuwait for 50 years of continuous success and outstanding

excellence. As a pioneer in the hospitality industry, Sheraton Kuwait's Leading Hotel Award represents the persistent finest standards of hospitality, best quality services and promoting the pathway to presenting the most luxurious of standards throughout the

country. This prestigious award was received by Mr Mounir Amer, General Manager of Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait and Mr Mazen Al Mhana, the Director of Sales and Marketing at Sheraton Kuwait and Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait.



As Kuwait's Leading Hotel for the sixth consecutive year and as Kuwait's enduring Social Icon, Sheraton Kuwait has offered award-winning standards of excellence and hospitality since its inception in 1966 providing the widest selection of accommodations boasting the finest culinary offerings in the country with seven restaurants and lounges which present a true gastronomic experience with impeccable service to satisfy the needs of each individual guest. In addition to its restaurants at The Avenues Mall, where the visitors can taste our best dishes from different cuisines in the world.

Fahed Abushaar - General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait stated "I am proud to hold our title as Kuwait's Leading Hotel for the sixth consecutive year through a journey of fifty years of outstanding excellence.

I would like to thank each member of our hotel family for their outstanding diligence and the loyalty of our guests as we couldn't have it done without their trust and valuation. We are confident that we will maintain the highest standards of excellence in service and hospitality.

FOX: BREXIT WTO TERMS WITH MINIMAL DISRUPTION

BIRMINGHAM: Agreeing Britain's post-Brexit membership terms with the World Trade Organization will not be simple but should be done in a way that causes minimal disruption to global trade, trade minister Liam Fox said yesterday.

Fox, a leading Brexit campaigner ahead of the June 23 referendum, said Britain did not need to re-apply to join the international trade body when it leaves the European Union as it was already "a full and founding member". But as Britain is currently a member of the WTO through the EU, it will need to agree new membership terms, or schedules of tariffs, following Brexit and those terms will have to be agreed by all other WTO members.

"What we do need to have are the schedules, which are effectively our license to trade. That's what we are discussing at the present time," Fox said in an interview with the Huffington Post on the sidelines of the Conservative Party's annual conference in Birmingham, central England. "We will want to see a position on WTO schedules adopted in a way that causes minimal disruption. That is not an entirely simple process, and we would never pretend that it is, but neither is it an insoluble riddle."

Earlier this week said the Japanese automaker could scrap a potential new investment in Britain's biggest car plant if the country did not pledge compensation for any tax barriers resulting from Brexit. Asked about threats to withdraw investment, Fox said Britain's strong legal base offered companies certainty.

"Investment is a balance of risks when you come to look at it, and I think that the UK remains the number one destination for safe investment," he said. Prime Minister Theresa May said on Sunday Britain will trigger the formal divorce procedure by the end of March, but Fox said the government would not rush the process. "What we want is the best exit for the United Kingdom, not the quickest, and what we need to concentrate on is the quality of the relationship we will have afterwards," he said when asked if Britain would have left the EU by 2020.

Fox said levels of protectionism globally were on the rise. While declining to comment specifically on Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who has been accused of promoting isolationist policies, he said the US election debate was lacking in arguments for free trade. "There is a temptation for politicians to pander to the short term view that protectionism will be the answer but it never really is," he said. "The debate in the United States at the moment in particular, you are getting much less of a free trade flavor than I have ever known in any election." — Reuters

New investment
Before the referendum, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevedo said renegotiating Britain's relationship with the rest of the WTO could take years or decades. The chief executive of Nissan

WE STAND WITH DEUTSCHE BANK: TOP EXECES

FRANKFURT: Germany's top executives voiced confidence in Deutsche Bank yesterday, after fears over the lender's financial health saw shares plummet to a record low. Speaking to the Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung, the heads of some of Germany's biggest companies, including Siemens, Daimler and Munich Re, said the drama of the past week had not dented their trust in the country's biggest bank. "German industry needs a Deutsche Bank that accompanies us throughout the world," chairman Juergen Hambrecht of chemicals giant BASF told the newspaper. "We stand with Deutsche Bank."

Deutsche shares fell into a tailspin last week as anxious investors fretted over a US demand for an unaffordable \$14 billion fine over the bank's role in the subprime mortgage crisis, fuelling worries over the lender's capital level. After days of volatile trading, during which the German government was forced to deny speculation of a rescue plan to prevent the bank from collapsing, Deutsche's shares staged a recovery Friday on a report it was nearing a deal to bring the fine down to \$5.4 billion.

Reinsurance giant Munich Re's chief executive Nikolaus von Bomhard told the Frankfurt news-

paper he had followed the developments closely but currently saw no need to "reduce our business volume" with Deutsche Bank. "Deutsche Bank has a great tradition, a solid foundation and beyond that, a good future ahead. Of that I am convinced," chief executive Dieter Zetsche of luxury carmaker Daimler was quoted as saying. Siemens chief Joe Kaeser added that the bank's management "is pursuing the right goals and has our fullest confidence". In a show of solidarity, BASF's Hambrecht said he himself had just bought stock in the embattled lender. "(CEO) John Cryan has earned our trust," he said. — AFP

ZAIN PROMOTES DR AROWOJOLU TO CHIEF REGULATORY OFFICER

KUWAIT: Zain Group, a leading mobile telecom innovator across the Middle East and Africa, announces the promotion of Dr Andrew Arowojolu to Group Chief Regulatory Officer (CRO), effective October 1, 2016.

This important role within Zain Group will see Dr Andrew liaise with Regulatory Authorities across the company's eight-country footprint, dealing with multiple issues including spectrum license terms and conditions as well as working with various industry bodies such as the GSMA and Samena Council to enhance the regional telecommunications sector. As part of the senior executive management team, he will also address regulatory matters pertaining to the development of new expansion opportunities and in support of the implementation of Zain's digital lifestyle strategy.

A seasoned telecom executive with over 25 years of experience and a proven track-record in the telecom industry across the Middle East, Europe, Africa and Asia, Dr Andrew joined Zain in 2003 and most recently held the role of Group Executive Director, Strategy & Business Development. Prior to joining Zain, he had worked in professional engineering consulting for 11 years for UK based firms, specializing in radio network design, software solutions, and engineering services for telecommunications operators.

Commenting on the appointment, Zain Group CEO Scott Gegenheimer said, "With the ever increasing importance of telecom regula-

tion in our region, Dr. Andrew has the right qualifications and industry experience to support all Zain operations in their crucial dealings with regulators. Given his distinguished record, I have every confidence he will further ensure that critical regulatory issues, which are prominent and have a material impact on our business now and into the future, are given their due attention."



Dr Andrew Arowojolu, Zain Group CRO

Gegenheimer continued, "It is a particular pleasure to promote a Zain stalwart to a senior position, fulfilling our human resources policy of capitalizing on and promoting our talented leaders from within."

Since August 2003, Dr Andrew has held senior leadership positions within Zain Group in the areas of corporate strategy development, merg-

ers & acquisitions, and business development. Over a 13-year period, he played key roles in Zain's successful international M&A transactions, initial public offerings and license bids, as well as digital venture capital investments in the Middle East and Africa region. Milestones include the purchase of 13 mobile operations from Celtel International for a total consideration of USD 3.36 billion in May 2005 and the subsequent USD10.7 billion sale of Zain Africa BV to Bharti Airtel in June 2010; the 2008 Zain Saudi IPO and subsequent USD 1.6 billion rights issue in 2012; as well as both the Zain Bahrain and Zain Iraq IPOs that were completed in 2014 and 2015 respectively.

On the regulatory/business development front, Dr. Andrew has actively led relevant licensing assignments, as well as being directly involved in the development of regulatory policy papers and public consultation responses on greenfield licences, spectrum auctions and awards, and regulatory positions on digital services in markets across the MENA region.

A UK-national, Dr. Andrew holds a Doctorate degree (Ph.D.) in Mobile Radio Communications (1994) and a M.Sc., (Distinction) in Microelectronic and Telecommunications from University of Liverpool, United Kingdom (1991) and a B.Sc. (First Class) in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from University of Lagos (1988). Dr. Andrew is a Member of the Institution of Engineering and Technology and of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers.



EASA HUSAIN AL-YOUSIFI & SONS CO AND SKYWORTH LAUNCHES NEW GENERATION OLED TV IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Easa Husain Al Yousifi & Sons Company and Skyworth, announced the launch of their new generation OLED TV in Kuwait at an event hosted at the Holiday Inn Hotel and was attended by a number of Corporate guests, dealers and Customers of Al-Yousifi Company in addition to the Management of Easa Husain Al-Yousifi and Skyworth with presence of press and Media figures.

Established in 1988, Skyworth has grown to be one of the Top Five Color TV brands in the world and a top brand in Chinese dis-

plays industry market. Skyworth yesterday unveils its newest & latest model LED-65S9300 - 65" OLED TV. LED-65S9300 offers the highest resolution, targeting customers who want the best in terms of size and picture quality.

Skyworth's latest release of new generation OLED TV will offer revolutionary Audio-Visual experience & brings the viewers an amazingly detailed picture with one of the highest standards in color & contrast and close-to-reality experience. Unlike Normal LED TV, in an OLED TVs there is no need for tradi-

tional Backlight. Challenging the world with super slim design & viewing experience enhanced by introduction of self-luminous OLED Technology.

Skyworth OLED TVs are edge free, Light weight, Super Slim (5.27mm) having extremely fast response time (0.001 ms) & wide viewing angle. LED-65S9300 is powered with the cutting edge JBL Sound bar stand which is one of world's top brands for sound bar products. Skyworth OLED TVs has 6 JBL Front speakers & one JBL Bass on back providing the best dulcet

sound which makes you enjoy the special auditory tour.

LED-65S9300 is awarded the 'GOLD AWARD for design' by China International Industrial Fair & the 'AVF Innovation Award' making it a true flagship model from Skyworth. The revolution has begun. The all-new SKYWORTH SIGNATURE OLED TV combines the best picture quality with an ultra-premium design beyond any other television, ever. And it will change everything. With its picture-on-glass design, the SKYWORTH SIGNATURE OLED TV is the future of television.



SAO PAULO: Brazilian President Michel Temer votes during municipal elections. —AFP

BRAZIL'S WORKERS PARTY FACES MAJOR SETBACK IN ELECTIONS

BRASILIA: Brazilians began voting yesterday in the first elections since the impeachment of former president Dilma Rousseff - and her leftist Workers Party (PT) is expected to suffer a big setback. The nationwide election of mayors and city councils in 5,568 municipalities across Brazil will be a test of support for the country's political parties in the midst of its worst corruption scandal and deepest recession since the 1930s.

Centrist parties allied to Brazil's President Michel Temer, who succeeded Rousseff in August, are expected to do well. Victory, particularly in Brazil's largest cities, would boost the parties as they prepare for the 2018 presidential race. "The Workers Party has no presidential alternatives and will suffer big losses," said Claudio Couto, a political scientist at the FGV think tank in Sao Paulo. "The party made a lot of mistakes in recent years and never admitted it was wrong."

Temer's Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) is expected to expand its number of mayors. The Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), the other major centrist force, should win in Sao Paulo, which is a traditional launching pad for national office. In Sao Paulo, a bastion of anti-Rousseff sentiment, even PT candidates have eschewed the classic red T-shirt of PT supporters to avoid association with the party born in the city's industrial suburbs.

According to ARKO Advice consultancy in Brasilia, the PT will win only one mayoral race in a state capital city, in Rio Branco, in the small state of Acre. Millionaire businessman Joao Doria is favored to become Sao Paulo mayor, though likely in an Oct. 30 runoff vote, as he is not forecast to win the absolute majority needed for a first-round victory on Sunday. His election would bolster a likely presidential bid in 2018 by the PSDB governor of the state Geraldo Alckmin.

The elections are the first held under a ban on corporate campaign financing that was meant to clean up Brazilian politics following the massive graft scandal surrounding state-controlled oil company Petrobras. But the new rules have instead helped wealthy candidates who are using their personal funds and conservative candidates backed by evangelical churches.

The elections have generated little enthusiasm among Brazilian voters in a country battling double-digit unemployment and high inflation. Voting is obligatory in Brazil, but many disenchanted voters would rather not cast any ballot. "What's the point? There are no alternatives, look left look right, all the candidates are corrupt," said Ana da Rocha, a maid who lives in Itapoa on the outskirts of Brasilia. "Once they get elected, they do nothing but look after themselves, so they don't have to work again in their lives," she said. —Reuters

US SUPREME COURT TO WEIGH REACH OF INSIDER TRADING LAW

NEW YORK: The US Supreme Court is set to consider this week a closely watched insider trading case that could limit the ability of prosecutors to pursue such charges against hedge fund managers and other traders. The eight justices, who open their 2016-17 term today, will hear arguments on Wednesday in the case of an Illinois man, Bassam Salman, who prosecutors said made nearly \$1.2 million trading on inside information about mergers involving clients of Citigroup Inc, where his brother-in-law worked.

It is the first time in two decades that the Supreme Court has taken up a case involving insider trading, a crime that the US Congress has never defined and has left the courts and the Securities and Exchange Commission to shape. Salman was convicted of conspiracy and securities fraud charges arising from insider trading and sentenced in 2014 to three years in prison.

At issue in Salman's appeal is whether the government in insider trading cases must prove that an alleged source of corporate secrets like the brother-in-law received a tangible benefit like cash in exchange for any tips. Lawyers and prosecutors say that requiring such proof would make it harder for authorities to pursue insider trading cases, potentially preventing prosecutions in which corporate executives tip friends or relatives without any tangible quid pro quo.

"This will be a court decision that could have significant ramifications on if tipping cases can continue to be brought with the fervor they have been brought in the last decade," said David Miller, a defense lawyer at the law firm Morgan, Lewis & Bockius. The appeal follows ramped-up efforts by U.S. authorities to crack down on insider trading, with the SEC announcing charges against more than 550 people in the past six years.

A wave of insider trading cases brought by Manhattan federal prosecutors, meanwhile, resulted in Galleon Group founder Raj Rajaratnam's conviction in 2011 and a \$1.8 billion settlement and plea deal in 2013 with hedge fund SAC Capital Advisors LP. But in December 2014, a federal appeals court in New York dealt prosecutors a major blow by overturning the conviction of two hedge

fund managers, Todd Newman and Anthony Chiasson, and narrowing authorities' ability to pursue such cases. The New York-based 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals held that to be convicted, a trader must know that the source received a benefit in exchange, and that such a benefit was "at least a potential gain of a pecuniary or similarly valuable nature."

Dropping charges

The ruling forced prosecutors under Manhattan US Attorney Preet Bharara to drop charges against 12 other defendants, out of 107 people charged under his watch since 2009. While the Supreme Court in October 2015 declined to review the case, the justices in January agreed to review a similar one, Salman's case, in which a federal appeals court in California had issued a potentially conflicting ruling.

Salman argued that his trading was not illegal as no proof existed that his brother-in-law, in tipping a family member who in turn tipped Salman, received anything beneficial in exchange. The San Francisco-based 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals rejected that argument, saying that requiring a tangible benefit in such a circumstance would allow insiders to tip their relatives so long as they got nothing in exchange.

Prosecutors are hoping the Supreme Court adopts the 9th Circuit's view and rejects the 2nd Circuit's narrow interpretation, which authorities said could result in some people avoiding charges and could affect investigations. For example, hedge fund investor Leon Cooperman, who the SEC sued last month for insider trading, has said that federal prosecutors in New Jersey have informed him that they are holding off on pursuing criminal charges until the Supreme Court rules.

Many defense lawyers say that what Wall Street is looking for is a ruling clearly defining what conduct violates the law. "I do think clarity is particularly important in this context, and right now there is a lack of clarity," said Stephen Ascher, a lawyer at Jenner & Block who backs a broad definition. "The Supreme Court has the opportunity now to clean that up." —Reuters

CHINA CITIES RESTRICT PROPERTY PURCHASES

SHANGHAI: Three Chinese cities have announced new restrictions on property purchases, as second- and third-tier cities across the country try to cool soaring home prices stoked by property speculators. Residents of the inland city of Zhengzhou who already own two properties and non-residents who own one will now only be able to buy homes larger than 180 square meters (1,938 square feet), according to a notice posted on the local government's website late on Saturday.

In Chengdu, the capital of southwest Sichuan province, prospective buyers will only be allowed to purchase one property in certain city districts, and those buying their second property will need to place a down payment of no less than 40 percent of the purchase price, the local government said. The Chengdu government also said it would penalize developers who were sitting on land without starting construction on time as promised and would clamp down on rumor mongering in the property market. —Reuters



COUNTDOWN BEGINS TO INTERSEC 2017

DUBAI TRADE SHOW TO FEATURE TWO-THIRDS OF WORLD'S TOP 50 SOLUTIONS PROVIDERS

DUBAI: The Middle East market for security, safety, and fire protection is on track for double digit growth over the next four years, as regional governments and the private sector look for improved technologies to better protect assets, people, businesses, and borders.

Led by the Gulf nations of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, regional countries are making rapid strides to upgrade infrastructure and secure their countries, with research from analysts Frost & Sullivan (F&S) highlighting the tremendous potential that remains to be unlocked in the region.

An industry white paper published by F&S outlined the latest trends and opportunities in the market, with spending in Middle East commercial, cyber, and homeland security, along with fire protection, and smart home building automation on a steep upward growth curve.

According to F&S, the Middle East commercial security market, which includes intruder alarms, CCTV surveillance, electronic locks, perimeter protection, door alarms, access control and identification systems, is expected to be worth US\$10.2 billion by 2020, growing annually by 24 per cent from its US\$3.8 billion value in 2015.

Similarly, the region's homeland security market is forecast to grow annually by 21 per cent up to 2020, with market revenues increasing to US\$34.2 billion, driven predominantly by investments in critical infrastructure, major events, and the need to counter perceived threats.

Fire protection also has huge growth potential, with the Middle East's fire safety market estimated to grow annually by 12.5 per cent from 2012 to 2020. During this period, the market will grow from US\$1.6 billion to US\$4.2 billion, making it one of the world's largest fire safety markets.

1,300 exhibitors

The latest figures come in the final countdown to Intersec 2017, the world's leading trade fair for security, safety, and fire protection, which is scheduled to be ten per cent larger year-on-year when it opens from 22-24 January at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The 19th edition of the annual three-day event will feature more than 1,300 exhibitors from 52 countries, while over 31,000 visitors from 128 countries are expected to attend as they seek the latest solutions across seven show sections of Commercial Security, Fire & Rescue, Safety & Health, Homeland Security & Policing, Perimeter & Physical Security, Information Security, and Smart Home & Building Automation.



Ahmed Pauwels - CEO, Messe Frankfurt Middle East.

Ahmed Pauwels, CEO of Messe Frankfurt Middle East, the organizer of Intersec, said: "Middle East organizations and end-users realize the impact of security and fire safety on their overall productivity and bottom lines, while regional governments have always been committed to protecting critical assets and people in the face of perceived threats along with social and commercial interests."

"In this respect, the region has carved out a niche for itself the global security, safety, and fire protection industries and Intersec, as the leading global trade platform with a pronounced regional focus, remains the natural vehicle for international manufacturers to showcase their wares to regional buyers."

"The coming edition will be even wider in scope and reach and will provide trade visitors a comprehensive look at what's available to suit their varied needs, whether that be for governments and authorities, or for private sector end-users in aviation, oil & gas, construction, finance, hospitality, logistics, retail or healthcare," added Pauwels.

50 security solutions

With more than 580 exhibitors, Commercial Security is the largest section at Intersec 2017, with more than two-thirds of the world's top 50 security solutions players on board, including Hikvision, Bosch, Dahua, Assa Abloy, Tyco, FLIR, Hanwha Techwin, Axis Communications, Avigilon Panasonic,

Infinova, IDIS, and Milestone Systems.

Promise Technology, a leading developer of storage solutions for the surveillance industry, is a returning exhibitor in 2017, and will use the show to introduce some of its most exciting solutions yet.

John van den Elzen, Promise Technology's Surveillance Business Unit General Manager, explained: "Promise Technology has been developing NVRs (network video recorders) and storage optimized for surveillance for years, and now we'll launch a complete new product line with a management server, analytics server and recording server."

"With our business taking off in the Middle East due to the strong demand for storage, we'll also introduce a new high-capacity surveillance storage block solution, which is ideal for deployments requiring a large centralized storage solution, offering an open-platform, simplicity, optimization, and the most comprehensive partner ecosystem."

Added van den Elzen: "The Middle East is showing very strong interest in cloud-based storage solutions, and we're working on cloud-based solutions with an eye towards the growing trend of smart cities. With the Dubai Expo 2020 coming up and the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, there are certainly opportunities for Promise to work together with our partners to further develop surveillance cloud solutions."

Information security

With more than 50 exhibitors, Information Security has been one of the major growth sections at Intersec, and has doubled in size every year since it was first introduced to the show in 2014, as security threats to businesses spread beyond the physical realm.

Headline exhibitors confirming their participation early next year include Agility Grid, Al-Mazroui - ICAS, Commend, Dell, Easy World, Hanvon, Infosec, Matrix, Netronics, Quantum IT, and Rittal, a manufacturer of IT networking and Data Centre Physical Infrastructure solutions.

Joseph Najjar, the Managing Director for Rittal Middle East, said: "Intersec, with its global recognition, elevates Rittal strengths on its IT Physical Security offerings to the market. Acknowledging the growing need for physical security for IT, our display of physical security offerings (IT Security Room and Micro Data Centre) will be a strong resilient proposition to the leading security consultants and clients who value their critical IT equipment and data centres."

"The physical display of the IT Security Room on our stand at Intersec 2017 will be, one of the realistic touch-and-feel showcase

to experience our Promise - 'Our Expertise - Your Benefit'."

Smart Home & Building Automation is the most recent show section added to Intersec's vast product scope, as urbanisation and a new age of ICT (Information and communications technology) aids the march toward smarter integration of different functions like electro-mechanical controls, fire and safety security systems, and energy management.

According to F&S, the Middle East Building Automation market is anticipated to grow 7.32 per cent annually with a revenue projection of US\$ 560.5 million by 2020. Saudi Arabia and the UAE, with their large projects on housing and commercial construction, will drive demand for smarter and control-enabled buildings.

Among the 50 plus leading players in this section at Intersec 2017 are Ferman, Somfy, HDL, Videocom, Techcom, Hunt and Teleste, all of which will present their latest solutions to a regional market that's beginning to

International flavor

The show's strong international flavor will be further enhanced by 14 country pavilions from Canada, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Korea, Pakistan, Singapore, Taiwan, UK, and USA.

Returning features to Intersec 2017 include the Safety Design in Buildings Pavilion in the Fire & Rescue section, which has doubled in size and will shine the light on fire-rated building materials such as facades, fabrics, doors, windows, paints, stucco, and egress systems. A Techtexil Pavilion in the Safety & Health section will also present the entire spectrum of technical textiles and nonwovens for professional and protective clothing, as well as the latest laminating technologies for coating, printing, finishing and other products and services.

A GPEC (General Police Equipment Exhibition & Conference) Pavilion at the Homeland Security & Policing section; a Job Pavilion, bringing thousands of professionals



demonstrate interest in the benefits of home automation and systems integration.

Fire & Rescue (400 exhibitors), Safety & Health (100 exhibitors), Homeland Security & Policing (100 exhibitors), and Perimeter & Physical Security (50 exhibitors) wrap up the dedicated show sections at Intersec 2017, firmly underlining its position as world's most influential exhibition dedicated to security, safety and fire protection.

together with specialist security-related recruitment companies; and three industry conferences held in cooperation with the Dubai Police and Dubai Civil Defence wrap up the host of additional features.

Intersec 2017 is held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and officially supported by Dubai Police, the Dubai Civil Defence, and Dubai Police Academy.

CALIFORNIA OPENS PATHWAY FOR CARS THAT LACK STEERING WHEEL

SAN FRANCISCO: California regulators have changed course and opened a pathway for the public to get self-driving cars of the future that lack a steering wheel or pedals. It's not going to happen immediately - automakers and tech companies are still testing prototypes.

But, in a shift, the state's Department of Motor Vehicles said in a revision of draft regulations released late Friday that the most advanced self-driving cars would no longer be required to have a licensed driver if federal officials deem them safe enough.

The redrafted regulations will be the subject of a public hearing Oct. 19 in Sacramento. The DMV has been wrestling for several years with how to oversee the emerging technology.

In December, the agency released an initial draft of self-driving car regulations that required a licensed driver in any self-driving vehicle. The industry reacted with great disappointment, as the ultimate vision of many companies is a car that has no wheel or pedals. That approach is based on the argument that humans are not very good at driving, and anyway cannot be relied on as a backup to a car that typically drives itself but might fail in a way that required a person in the driver's seat who might be distracted or even asleep to snap to attention.

The DMV's new document coincides with the release last week of a 112-page federal proposal under which any self-driving car should pass a 15-point safety assessment before the public can get hold of it. Among other things, the safety assessment asks automakers to document how the car detects and avoids objects and pedestrians, how hardened it is against cyberattacks and what how its backup systems will cope should the software fail. In incorporating the federal approach, California dropped a proposal that a third-party company certify the safety of self-driving cars.

The new draft regulations released Friday include several other new provisions. Among them is wording that would prohibit advertising vehicles with lower levels of automation - such as Tesla Motors' Autopilot, which on divided highways can keep a car's lane, brake and accelerate on the understanding that a person is paying attention all the time - from being advertised as "autonomous" or "self-driving."

The company that stands to gain the most from the state's embrace of cars without a wheel or pedals is Alphabet, where the Google self-driving car project envisions cars that allow no human control other than a start and emergency stop button. A spokesman for the Google self-driving car project did not have a comment Friday on the changes to the proposed regulations. — AP

OCEAN WARRIORS UNVEIL NEW HIGH SPEED SHIP AGAINST JAPAN WHALERS

AMSTERDAM: With its distinctive pirate-like flag flying from the mast, the sleek, high-speed concrete grey Ocean Warrior is the latest weapon in a bitter war between marine conservationists and Japan's whaling fleet. "The one thing that we were missing in our fleet was a vessel with speed and endurance," said Alex Cornelissen, chief executive of Sea Shepherd Global.

"With the Ocean Warrior, we have a ship that can outmatch any poaching vessel on the high seas," said Cornelissen, also the captain, giving

AFP a tour of the ship before its departure from the Netherlands this weekend bound for Australia.

"We are now able to follow them anywhere they go and even run away if they become too aggressive." Bought at a cost of 8.3 million euros (\$9.3 million) funded by public lotteries in Britain, The Netherlands and Sweden, Sea Shepherd Global is counting on the vessel in its upcoming battle to save the whales in the icy waters of the Southern Ocean.

The new vessel, designed by a Dutch shipbuilder, took 18 months

to build. Stretching some 54 metres (yards), it is a state-of-the-art ship, equipped with hybrid propulsion to extend its range, four powerful engines and a helicopter landing pad.

But it also has a secret weapon on the bridge a red cannon can eject a powerful plume of water to obstruct the views of the whalers, or block them from boarding. For almost four decades, Sea Shepherd has fought to "defend, conserve and protect" marine life in the vast expanses of the planet's oceans.

Masquerading as science

And for 30 years they have been playing cat-and-mouse on the high seas with determined and at times ruthless whaling fleets. "The minute you actually find them, you get very excited and the whole crew is excited because that's what you came down here for," said Cornelissen, sitting at the controls which resembles the helm of a spaceship.

"And then you just go into this high energy mode. You don't get tired anymore. You can stay up for 24 hours without interruption," he added. "All the sacrifices you made to be down in the Antarctic, you know, missing Christmas, missing your family, it's all become worth it when you find the whalers." Despite a global moratorium imposed in

1986, Japan has continued to hunt whales using a loophole in the ban, but makes no secret the giant mammals end up on dinner plates.

Tokyo was forced to call off its 2014-15 hunt after the International Court of Justice, based in The Hague, ruled its annual Antarctic foray was commercial, and only masquerading as science.

But the hunt resumed in late 2015, with the fleet returning to Japan in March this year after having killed some 333 Minke whales. Tokyo has sought to close down the anti-whaling campaigns in court saying the activists ram their ships, snare propellers with ropes and harass crews with paint and stink bombs.

The conservationists in turn complain that the whalers have thrown stun grenades at them, and tried to sabotage their boats.

Vengeance

Sea Shepherd USA and its renowned founder Paul Watson are now prevented by a legal injunction from leading whale defence campaigns against the Japanese. But Cornelissen and Sea Shepherd Global, based in Amsterdam, have taken up the battle. They estimate that in the past 10 years they have saved some 5,000 whales from Japanese harpoons. — AFP



Stretching some 54 metres, Ocean Warrior is equipped with hybrid propulsion to extend its range, four powerful engines and a helicopter landing pad. — AFP

FDA APPROVES 'ARTIFICIAL PANCREAS' TO MANAGE DIABETES

WASHINGTON: Federal regulators have approved a first-of-a-kind "artificial pancreas," a device that can help some diabetes patients manage their disease by constantly monitoring their blood sugar and delivering insulin as needed.

The device from Medtronic was approved Wednesday for patients with Type 1 diabetes, the kind usually diagnosed during childhood. About 5 percent of the nation's 29 million Americans with diabetes have this type.

Doctors said they have long awaited a device that could help patients around the clock. "I can't wait to get my hands on it because I can think of a lot of our patients who need this," said the Cleveland Clinic's Dr. Betul Hatipoglu. "Now I have a helper who is going to help me to help them." Type 1 diabetes patients now have to manage their insulin through multiple injections throughout the day or a drug pump that delivers it through a tube. Their own pancreas doesn't make insulin, a hormone needed to turn food into energy. They face increased risks of dangerously high blood-sugar levels, heart disease and many other health problems.

The new MiniMed 670G consists of a drug pump, a sensor that measures blood sugar and a tube that delivers the insulin. The sensor measures sugar levels every 5 minutes, infusing or withholding insulin as needed. Patients still have to manually increase insulin before meals.

Medtronic said the device will cost between \$6,000 and \$9,000, similar to its other insulin pumps.

Older insulin pumps simply deliver a baseline level of insulin, and patients must monitor their

sugar levels and give themselves more insulin to keep their blood sugar from getting too high. A big danger is having too much insulin in the body overnight, when blood-sugar levels naturally fall. People can go into comas, suffer seizures and even die.

The Food and Drug Administration said it approved the device based on a three-month study of more than 120 patients. The study reported no major adverse events, such as dangerously low blood sugar, showing that the device is safe for those 14 years and up, regulators said in a release.

The pump is about the size of a deck of cards and can be worn on a belt or carried in a pocket.

The device "can provide people with Type 1 diabetes greater freedom to live their lives," said Dr. Jeffrey Shuren, director of the FDA's device center.

While the device can currently only be marketed for Type 1, doctors said it could eventually be used by those with Type 2 diabetes, where the body gradually loses the ability to produce or use insulin. Many of those patients are overweight or obese and face increased risk of heart attack, stroke and kidney failure.

"Type 2 diabetes is such an overwhelming spectrum of the disease and I think there's a significant slice of that pie that could benefit from the artificial pancreas," said Dr. Robert Courgi of Southside Hospital on New York's Long Island.

The agency said it is requiring Ireland-based device manufacturer Medtronic to further study the implant's performance in patients.

The company is also studying the device for potential use in children ages 7 to 13. — AP



NOUMEA: This file photo taken on February 27, 2016 shows an aerial view of the Isle aux Canards near l'Anse Vata south of Noumea in the south Pacific. Marine biologists are crossing their fingers after New Caledonia's coral reef, a UN-inscribed natural wonder of the world, was hit by bleaching this year. Bleaching — when corals turn pale after tropical seas dramatically warm — has been the prelude to a catastrophic die-out in many parts of the world. — AFP

SCIENTISTS IN NEW CALEDONIA HOPE FOR BEST AFTER CORAL BLEACHING

NOUMEA: Marine biologists are crossing their fingers after New Caledonia's coral reef, a UN-inscribed natural wonder of the world, was hit by bleaching this year. Bleaching — when corals turn pale after tropical seas dramatically warm — has been the prelude to a catastrophic die-out in many parts of the world. That was the fear in many minds when New Caledonia's reef was slammed in February by a warming episode that was as brutal as it was unexpected.

Results from the first surveys since show the worst-case scenario has been avoided, but the area remains vulnerable. "The temperature reached as high as 32 degrees (Celsius, 89.6 degrees Fahrenheit) two or three metres (yards) from the shore for a long period," said Fanny Houlbrecque, with France's Institution for Development Research (IRD). "All it takes is for water to be just one degree (1.8 F) above normal for coral to bleach." The warming was a jolt for many experts. It coincided with the El Nino weather pattern, in which waters in the western Pacific — where the French territory is located — should typically be a bit colder than normal.

The corals in New Caledonia form a double barrier reef, the second largest in the world, that extends around the territory's largest island and several smaller ones over a mighty 1,500 kilometres (900 miles) — greater than the length of Britain. One of the few reefs in the world to be considered in relatively good health, the system is a magnet for divers. It is home to a vast range of species, including dugongs, nesting green sea turtles and sharks. It was added to the UN's World Heritage List in 2008.

The scientists have now completed a first appraisal of the consequences of the 2016 warming and conclude that — for now — the damage is limited. "We were bracing for worse, given the area that could have been bleached. But the corals have recovered better than we imagined," said Houlbrecque. "The situation isn't the same everywhere," she said. Out of four sites that her team monitors near the New Caledonian capital Noumea, two — the Baie des Citrons and Canard Islet — suffered coral death of 10-20 percent, and a higher percent-



NOUMEA: This file photo taken on February 27, 2016 shows an aerial view of coral reefs, part of the UNESCO-listed World Heritage Area, in New Caledonia in the South Pacific. — AFP

age of bleaching. But "there have been few losses" at the other sites, she said. A similar picture emerges for parts of the reef beyond Noumea, said Sandrine Job, a marine biologist who heads an association gathering 40 divers who provide scientists with data on coral reefs. She estimated bleaching had occurred on between two and five percent of coral at monitored sites, although parts of the reef that extended towards the shore, and were in warmer water, were far more affected.

BLEACHING MECHANISM

Corals depend on single-cell plankton called dinoflagellates that live in vast colonies on their surface. The dinoflagellates feed on nitrogen, phosphorus and other nutrients provided by the coral, and use light to transform this food into energy. The photosynthesis also releases energy into the tissues of the coral, enabling it to build the calcium skele-

ton which houses the dinoflagellates. When corals come under warm-sea stress, they expel the dinoflagellates. As a result, the corals turn pale, as the algae have the pigments which give the skeletons their distinctive colour. At this point, the reefs are not dead. But they become more vulnerable to disease and will die if they fail to regain their plankton friends.

The risk of this happening is high — as is the cost to biodiversity and the local economy if the corals die. In the Seychelles, more than 90 percent of the Indian Ocean nation's coral reefs were hit by bleaching in an extreme El Nino in 1998. Twelve out of 21 reefs have since recovered, but nine did not, according to a study published in January 2015 by a team from Australia's James Cook University. The scientists in New Caledonia remain cautious, noting that this year's warming episode occurred during the southern hemisphere's winter. — AFP

GLOBAL TRADE IN AFRICAN GREY PARROTS BANNED

JOHANNESBURG: Delegates at a global wildlife conference yesterday voted to ban international trade in African grey parrots, one of the world's most trafficked birds.

Prized for their ability to mimic human speech, the birds are a highly sought-after pet, but their numbers have been decimated in recent years by poaching and the destruction of their forest habitats.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) meeting in Johannesburg voted 95 to 35 in a secret poll to ban the global commercial trade of the parrot.

CITES said the vote result would give the African grey the "highest level of protection" by listing it in "appendix 1", which outlaws all international trade in animals facing possible extinction.

Dr Colman O'Criodain of conservation group WWF called the move "a huge step forward" in protecting the bird.

"Fraud and corruption have enabled traffickers to vastly exceed current quotas and continue to harvest unsustainable numbers of African grey parrots from Congo's forests to feed the illegal trade," he said. "Banning the trade will make it

easier for law enforcement agencies to crack down on the poachers and smugglers, and give the remaining wild populations some much-needed breathing space."

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) estimates that between 2.1 and 3.2 million African greys were captured between 1975 and 2013.

Susan Lieberman of the Wildlife Conservation Society said the parrot had experienced "significant population declines throughout its range in West, Central and East Africa."

"It is extremely rare or locally extinct in Benin, Burundi, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Togo," she said in a statement. "If this bird could talk — and it certainly can — the African grey parrot would say thank you."

The CITES treaty, signed by 182 countries and the European Union, protects about 5,600 animal and 30,000 plant species from over-exploitation through commercial trade.

The 12-day conference, which ends on Wednesday, is sifting through 62 proposals to tighten or loosen trade restrictions on around 500 species. — AFP

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KUWAIT DRAGONS BIKERS TEAM LAUNCHES NEW SEASON

In the presence of the Drag 965 president, Sheikh Mohammed Khaled Al-Sabah and a number of GCC teams, The Kuwait Dragons bikers team recently launched its new season. The opening ceremony kicked off at 7:00 am in the presence of a great number of bikers and riders who were all welcomed by the team leader, Osama Salmeen.



MEKHMARI RETURNS HOME
 Relations and communications officer at Oman's embassy in Kuwait, Abdullah Bin Ali Al-Mekhmari recently returned to Kuwait after a two-month vacation back home.

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

A SOULFUL CONCLAVE

All of us inevitably must live through and respond to the highs and lows of our lives... Some of us choose to deny or get angry at the turbulence life entails, while some of us choose to accept in one's stride, and emerge unscathed and stronger... It is not unusual for writers too, to experience the depth of their emotions; resonate with themselves and weave the lessons learnt into beautiful words of poetry. It is certainly not unusual. However, there are those days and moments when quite a few of such minds coincidentally experience this renaissance at the same time. That is what makes an evening, unusual.

Such a day of reckoning was experienced by the members of the Writers' Forum, Kuwait when they met for their monthly meeting on September 23, 2016 at the residence of Dr Navnit Gandhi. There are those days, when poets find themselves not trying to wave emotions into words,

but rather words themselves acquiring emotional overtones and tumbling out earnestly... It was one such evening which was presided over by Mrs Chhaya Athavale who writes poetry in Hindi, Gujarati, and Marathi. Aamir Diwan who philosophies with words and verses in Hindi, graced the evening as the Chief Guest. A short story, titled: 'A Missed Marriage', was read out in English by Rajesh Verlekar in the first session. Vibheesh Tikkodi narrated a prose in Malayalam on the balance between spiritualism and materialism-which the festival of Onam signifies. The second session witnessed some very powerful and soulful renditions and recitals by Syed Qamar Minto, Afroz Alam, Kamaal Ansari, Sayeed Nazar Kadapvi, and Shabbih Ahmed in Urdu, while the President of WFK-Umesh Sharma, Dr Navnit Gandhi, Ravin Singh, and Sunil Sonsi recited their respective poems in Hindi. There was a young new participant -

Sameen Azad-daughter of the WFK member and Urdu poet Syed Qamar Minto-read a verse in Persian from the poetry of Iranian poet Sa'adi-an extremely influential Persian poet from the medieval period. Sameen presented the English translation of the verse too. It was an evening, which reflected contemplation and depth-so very essential and rare to sustain a literary organization... The Chief Guest-Aamir Diwan presented his poem in Hindi and congratulated the President of WFK, for continuing to uphold the dignity of the WFK and for giving it the much-needed impetus to keep moving forward. Mrs Chhaya Athavale- the President for the evening presented her own poetry in Marathi and summed up the deliberations as 'one of the finest ever meetings', held by the WFK. Dr Navnit Gandhi and Mr Rajesh Verlekar were given special thanks for hosting this event.





SAL minister Hind Al-Subaih at the Sebamed booth



OPENING OF AL-BER SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB

The Al-Ber Senior Citizens Club was opened by Social Affairs and Labor Minister, State Minister for Development and Planning Affairs Hind Al-Subaih in Qurain on Saturday. Various government departments, private companies and voluntary groups participated in the event, including Al-Sanabel Al-Thahabiya and Sebamed as advice on preventive care was provided throughout the opening.



PONNONAM 2016 CONCLUDES EVOKING MEMORIES

Thiruvonam celebrations organized by St Stephen's Indian Orthodox Church, Kuwait has concluded leaving joyful and exciting moments in the hearts of all attendees. The festive day is considered a memorable day for every Malayali away from the homeland, welcoming King Mahabali to their homes with pomp, gaiety & excitement. The celebrations of the year held at Alphonsa Auditorium, Abbasiya on Friday the 30th September was

presided by the Vicar Rev Fr Sanju John during his Presidential address Achen advised all to imbibe the care, sincerity & love exhibited by Mahabali in our lives. In the inaugural address, Rev Fr Aby Paul, the Vicar of St George Reesh Church recommended all to realize amidst the joy & festive mood of the festival, that we should mentally remind ourselves of our responsibilities & duties prior to our return to our homeland. Rev Fr Stanly David James

delivered a meaningful Onam message, following the inauguration.

Afterwards, the variety entertainments solely focusing the culture & tradition of Onam by all spiritual organizations of the parish were a treat to watch & was enjoyed by all present. The traditionally arranged welcoming of the Mahabali, the Pulikkali' in which boys or gents dressed up resembling tigers dance depicting win of good over evil,

tradition folk songs, Onam poems, film and light music were all performed truly sticking to the traditions of Onam. The traditional Thiruvathira by Morth Mariam Samajam Unit and snake boat race organized by Orthodox Christian Youth Movement Unit were truly noteworthy and attractive to all spectators. Later, a musical extravaganza led by noted singer of Kuwait Binoy Johney and members of the parish also were enjoyed by all.



Luke Steele of Empire of the Sun performs onstage during The Meadows Music & Arts Festival on Saturday in New York.



Fans dance as musician Zhu performs. — AFP photos

J Cole raps empowerment to open new NYC festival

Rapper J Cole took fans on his path to achieving self-confidence Saturday as he inaugurated The Meadows, the latest entrant to the fast-growing US music festival scene. Taking place at the tail-end of the summer festival season, The Meadows is spread across the spacious parking lot of the New York Mets baseball team's Citi Field and will close Sunday with rap superstar Kanye West, one of the biggest draws in live music.

Unlike West, whose musical trajectory has gone from meditative to braggadocious, J Cole has devoted himself to self-reflection. Cole's last album, the Grammy-nominated "2014 Forest Hills Drive," revolves around his purchase of his own childhood home in Fayetteville, North Carolina, a starting point for

exploring his life as well as the broader divides of modern America. At times perched pensively on a stool on stage, Cole provided running commentary on his thinking behind the songs, from explaining how "there was a time when I wasn't so sure" to his moment where he felt "confident for the first time in my life."

Pinpointing his moment of empowerment, Cole hailed St John's University - a short distance away within the borough of Queens - where he was a high-achieving student while making his start in the New York music industry. His delivery was forceful - he tinkered with his track "No Role Modelz" to interject a profanity against Republican presidential contender Donald Trump - even if his material makes for unlikely anthems. The crowd



Rapper J Cole performs onstage.

swayed in an enthusiastic sing-along as Cole performed "Wet Dreamz," a song about the awkwardness of first-time sex rather than the more common rap theme of conquest.

Rising Festival Competition

J Cole admitted to the crowd that he was a late replacement for a bigger name, R&B sensation The Weeknd, who recently debuted new music. The Weeknd canceled so he could sing to a much larger audience on television's "Saturday Night Live." He briefly rescheduled his set to an earlier time before finally confirm-

ing it was scrapped. "Maybe the festival can split The Weeknd's fees among all the tour bands and we can all go for ice cream," Scott Hutchison, frontman of Scottish rockers Frightened Rabbit, mischievously suggested from stage.

The Weeknd's no-show was particularly unwelcome for promoters of The Meadows, who have put on the Governors Ball festival in New York since 2011 but in July faced competition from yet another newcomer to the metropolis, Panorama, by the company behind Coachella in California. Governors Ball

in June snagged West for a performance in advance of his ongoing tour, but his set was canceled due to weather.

Festivals have soared in number in the past decade, fed by demand from the millennial generation, and have emerged as a crucial money-maker for musicians. Instead of Governors Ball's contained island location, The Meadows opted for the stadium's easy transportation connections. As planes flew overhead from nearby La Guardia airport, The Meadows showcased its identity through food from across ethnically diverse Queens including a special sampling menu of cuisine from Colombia, Mexico, Nepal and Thailand.

Jr Gong

Other performers at The Meadows included Damian "Jr Gong" Marley, the youngest son of reggae icon Bob Marley, whose likeness appeared on the screen as a group member proudly danced with a Rastafarian flag. The 38-year-old Marley, who sports majestic dreadlocks that dangle to the floor, offered a look of Jamaican music's transition with his reggae infused with faster dance hall rhythms and rap as witnessed on his take of his father's "Could You Be Loved."

Australian electro duo Empire of the Sun put on one of the most visibly engaging sets, with science-fiction imagery and sudden lines in Korean as dancers wore outfits from super-sized conical hats to frizzled rose-red blouses. Frontman Luke Steele, his blue gown between "Star Trek" and priestly, smashed his guitar by ramming it head-down to the beat of the drum - but quickly returned with a new guitar, a crew member having quickly swept away the debris. — AFP



Damian 'Jr Gong' Marley performs.



A graffiti mural is displayed at The Meadows Music & Arts Festival.



Musician Zhu performs onstage.



Luke Steele of Empire of the Sun performs.

Ovitz vs Meyer: Who won the showdown?

By Andrew Wallenstein

It was an event that felt more like a prizefight than a book promotion: Michael Ovitz and Ron Meyer. One night only at DGA headquarters with the central figures of James Andrew Miller's new book, "Powerhouse." Thursday's Q&A with the men who came together to build CAA into a juggernaut, only to part bitterly, came laden with the kind of tension reunions don't always deliver.

Imagine if Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie were to sit on stage together decades from now to review the circumstances that preceded their split. Maybe that would be something like what it was like to see Michael Ovitz and Ron Meyer appear together in public for the first time in 20 years detailing their own falling out, a conflict so traumatic to Ovitz that he characterized it as "going through a divorce from my male wife."

Their reunion was so surreal it felt like another sequel to "Night at the Museum," a film franchise that magically resurrect-

ed historic figures in all sorts of strange combinations. And yet what may have been most striking about Ovitz and Meyer that night was how little they resembled the mighty, almost mythical creatures they've been rendered in Miller's book. These marauders disrupted the sleepy status quo of Hollywood's talent agency business during the 1980s with a ferocity Ovitz seemed to liken to a pack of wild Dobermans. "Once we were let loose, no one was safe," he told Miller.

But CAA's big dog wasn't barking too loudly Thursday. Now 69, Ovitz looked and sounded more frail than his age, walking on stage to his seat with a cane due to a back injury that had caused a postponement of the Q&A's first scheduled date, his voice creakier than many remembered. For a man who was obsessed with crafting his own public image, it was odd to see him looking far more fragile than the fearsome figure of yesteryear.

But that vulnerability subtly cued we'd be hearing from a very different kind of

Ovitz than the Machiavellian master of media he used to be. The 2016 Ovitz was contrite and introspective, a far cry from the ruthless, blinkered titan of industry he repeatedly described himself to Miller to be on stage. Someone so consumed with furthering the incredible growth of his company that he was ignorant to the rift that had opened between himself and the man with whom he couldn't have willed CAA into existence.

"We were on such a roll in every aspect of the business that I was oblivious and insensitive to the people issues," Ovitz explained. Sorry for my behavior, Ron. Success made me do it. His was a rise and fall so steep, Ovitz would have us believe, that it thoroughly transformed a narcissistic monster to a deeply sensitive soul who can look back and self-diagnose the personal weaknesses that ultimately sabotaged himself. It was as if those in attendance at the DGA were hearing Icarus recount what sun blindness was like. But as Ovitz floundered himself over and over Thursday for the

conduct that eventually alienated Meyer and diminished his own power, I found myself questioning his transformation. Is Ovitz truly the man he now says he is or is he telling us what we want to hear so we stop seeing him as some kind of monster? Maybe he's just being as manipulative as we've always known him to be, sanding the edges off his sharp-elbowed persona to reshape his legacy.

Chilly

But for all the proclamations of penitence he issued from the stage, there was something distinctly chilly about the tone of the joint interview. Like an actor who isn't quite right for the part, Ovitz may have read all his lines but he wasn't really emoting. He tossed off apology after apology to the audience but didn't really direct those apologies to Meyer himself. Watching the two men interact, it was tempting to wonder what Miller didn't address in his questioning: Had Ovitz previously said anything like what he was saying directly to Meyer? What if

anything is the nature of their actual relationship today? Is their broken bond beyond repair? And then there's Meyer, still a titan in his own right thanks to a second triumphant career at Universal Pictures. Does Meyer believe Ovitz's version of what occurred, and does he forgive him, anyway?

If he did, Meyer didn't let on; he was as opaque as Ovitz was transparent Thursday. And maybe there's nothing wrong with that when the more you hear these men talk - a staged conversation that dug even deeper into the deterioration of their relationship than the already exhaustive dissection "Powerhouse" provides - the more you could get the sense nothing could really entirely capture their shared truth in all its complexity.

Such is life sometimes. Meyer's summation of their famous partnership may have been as truthful as anything Ovitz had to say. "Shit happens," he noted. "Relationship sour and things go wrong. That's what happened." — Reuters



Celine

Fun, brooding and sea-inspired styles hit Paris Fashion Week

Christina Hendricks, Diane Kruger and singer Charli XCX led the front rows at the half-way point of Paris Fashion Week on Saturday. Here are the highlights of the spring-summer 2017 collections including reports from Nina Ricci, Elie Saab and Mugler.

Nina Ricci has Some Fun
Guillaume Henry injected his signature sense of fun to the usual coquettishness of Nina Ricci - and this season saw the lauded designer further define the sto-

ried French house with his forward-looking approach. Lending a note of irony to the DNA game styles, kinetic black and white stripes, floral motifs, and flashes of fur print peppered the 40-piece show. Metallic gold and bronze gave the collection a purposeful over-the-top edge, alongside the bright color palette of purples, blues, reds and pinks.

There were plenty of clever references. A leopard print style came as a total-look, as if the model herself had fur actually covering her body. Henry won

accolades for turning the dormant Carven house in the space of just five years into a must-see show. The designer looks like he's set to do the same at Ricci.

Elie Saab Channels Dark for Spring
"Inglorious Basterds" star Diane Kruger posed for photographers ahead of Elie Saab - a show that was notable for featuring some of the world's most influential current models such as Karlie Kloss and Gigi Hadid. The Lebanese designer explored an unusually dark and

brooding palette for a spring show. Stars and vivid taroc-like colors gave the 54-piece collection a cosmic edge - reflected in the multicolored stardust runway decor. The vavavoom, cinched-waisted Saab DNA was, of course, there - the bread-and-butter of the house. But voluminous black leather waistcoats and black leather belts gave this display a rebellious side.

Mugler's Deep Sea
Deep blue ocean decor was the canvas that Mugler designer David Koma used to paint his

swirling, geometric styles in the funky Saturday show. Shards of wispy sea-plant shaped color, along with asymmetric watery blue decoration on calves, and colors - from vermilion, to vivid blue, coral and shimmering silver - evoked the hues of deep sea creatures.

Japanese-style round shoulders - such as in an oversize Origami-style white jacket - provided an Oriental twist to the marine musing. Elsewhere, white mini-dresses with crisp hems added a sporty flavor. — AP

Five top trends

With Paris women's fashion week coming to a climax over the weekend, we pick out five of the big trends so far in the spring-summer collections:

No Bras
Transparency. We demand it of our leaders and institutions. Well now it is coming to your wardrobe. See-through is one of the big looks of spring-summer, dominating the week's three big, headline-grabbing shows. Almost every dress in Maria Grazia Chiuri's debut at Dior was of gossamer lingerie tulle, while Anthony Vaccarello, toying with bad taste in his first show for Saint Laurent, sent out a line of braless sheer tops and a mono-boob dress that exposed one breast.

Bouchra Jarrar was more restrained and elegant in her debut for Lanvin. Even so at least two of her lingerie dresses would work as well in the bedroom as at a ball. Newbie Neith Nyer and older staggers Carven, Rochas, Y Project, Vionnet and John Galliano at Maison Margiela all got in on the act too, while Rihanna and ID made underwear outwear.

Gender Flux
Androgynous, genderless fashion has been in the ascendant for some time, with transgender models more present on the runways as designers blur boundaries. This week Brazilian creator Francisco Terra used four trans models in his Neith Nyer show while others turned up across the catwalks from Y Project to Koche. Julien Dossena at Paco Rabanne evoked gender flux in a show inspired by 1960s sexual liberation, which seemed partly to have also sprung from the loins of Woody Allen's 1972 film "Everything Always You Wanted to Know About Sex".

Off the shoulder
Despite last season's 1980s retro revival, designers are far from finished with resurrecting looks from the decade of big belts, big shoulders and even bigger hair. This time it is off-the-shoulder tops and dresses, not quite "Flashdance" but close, often pulled tight across the chest. The "one bare shoulder" look ran from floaty bohemian Chloe to Barbara Bui's shiny vinyl with variants turning up in Mugler, Wanda Nylon, Vionnet, Isabel Marant and Yohji Yamamoto shows.

It seems to be all Hedi Slimane's fault. He started the ball rolling with his final show for Saint Laurent, the now notorious love-it-or-hate-it 1980s super-bling "batwing" shoulders collection. Instead of turning on such excess, his successor Vaccarello has embraced the look, or the off-the-shoulder part at least. The sublime Haider Ackermann show Saturday was all shoulders too, bringing the focus to the hard work his models had done in the gym and pool.

Frills
Despite being the frivolity that dare not speak its name to fashion's dominant minimalist brigade, frills are back with a flourish. Prada lovers should look away now, but frills are breaking out all over the catwalk from Anne Sofie Madsen to Andrew GN, Alexis Mabille and Lanvin to name but a few. Even rappers favorite label Off White went all frilly.

The young Ukrainian brand Paskal used them ingeniously to punctuate its otherwise minimalist collection, making a summer bikini type top from one single frill. Japanese street avant gardist Junya Watanabe was also swept up by the trend, folding them into his jagged geometrical origami creations.

Turning Japanese
Japanese designers are a major part of Paris fashion week, with pioneers Kenzo, Yohji Yamamoto and Commes des Garçons now the godfathers of an ever-expanding brood that includes Undercover, Junya Watanabe and Anrealage.

And beyond the global brands like Issey Miyake, the country's influence on foreign designers has rarely been as strong. Japanese aesthetics and techniques are everywhere on the catwalk with three of the most exciting young talents Terra, Paule Ka's Alithia Spuri-Zampetti and Liselore Frowijn all citing trips to the country as the key to their collections. — AFP



Nina Ricci



Do you speak fashion?

If the idea of an "it girl influencer" sitting in a "frow" watching a "gender fluid" collection available in "see now, buy now" has you scratching your head, then you need our essential guide to fashion jargon. Here are a few basic terms to help you understand what is going on at Paris fashion week:

Fashion Week

Be careful. Fashion week is not just an ordinary week of seven days. A fashion week can be five days (in London), or six (in Milan) or eight (in New York) or nine or 10 (Paris). Please adjust your calendars accordingly. Never forget fashion works on another time plane.

Gender Fluid

Which gender are you this season? The strongest meta-trend in contemporary fashion is towards a more and more androgynous look, demolishing the boundaries between men's and women's style. Uber-cool French label Vetements, which puts men and women in thigh high boots, dresses and XL bomber jackets, has brought the look to the street with a bang. "There is no gender anymore," its commercial boss Guram Gvasalia told AFP. "Men and women can now choose what they want to be." With former Kardashian consort Caitlyn Jenner now the face of H&M Sport, transgender models are ever-present this week in Paris. Often even close up it is hard to tell who is who. Men and women now walk together on the catwalk for Gucci and Burberry as well as for Koche, Vivienne Westwood and Andrea Crews.

Frow

This is the front row, the place where you will find Kim Kardashian at Balmain, Salma Hayek at Saint Laurent, Rihanna at Dior, and AFP of course always. It is also where you will find "it girls" and boys, Vogue editor Anna Wintour, top buyers, and the brand's most in-favour celebrity fans, cheerleaders and bloggers, who now like to be known as "influencers". Behind them is everyone else, a fair proportion of who will be seething with envy and resentment for not being on the "frow". We shall not speak of those relegated to the dark oblivion of the "standing".

'See Now, Buy Now'

This - oddly for a fashion term - means exactly what it says. You see a fashion show and you can buy the clothes straight away, not having to wait six months for them to appear in the shops as has traditionally been the case. Big high-street, mostly US-focused brands like Tommy Hilffger, Tom Ford and Burberry are adopting the practice, but most of Europe's younger and innovative creators regard it as the work of the devil. They argue that it favors brands with their own stores, narrows choice and will be hugely wasteful, with pre-made clothes the public don't like heading straight for landfill.

Capsule Collection

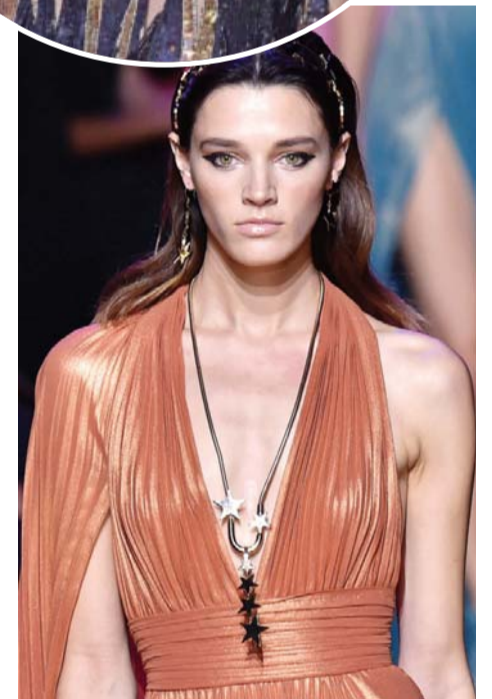
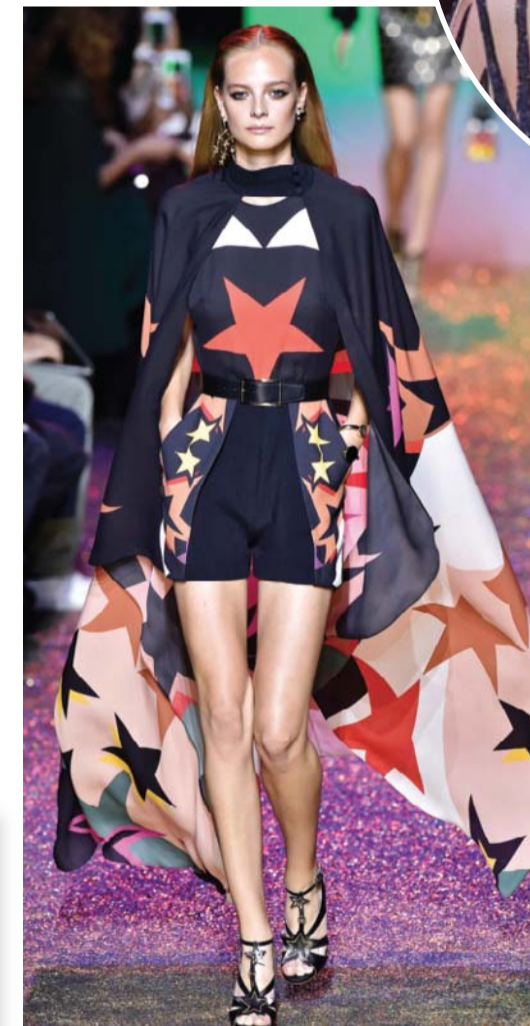
This is a one-off collection made between seasons or to sate fans who are clamoring to buy something after a fashion show. Not to be confused with a "resort collection" which is collection of clothes you take with you when you winter in Monte Carlo, Dubai or Palm Springs.

Effortless

The term is generally used to describe people who dress like a Parisian. Those very annoying people who, with seemingly no effort at all, always look "effortlessly" stylish. Think Charlotte Gainsbourg. They don't have to be conventionally beautiful but they always looks good. Ironically, one of the most expert current purveyors of this look is actually the British designer Clare Waight Keller at Chloe. — AFP



Elie Saab



Rabih Kayrouz

Lifestyle

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2016

Fun, brooding and sea-inspired styles hit Paris Fashion Week

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Members of the "Colla Vella dels Xiquets de Valls" human tower team form a "castell" (human tower) during the XXVI human towers, or 'castells', competition in Tarragona yesterday. These human towers, built traditionally in festivals within Catalonia, gather several teams that attempt to build and dismantle a human tower structure. — AFP

Swords and skewers at Thailand's gruesome vegetarian festival



(Left) A devotee of the Nine Emperor Gods walks with needles through her face during the annual Phuket Vegetarian Festival in the southern province of Phuket on Saturday. (Center) A devotee marches with palm leaves pierced through his cheeks. (Right) A devotee walks around a Chinese shrine with multiple skewers in his face. — AFP photos

Swords, axe handles, kebab skewers and even a model boat were among the bizarre array of objects pushed through devotees' cheeks yesterday as southern Thailand's gruesome vegetarian festival got under way. Many Chinese communities across Southeast Asia go vegetarian this week for the annual Taoist "Nine Emperor Gods" festival but few do it with quite the gusto and shock factor of Phuket's inhabitants.

Throughout the week devotees show their religious devotion through ritualistic self-mutilation and pain trials, including running over hot coals and piercing their bodies with an astonishing - and stomach-turning - variety of objects. At a temple on the outskirts of Phuket's main town yesterday, dozens of people put themselves to the test. Dressed in flowing robes they worked themselves into a trance-like frenzy against a constant backdrop of drums, a status they say allows them to feel no pain.

One man shook his head from side to side before another created a hole in his cheek with a large metal spike, watched over by medics. The bowsprit of a large model boat was then threaded through the hole before he joined a parade through town to show off their new facial accessories. "It's an unforgettable experience," 55-year-old Canadian tourist Barry Rafferty told AFP as he looked on. "I'm surprised by the lack of blood". Fellow Canadian traveller Julie Bedford, 33, was taken aback by the scale of festival. "I figured there might be a handful but everywhere you look people are getting their faces pierced."

The tropical island of Phuket - best known to holidaymakers for its parties and beaches -

boasts a sizeable Chinese population, most of whom trace their roots back to Hokkien speaking areas of China's southeast. Local folklore has it that the island began celebrating the vegetarian festival en masse after 1825 when illness struck a visiting opera troupe from China. The stricken troubadours adopted a vegetarian diet, paid homage to the Nine Emperor Gods and were miraculously cured.

The festival emphasizes purification, embodied by the giving up of meat for nine days and dressing in white. Participants must

adhere to a series of strict rules throughout the festival-including abstinence from sex, drinking and gambling. But what makes Phuket stand out from the crowd is the devotees who choose to self mutilate. Later in the week, some also test their faith by running barefoot across burning coals or climbing bladed ladders. A taxi driver, who gave his nickname Chang (Elephant), said he had no plans to skewer his body but he had been abiding by the abstinence rules. "It has already brought me good luck," he grinned. — AFP

US TV comedy skewers Clinton-Trump debate

Live from New York, it's ... Alec Baldwin as Donald Trump sniffing and spouting off words like "yuuge" and "ji-na" in a parody of the US presidential candidate's debate. Baldwin delivered in his new role as Trump as the popular "Saturday Night Live" comedy show began its new season. Sporting wavy blonde hair, an orange spray-tan and a lip-puckering scowl, Baldwin skewered the Republican presidential candidate's debate performance at Monday at Hofstra University.

"Our jobs are fleeing this country. They're going to Mexico, they're

going to Ji-na. I'd stop that. If Hillary knew how she would have done it already, end of story. I won the debate, I stayed calm just like I promised, and it is over. Good night, Hofstra," Baldwin's Trump said, as he attempts to leave.

Clinton - portrayed by SNL regular Kate McKinnon - walked onstage aided by a cane, a tweak at her recent bout with pneumonia. McKinnon's Clinton said that Trump's tax plan is "not just trickle-down economics, it's - I don't know, I guess if I had to call it something off the top of the old dome, with no prep whatsoever, I don't know, I

guess I'd call it Trumped-up, trickle-down economics."

Clinton, who spent days preparing for the debate, has a reputation of being a stiff and scripted politician. After claiming to have "the best judgment. And the best temperament," Baldwin's Trump blamed Clinton and President Barack Obama for tampering with his microphone. The reaction? "I think I'm going to be president," McKinnon smiled. Also mocked: Trump's repeated interruptions, his claim that climate change is a Chinese hoax and Clinton's use of 1996 Miss Universe Alicia Machado as "a strong, beautiful,

political prop." Machado claims that Trump - who at the time owned the beauty pageant - mocked her as "Miss Piggy" when she gained weight, and called her "Miss Housekeeping" because of her Latina heritage. SNL has a history of mocking politicians going back to Gerald Ford in the 1970s, portrayed by Chevy Chase as a clumsy bumbler after the president once tripped and fell down an airplane staircase. A notable recent impersonation was Tina Fey, who was merciless as she portrayed Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin in 2008 as clueless and unprepared. — AFP



In this photo provided by NBC, Alec Baldwin as Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, and Kate McKinnon as Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, perform during the "Debate Cold Open" sketch on the 42nd season of "Saturday Night Live" in New York on Saturday. — AP