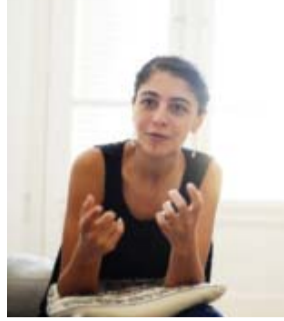


Gas stations jam-packed on eve of price hike



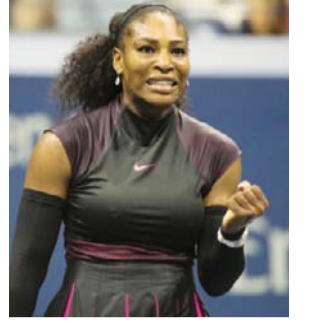
Fight against Egypt sexual harassment bearing fruit



Singer Chris Brown freed after standoff with LA police



Serena starts strong in bid for seventh US Open title



KUWAIT TO SUE DRUG KINGPINS, OPEN MORE ANTI-DRUG OFFICES

MOI FOILS ATTEMPT TO SMUGGLE HASHISH FROM IRAN



Min 30°
Max 48°
High Tide 00:18 & 11:37
Low Tide 05:52 & 18:46



KUWAIT RANKS LAST IN WORLD EXPAT INDEX

By Aakash Bakaya

KUWAIT: In the latest list from Expat Insider, Kuwait, along with Greece and Nigeria, made up the bottom three nations, while Taiwan and Malta topped the list of the world's friendliest countries for expats. The Expat Insider survey from InterNations group provided an in-depth analysis of everyday expat life in more than 60 countries around the globe. The results looked at everything from quality of life to ease of settling in. In Kuwait, foreign recruits made up the greater majority of the survey population at 6 percent. Kuwait has remained at the bottom of the list for more than three years running.

The GCC states' rankings in the Quality of Life Index are, for the most part, among the worst in the world: Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait rank 55th, 63rd, and 65th out of 67 countries, with the UAE and Oman standing out at 23 and 32 respectively. Under the Quality of Life index, respondents were asked questions about their satisfaction with their leisure options, travel and transportation, health services, safety and personal happiness. (See Page 5)



KUWAIT: Three suspected drug smugglers are seen with the haul of hashish that was busted. — MoI

By A Saleh and Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait intends to sue drug kingpins in some foreign countries, accusing them of tirelessly working to smuggle drugs into Kuwait with the help of their accomplices in both Kuwait and some neighboring countries, high-ranking Interior Ministry official sources said. The sources added that Kuwait has official and firm evidence linking these drug lords to the narcotics seized in Kuwait, and stressed that lawsuits would be filed in each drug trafficker's respective country.

Moreover, the sources highlighted that as part of coordination with other countries to exchange classified information, Kuwait intends to establish its own anti-drug offices in key countries to place drug dealers under close surveillance and foil their attempts to smuggle drugs into Kuwait before they actually arrive. Notably, Kuwait does have two such offices in Lebanon and Pakistan, while a third is pending to open in Iraq, the main country through which drugs are smuggled into Kuwait and other GCC states.

Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry announced yesterday it foiled an attempt to smuggle 160 kg of hashish from Iran into Kuwait. The Drugs Control General Department was tipped off that a drug trafficker was planning to bring in a large amount of cannabis into the country by sea, the ministry's security information department said in a statement. A task force was formed and investigations confirmed the information.

The trafficker, who holds a Gulf nationality, was arrested with the narcotics, and he confessed to his crime.

He led security bodies to the residence of his two partners, both stateless (bedoons), who were found to be registered offenders. The three suspects and the drugs, worth KD 300,000, were referred to the prosecution.

ROUSSEFF STRIPPED OF PRESIDENCY

BRASILIA: Brazil's Dilma Rousseff was stripped of the country's presidency yesterday in a Senate impeachment vote ending 13 years of leftist rule in Latin America's biggest economy. Rousseff, 68, was convicted by 61 of the 81 senators of illegally manipulating the national budget. The vote, passing the needed two-thirds majority, meant she was immediately removed from office. However, in a surprise twist, a separate vote to bar Rousseff from holding any public office for eight years failed to pass, meaning she could in theory reenter political life.

Cheers - and cries of disappointment - erupted in the blue-carpeted, circular Senate chamber as the impeachment verdict flashed up on the electronic voting screen. Pro-impeachment senators burst into a rendering of the national anthem, some waving Brazilian flags, while leftist allies of Rousseff, who claims she has been the victim of a right-wing coup d'etat, stood stony-faced.

Continued on Page 13



BRASILIA: Brazil's Dilma Rousseff is pictured at the Alvorada presidential palace after she was stripped of the country's presidency in a Senate impeachment vote yesterday. — AFP

WEALTHY QATARIS TASTE AUSTERITY

DOHA: Fly economy class, share an office, cancel journal subscriptions: These are some of the requests being put to government employees in Qatar, as low energy prices force austerity even among the world's wealthiest citizens. With huge offshore gas reserves, a small population and billions of dollars of foreign assets, Qatar has weathered the global oil price slump since mid-2014 better than many of its Gulf Arab neighbors.

But the decline in state energy income comes at a time when Doha is pursuing a \$200 billion infrastructure upgrade for the 2022 football World Cup and building ports and hospitals, squeezing finances and leading to budget cuts. The foreign workers who make up the bulk of Qatar's 2.3 million population have borne the brunt of cutbacks; thousands have

lost their jobs as the government has sought to shield its citizens from the impact of austerity.

But the world's top liquefied natural gas exporter faces a \$12.8 billion budget deficit this year, its first deficit in over a decade, and has halved its forecasts for economic growth. Now even the 300,000 citizens of the world's richest nation per citizen are feeling the pinch in a shakeup of state entities, which employ about nine out of 10 Qatari workers. "Your responsibility in light of the falling oil prices is bigger," Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim said in a November speech that warned against "waste and extravagance", and said the state could no longer "provide for everything" as the country diversifies its economy away from oil and gas.

Continued on Page 13

DUTERTE WARNS RETURNING WORKERS: DON'T DO DRUGS

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, heavily criticized for a brutal anti-narcotics drive in which hundreds have been killed, yesterday welcomed home more than 100 Filipinos abandoned in desert camps in Saudi Arabia with a warning - don't do drugs. The Southeast Asian nation's war on drugs has gained some popular support but the wave of killings has shocked rights groups and brought expressions of concern from the United States, a close ally of Manila.

Duterte railed against the United Nations this month after it called for an end to the killings. "Avoid drugs at all cost because it could cost your life too," Duterte told the workers after an almost 10-hour flight from Dammam. The number of drug-related killings in the Philippines has reached 2,000 since Duterte became president two months ago on a pledge to wipe out the drug trade.

Migrant oil and construction workers, abandoned in

their thousands by Saudi employers during the kingdom's economic slump, are fighting to claim back wages and benefits. "I lost my job so my children were forced to drop out of college and they were mad at me but what can I do?" Ronie Surilla, 47, a construction worker living for almost a decade in Saudi Arabia, told Reuters, adding that he had not been paid for eight months.

Filipinos living and working outside the country sent home a record \$13.2 billion in remittances, a major driver of the Southeast Asian nation's household consumption, in the first half of 2016. For the returning overseas workforce, the president committed to boost the economy and provide jobs. The Philippines' economy grew at 7 percent in the second quarter from a year earlier, its highest level in three years. It made the Philippines the fastest growing among all countries that have reported so far for the second quarter. — Reuters

CONDOLENCES

Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief,
management and staff convey their
deepest condolences to

Karam Family

on the sad demise of

Mustafa Karam

May Allah Almighty bestow His mercy on him



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Sheikh Faisal Al-Saud Al-Sabah.

AMIR RECEIVES TOP OFFICIALS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. His Highness the Amir also received His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Moreover, His Highness Sheikh Sabah received First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received, Sheikh Faisal Al-Saud Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Bader Al-Essa.

In other news, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mahmoud, conveying his deepest sympathies over the loss of life in a car bomb attack in Mogadishu. In his cable, His Highness the Amir condemned the attack that targeted a hotel in the vicinity of the Somali presidential palace, expressing his condolences for the families of the deceased and wishing swift recovery for those wounded. Moreover, His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables of condolences to the Somali President. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Bader Al-Essa.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly-assigned Armenian Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Manvel Badeyan. — KUNA photos



First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly-assigned Yemeni Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Ali Mansour Bin Sefaa.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly-assigned Bulgarian Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Boris Borissov.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly-assigned Austrian Ambassador to Kuwait Zigord Bakher.

NEW AMBASSADORS DELIVER CREDENTIALS

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday the creden-

tials of new ambassadors appointed in Kuwait. They include the ambassadors of Armenia Manvel Badeyan, Yemen Ali Mansour Bin Sefaa,

Bulgaria Boris Borissov and an Austria Zigord Bakher. The ceremony was attended by ranking ministry officials. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey Murat Tamer hosted a reception on the occasion of his country's Victory Day, at Jumairah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa yesterday. Higher officials, diplomats, media persons and Turkish community members attended the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT DURING THE TURKISH EMBASSY'S 'VICTORY DAY' CEREMONY

Today, we are celebrating the 94th anniversary of the Great Victory, which marked the re-sanctification of Anatolia as our homeland, together with our people and brothers in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in great pride and excitement. I would like to congratulate wholeheartedly August 30 Victory Day of millions of our citizens who live in Turkey as well different countries around the world. The torch of independence lighted in 1919 under difficult conditions and deprivations was crowned with the Battle of Commander-in-Chief on August 30 under the leadership of Ghazi Mustafa Kemal and his comrades. August 30 is the most obvious proof of what a nation can venture

and accomplish to save its independence and its dignity when confronted with the choice "Either Independence Or Demise". On August 30, 1922, the Turkish nation announced to the whole world that it would never bow to oppression and forego its independence in any way. Today, we still possess the same will-power proven 94 years ago in Dumlupinar with the epic struggle and the blood of our holy fallen. We are exerting our utmost efforts so that our Republic stands forever, and raise our country above the contemporary civilizations in economic, social and political aspects. Pride projects of our country, such as Osman Gazi Bridge and Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, which have been completed this year, are the most

concrete manifestations of our determination to carry on this struggle. Our efforts will continue in unity, togetherness and solidarity and defeat the gangs of treachery and overcome the obstructions and vicious attacks of terrorist organizations who desire to impede the auspicious progress of our country. Victory of August 30 should be a lesson particularly today for the terrorist organizations and evils targeting the unity, welfare and existence of our country in these lands. The stance displayed by the Turkish people during the bloody 15 June coup attempt is a vivid display of the vitality of the "Great Offensive" spirit. At that night, all Turkey along with Turkish, Kurdish, Laz, Circassian, Sunnites and Alawites

united their forces around our common values and defeated the members of FETO terrorist organization, who were disguised themselves in military uniforms. The epic spirit displayed in squares and streets of our cities on 15 July rose to a new height with the historical Yenikapi Meeting, in which 5 million people participated on 7 August 2016. Turkey is exposed also to the attacks of the terrorist organizations apart from FETO, such as DAESH and PKK targeting civilians, security officials, children and innocent people during this period. The single aim of all these terrorist organizations under different names but directed by the same center is to damage the "New Great Offensive Spirit" which manifested itself on 15 July and 7 August, and bring this

country into its knees. Turkey is determined to take all necessary steps within both its boundaries as well as the neighboring countries where the terrorist organizations are active in order to ensure the security of its citizens, without discriminating among the terrorist organizations. The Jarablus operation, initiated on 24 August in cooperation with the International Coalition, is a reflection of our resoluteness and will. Our operations will continue until the terrorist organizations such as DAESH, PKK and its Syrian affiliate YPG cease to become a threat to our citizens. Our greatest source of confidence is the solidarity displayed by the Turkish people on the night of 15 July and thereafter as well as the support of our friends.





KUWAIT: Drivers queue up to fill their cars with fuel at petrol stations in Kuwait City yesterday on the eve of increased petrol prices. The Kuwaiti cabinet decided on August 1, 2016 to raise petrol prices by more than 80 percent from September 1 as part of economic reforms aimed at countering falling oil revenues. These are the first increases in heavily subsidized petrol prices in the OPEC member for almost two decades. The oil-rich Gulf state liberalized the prices of diesel and kerosene in January 2015 and revises their prices monthly. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

GAS STATIONS JAM-PACKED ON EVE OF PRICE HIKE

CO-OPS UNION WARNS AGAINST WHOLESALE PRICES' INCREASE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Thousands of citizens and expats rushed to gas stations in all six governorates to fill up yesterday, before petrol prices go up from today. The melee witnessed clashes amongst customers who tried to jump the line, and some stations stopped operating after they ran out of petrol. Gas station work-

ers reported that demand for petrol skyrocketed before the new prices went into effect, with most stations overcrowded with motorists queuing to fill up according to the old prices for the last time. However, as a result of some social media campaigns against non-KNPC gas stations, demand was expected to drop because many customers plan to boycott them.

Case to court
Meanwhile, a lawyer yesterday filed a case at the administrative court demanding scrapping the decision to increase petrol prices. Having filed the case only 12 hours before the decision takes effect, the court is not expected to have enough time to order its annulment. In his case, the lawyer argued that the new prices would overburden all consumers including himself. Informed sources said that

the court would look into the immediate demand to scrap the new prices in a hearing due to be held on Wednesday, Sept 7.

Unjustified increase

Separately, the Union of Cooperative Societies urged the stores yesterday to reject any unjustified increase of commodities' prices by wholesale traders. Some goods' importers may hike the rates at pretext of

higher costs due to the higher fuel prices, Saad Al-Shabo, the union chairman, said in a statement to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). Traders must abide by the rates set by the federation, he said. He urged societies' stakeholders and consumers to report about controversial high prices of commodities. The union was established in 1971, signaling launch of the cooperative businesses in the country.

KUWAIT APPLIES NEW FUEL PRICING TODAY

KUWAIT: The new fuel prices will be applied today as follows: Octane-91 (Premium): 85 fils per liter, Octane-95 (Super): 105 fils and Octane-98 (Ultra): 165 fils. The Cabinet has approved the raising decision on August 1, by recommendation of the economic committee.

The price increase is expected to create a change in consumption of Octane-91 and Octane-95, as more consumers will tend to use the Octane-91, Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) Mohammad Al-Mutairi said yesterday.

KNPC has already prepared its fueling stations for such changes and provided sufficient amount of fuel to cover the rising demands in the local market, he added. He noted that Al-Ahmadi and Al-Shuaiba refineries produce about 1.84 million liters of Octane-91, 9.39 million liters of Octane-95 and 270,000 liters of Ultra 98, which is a total of 11.5 million liters of Gasoline daily.

As for the daily consumption of all three types, Al-Mutairi said it is 1,833 million liters of Octane-91, about 9,135 liters of Octane-95 and 267,000 liters of Ultra 98, with a total of 11,235 million liters of average daily consumption. The growth of gasoline consumption in the past five years in Kuwait is about four percent, he said.

In 2011, consumption rates were recorded at over 3,531 billion liters, about 3,682 billion liters in 2012, 3,810 billion liters in 2013, 4,006 billion liters in 2014 and over 4,122 billion liters in 2015. The new pricing is close to international rates, said the official, noting that Octane-91 and Octane-95 are state-subsidies.



KNPC's CEO Mohammad Al-Mutairi

The pricing decision was made to rationalize subsidies and improve the country's budget deficit. Statistics show that after the raise, fuel prices in Kuwait will still remain the lowest among the Gulf States. The Cabinet has tasked a special commission to re-examine the State subsidies and the fuel prices every three months, to be in harmony with the global rates.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah has previously stressed that the decision was an 'extreme necessity' for Kuwait to follow up with the economic changes in the world. After the raising decision, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced it will not accept any raise in food items' prices. Saudi Arabia raised fuel prices on December 28, 2015, Bahrain on January 11, 2016, Qatar and Oman on January 15, and UAE on May 29, 2016. — KUNA



TAXI FARES LOWEST IN GCC EVEN AFTER INCREASE: MINISTRY

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Fahd Al-Shuwaei said the amended taxi and public transport fares are the lowest in the Arabian Gulf even after hiking them. He said during a press conference yesterday the decision aims at organizing the process and set transport prices commensurate to operation costs. He said the Interior Ministry, as the body concerned with deciding transportation prices and protecting the parties involved, made a preemptive move ahead of some who may use the decision to raise prices, and what may follow in problems between the service presenter and receiver.

Shuwaei said it is important for taxi drivers to stick to the new tariffs and use the meter. He added that the tariff department will strictly monitor transport means and issue citations to violators, which allows impoundment of the vehicle for two months.

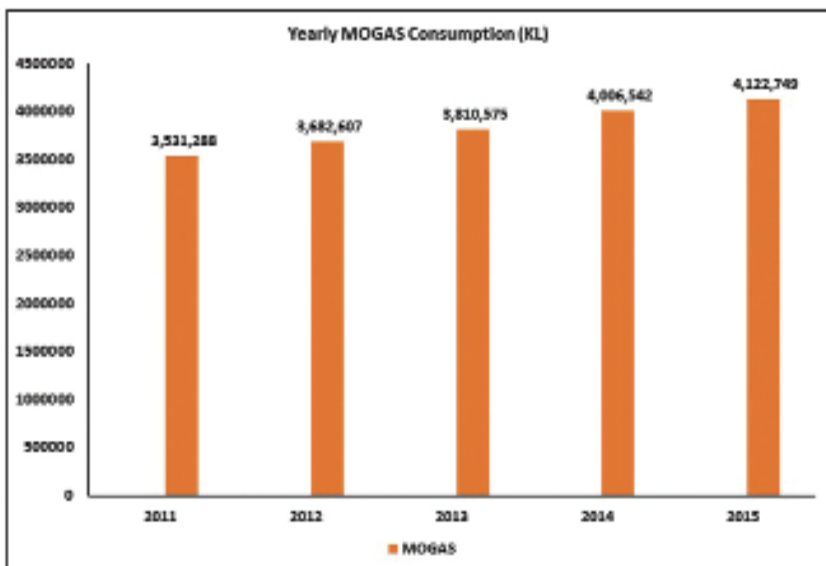
Meanwhile, Director General of the Relations and Security Information Department Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash said the department will launch an awareness campaign in all media to explain



KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Fahd Al-Shuwaei (center) speaks during a press conference yesterday.

the details of the decision and its goal. He called on citizens and expats to call the complaints number (999 - 888 - 777 - 25583666) or 112 to

inform about any case of noncompliance by taxi drivers, and a patrol will go to the site and deal with the situation.



Gasoline type	Production (1,000 liter)
Premium (91 octane)	1,840
Super (95 octane)	9,390
Ultra (98 octane)	270
Total	11,500

Gasoline type	Average daily consumption (1,000 liter)
Premium (91 octane)	1,833
Super (95 octane)	9,135
Ultra (98 octane)	267
Total	11,235

Example on new roaming taxi tariffs

Travelling from the Traffic General Department's building in Shuwaikh to Kuwait City (Sharq)

(Total distance = 16 km):

- Starting balance: 350 fils
- Distance value (total distance x 125 fils)
- Total value = 16 x 125 fils + 350 fils = 2,350

Example on new call taxi tariffs

Travelling from the Traffic General Department's building in Shuwaikh to Kuwait City (Sharq)

(Total distance = 16 km):

- Starting balance: 600 fils
- Distance value (total distance x 200 fils)
- Total value = 16 x 200 fils + 600 fils = 3,800



KUWAIT: Minister of Electricity and Water Ahmad Khaled Ahmad Al-Jassar and other officials tour the site of water pipelines connecting Doha to Al-Mutlaa. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KD 1 BILLION TO BE COLLECTED IN ENERGY BILLS: MINISTER



KUWAIT: The bills of electricity and water are expected to reach KD 1 billion early 2017, Minister of Electricity and Water Ahmad Khaled Ahmad Al-Jassar said yesterday. The ministry collected KD 850 million worth of bills so far, Jassar told journalists during his tour of water pipelines connecting Doha to Al-Mutlaa. The minister noted that the total production rate of water in Kuwait is currently up to 550 million gallons, while reserve rate is at four billion gallons.

Doha station is now running a project to produce 60 million gallons of distilled water daily, with four pipelines to transfer water to Al-Mutlaa reservoirs, he said. The cost of the project is KD 22.6 million and it is set to be completed by September 2018, said the minister. Meanwhile, the project's supervising engineer Talal Al-Mulla said the pipelines provide service to Al-Mutlaa, Jaber Al-Ahmad, and other nearby areas. — KUNA



DOMESTIC HELPERS' COURT CASES EXEMPTED FROM LITIGATION FEES

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The director of the comprehensive court recently informed all departments in various governorates that all cases filed by domestic helpers would be exempt from litigation fees.

Salwa's bachelors

The Municipal Council's deputy chairman Meshal Al-Juwaisri urged relevant authorities to fight the presence of bachelors in Salwa and warned that many of them have moved from other areas like Khaitan and Jleeb. In a press statement, Juwaisri said that Salwa residents are complaining and expressing fear for the safety of their children, especially since many bachelors have rented apartments amongst families.

Shrimping season

On the occasion of the commencement of the shrimping season at territorial waters today, Kuwait Fishermen Union Chairman Thaher Al-Sowayan urged all fishermen to fully respect the Amiri decree and the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources' (PAAAFR) resolutions concerning the timings of various fishing seasons in Kuwait territorial waters. Sowayan also stressed that violations will not be tolerated. He also hoped that this year's shrimping season would be better than earlier ones to make up for some of the previous losses.

EMBASSY CLOSELY FOLLOWING SUSPENDED STUDENTS' CASE

WASHINGTON: Kuwait Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah confirmed Tuesday that the embassy is closely following the case of Kuwaiti students, who were suspended by the US immigration authorities, in coordination with the Kuwaiti Consulate General in Los Angeles, California.

The embassy is working tirelessly with the US Departments of State and National Security, in addition to the Kuwaiti foreign ministry in order to lift the suspension of the students and return them to Kuwait as soon as possible through diplomatic channels and in accordance with US laws and regulations, Sheikh Salem said.

The United States follows specific unchangeable regulations and procedures ruled by federal laws, the Kuwaiti senior diplomat said, adding that work is currently underway to speed up the return of the students to their country.

The Consulate General in Los Angeles has met with the suspended students and is continuous contact with their families in Kuwait to assure them about their safety and inform them about the latest on their case and status, said Sheikh Salem. The Kuwaiti students' case is of the embassy's top priorities as part of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's directions, he noted. — KUNA

5,293 CITATIONS ISSUED IN TRAFFIC CAMPAIGN



KUWAIT: Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahd (center) and Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Fahd Al-Shuwaii (right) are pictured during the campaign.



Damage left by a fire reported in Farwaniya yesterday.

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The traffic department launched a campaign that covered Kuwait's six governorates. The campaign resulted in issuing 5,293 traffic citations, 273 vehicles were impounded, a man was arrested on suspicion of carrying drugs, three were held without residency permit, 18 others were detained and 27 juveniles were

caught driving without licenses. The campaign was led by Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahd and accompanied by Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Fahd Al-Shuwaii.

Farwaniya fire

Firemen dealt with a fire in the basement of a nine-

storey building in Farwaniya yesterday morning. It said that operations center received a call about the fire, so Farwaniya, Ardiya, Salmiya and technical rescue responded, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) said. The building was evacuated and the fire was controlled and put out. The basement was being used as a carpenter shop and contained wood and flammable materials. No injuries were reported.



KUWAIT: Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) are pictured during the signature ceremony. — KUNA

MINISTRY TO DEVELOP SECURE BANKING SYSTEM

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Kuwait Banking Association (KBA) have signed a memorandum of understanding to share electronic information and provide security for users of the KBC system. The agreement aims at developing the role of local and foreign banks in Kuwait in sharing information, the ministry's undersecretary Khaled Al-Shamali told journalists yesterday.

Depositing capital was previously made through paperwork, which created several security problems, said Shamali, adding that running the process electronically was the best solution. The agreement states that companies must deposit capital to banks through KBC system, said the official, adding that it also provided rules and regulations between the two sides. — KUNA

Photo

of the day

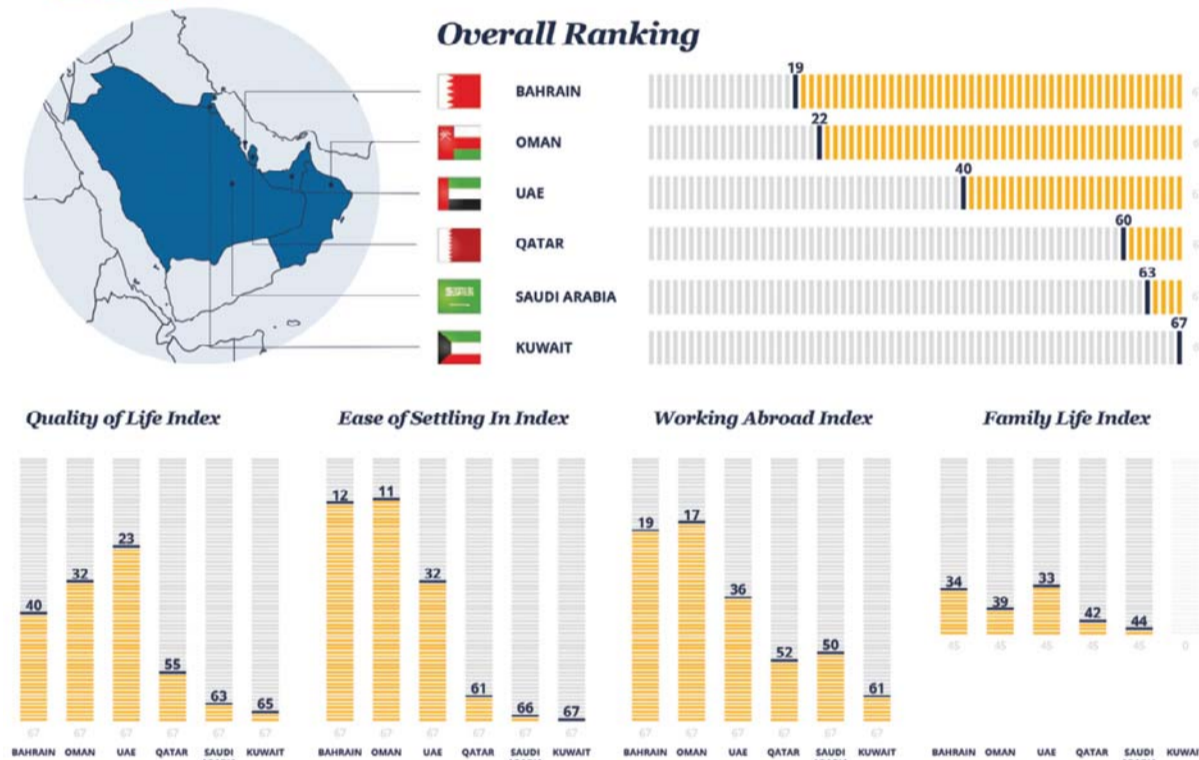
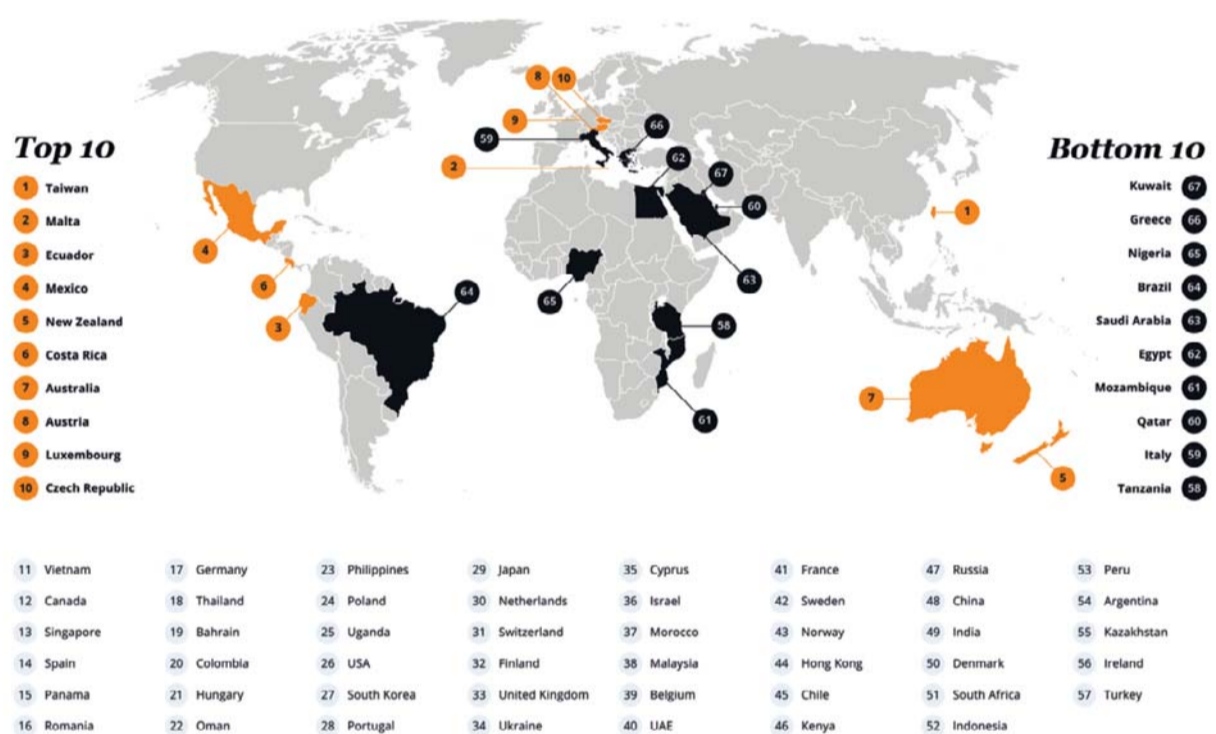


KUWAIT: An expatriate worker arranges items on top of a moving pick up truck's bed - a violation to Kuwait's laws. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

The Top Expat Destinations 2016



Regional Report GCC Countries



GCC STATES: DYNAMIC ECONOMIES WITH DOWNSIDES

INTERNATION'S EXPAT INSIDER 2016 SURVEY

The Arab Gulf region is surprisingly varied, and it can be quite attractive for people seeking higher wages. However, there are some serious downsides to be taken into consideration.

Few Leisure Options

The GCC states' rankings in the Quality of Life Index are, for the most part, among the worst in the world: Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait rank 55th, 63rd, and 65th out of 67 countries, with the UAE and Oman standing out on place 23 and 32, respectively.

Firstly, expats are generally dissatisfied with leisure activities available in the region: only the UAE does better than the worldwide average, with 38 percent of expats expressing complete satisfaction with local leisure options. In comparison, only 5 percent of respondents in Saudi Arabia say the same.

Political instability in the Middle East is a major problem at the moment, and the Gulf States are also affected by it, according to the survey respondents. In fact, fewer expats in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia are satisfied with the political stability in their country of residence than the global average of 61 percent. On the other hand, Oman and the UAE perform a lot better than the worldwide average: 85 percent and 81 percent, respectively, are generally happy with this factor.

However, this instability does not lead to issues with personal safety, with the region having a fairly low number of crimes. Most of the expats living in the region agree with this: for example, 63 percent feel very safe in the UAE, compared to a global average of 38 percent. Only Kuwait (27 percent) and Saudi Arabia (28 percent) perform worse than average in this regard.

Not surprisingly perhaps, the region is less attractive to expat women than to men. For example, there are only 15 percent of female expats in Saudi Arabia, and 33 percent in Qatar, compared to the global average of 49 percent. Three of the GCC states (Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia) are also among the ten worst-rated destinations for expat women.

Hot Climate

The results among the various destinations in the Ease of Settling Index vary greatly: Oman and Bahrain feature in the global top 15 while Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait rank 61st, 66th, and 67th out of 67, respectively.

Unsurprisingly, the responses to individual questions cover a wide range of reactions, ranging from a mere 35 percent of expats saying the locals are friendly in Kuwait, to an overwhelming 87 percent positive ratings in Oman. Qatar and Saudi Arabia are also below the worldwide average of 69 percent, with a respective 47 percent and 38 percent of positive respondents.

Furthermore, 21 percent of expats in Oman and Bahrain say that making local friends is very easy, compared to the worldwide average of 12 percent. However, all the other Gulf States have below-average ratings for this question, and it seems that the language might also be a contributing factor.

In fact, the survey respondents across every country of the region find learning the local language less than easy: for example, only 5 percent of expats in Qatar consider it very easy to learn, compared to 11 percent globally. However, most expats in the region (between 56 percent and 74 percent) agree that it is not necessary to speak Gulf Arabic in order to get by in everyday life, especially in Bahrain, Oman, and the UAE, where Arabic and English are the main business languages. The only exception to this rule is Saudi Arabia, where only 43 percent of the respondents think it's easy to get by without speaking the language, exactly the same proportion as the global average.

Job Market

In the Working Abroad Index, the best-ranking Gulf countries are again Oman and Bahrain, both featuring among the top 20 worldwide. The UAE comes in just above the global average, on 36th place, while the rest (Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia) are all in the bottom 20.

An interesting fact about the region is that Indian expats constitute the largest nationality in terms of numbers, except for Saudi Arabia, where Pakistani expats are

the most numerous. The most likely explanation would be the availability of jobs, often with higher wages than in their home countries, coupled with the relative proximity of the Gulf region to South Asia.

In fact, expats in the region say their top three reasons for relocation are all financial or work related, with the exception of the UAE, where an improved quality of life was another deciding factor. However, respondents are not particularly satisfied with the career prospects offered in the region; only the UAE and Bahrain outperform the worldwide average of 55 percent positive ratings, with 62 percent and 57 percent, respectively.

Top Findings

- » Expats not impressed with quality of life in Gulf region
- » Oman stands out for friendliness of local population
- » Jobs draw expats to the region, but career prospects often disappoint
- » Availability and cost of childcare present challenge to expat parents

Furthermore, the work-life balance (or lack thereof) seems to be a problem: in most of the Gulf States, expats work on average more than 45.2 hours a week, except for those in Oman, where the average work week is 43.3 hours, still more than the global average of 41.4 hours.

Moreover, in the UAE, Kuwait, and Qatar, more than 50 percent of expats also state that they are dissatisfied with the cost of living, compared to less than a third worldwide (32 percent). This surge in the cost of living can be attributed to the region's impressive economic growth in the last three decades. The notable exception here is Saudi

Arabia, where only 16 percent of expats are less than happy with the cost of living. In that specific case, government subsidies may help to keep living expenses affordable.

Family-Friendly

In the Family Life Index, all Gulf States rank in the bottom 15 out of 45 destinations, with the UAE coming in at 33rd and Saudi Arabia at 44th. Also, please note that Kuwait is not featured in the ranking since the number of respondents with families was too few to be statistically significant.

When it comes to the available childcare options, only Bahrain (48 percent) and the UAE (51 percent) outperform the global average of 46 percent positive ratings. Oman, however, has the lowest percentage in the region, with only 23 percent of expats saying they are satisfied with the availability of childcare.

Furthermore, childcare options seem to be both too few and too expensive: nearly a quarter of the expats in Qatar (24 percent) think that childcare is very difficult to afford. The UAE (17 percent) and Saudi Arabia (15 percent) also do worse than the worldwide average of 11 percent for those who are completely dissatisfied with the cost of childcare; however, only 3 percent of expats in Bahrain say that childcare is very expensive.

Expats in the region are generally as satisfied as the global average among expat parents when it comes to the quality of education (64 percent positive ratings worldwide): Bahrain and Saudi Arabia stand out, though - the one in a positive way, the other less so. In fact, more than two-thirds of expat parents in Bahrain (69 percent) are generally satisfied with the quality of education, while only 38 percent say the same about Saudi Arabia.

Even though the quality seems to be on par with the worldwide average, expat families say that there are not enough options for their children's education across the region. Again, Saudi Arabia fares worst, with only 24 percent of parents agreeing that education options are numerous and easily available (globally: 49 percent). — InterNation's Expat Insider 2016 survey

Crime

Report

Man stabbed in mall brawl

KUWAIT: Three bedoons stabbed another, who was admitted to Jahra Hospital's ICU, following a fight in front of a mall. The bedoon, who left a barbershop in Jahra, was surprised by three men who attacked him with knives. Policemen and paramedics rushed to the scene, and the victim was taken to hospital in stable condition, but had to be transferred to ICU as his condition was deteriorating. Detectives are looking for the three men.

Domestic violence

An argument between a man and his wife led to him beating her and ripping some books that belong to her including a diary. A security source said a citizen in her 20s told Fintas police that a heated argument took place between her husband and her, so he beat her severely, then tore up some of her books and her diary. Police are investigating. Separately, a woman accused her bedoon husband of beating her and causing her the injuries stated in a medical report. She said she was beaten because she went out at night without his permission. The woman had a bruised eye, nose, head, back and shoulders. She had a swollen left eyelid and scratches on the cornea. X-rays showed that her nose was broken.

Fugitives caught

A citizen was found wanted on a civil case when he was arrested while drunk. The citizen caught the attention of police when he was roaming in Rumaitihiya at dawn, and they asked him for his ID. They found an imported liquor bottle with him, so he was taken to the police station. He was found wanted on a KD 60,000 debt. Separately, an Indian man was sleeping on the pavement in Hadiya, and when police checked on him, he was found drunk, in violation of the residency law and reported absconding by his sponsor. Pedestrians called police to report the drunken man, so a patrol went to the site. The man attempted to escape, but ran unsteadily. He was taken to Hadiya police station and charged with drunkenness, and is being processed for deportation.

Enticing crime

Ahmedi prosecutor charged a citizen in her 50s for encouraging to commit a crime. A security source said a citizen was arrested for attacking a girl, and said he did it at the request of a woman he had a relation with. Police called the woman, who denied this at first, so the prosecutor made them face each other, and the man insisted on his claims. —Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa



Al-Jarida



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) welcomed a team from New Mowasat Hospital, who gave medical checkups and health advises to staff members.

Al-Anbaa

ULTIMATE DISAPPOINTMENT

By Qais Al-Usta

I do not blame most National Assembly members, and I do not blame members of the Cabinet, because their ability for true reform and hanging the bell waiting for what is coming is limited and timid, and it is clear that influences from outside the two are bigger and deeper, and they decide the path of all political and economic issues.

But I blame political personalities who abandoned their national role in recent years, and we no longer hear any opinion or any political activities from them, though they are the best from whom we learned that being interested in the country's affairs and its people is not a privilege that we leave or work with, like it or not. Rather it is a natural duty that must be performed so we hand the banner to those who come after us, as we received it from those before us.

I know that the element of initiative has been lost in this country, communications are almost non-existent, and the exclusion policy is what is being followed in recent years. Yet, I also know that the country is not the property of a certain person, sect, tribe or family - the country is for us all, and it is our right to express our opinion within the limits of the constitution and the law, and according to my humble experience, Kuwait's constitution is built on the freedom of the individual and faith, and allows us wide-ranging political freedoms.

Where is Meshari Al-Anjari, Yaqoub Hayti, Abdelwahab Al-Haroun and many other? Why are we no longer hearing their opinions, except in some bashful political gatherings and press statements that may be read or not? Are they hit by the adopted exclusion policy? Why did we hand the country's and people's assets to a political team that lead us to disappointment and bad management.

Those who believe we are exaggerating and that the situation is good is living in another world, and one who thinks that we are making gains doesn't know that is everything is either inoperative or temporary, and is not following the latest United Nations reports which indicate Kuwait is in low places on the lists of development in the region.

We are acting with lost time, and rescuing the country is the responsibility of all, and there is no excuse for anyone not to participate in changing the current situation to a better one, even if relatively. We write and hang the bell, so someone may read, hear or ask. Was the message delivered? I hope so.

—Translated by Kuwait Times



GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF RED, SALARY ACCOUNTS MONTHLY DRAW

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced winners of both monthly Salary Account and Red Account draws, which took place on Tuesday, 30 August 2016. The Salary and Red Account have a cash draw prize of KD 1,000 for each account.

Anwar Nawaf Marzouq Alhussaini and Mneef Nayef Mneef Almutairi who are the lucky winners of the

Salary Account and Red Account draw prize for this month, each of the two winners received cash draw prize of KD 1,000.

New Red Account or Salary Account customers who open an account and transfer their student allowance or salary will also be eligible to enter the monthly cash draws for a chance to also win up to KD

1,000 each. In addition, the quarterly car draw will be for one lucky winner who will have a chance to win a new Cadillac CTS.

For further information about Gulf Bank's red and Salary account and other prize draws, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, or go online at www.e-gulfbank.com.

TOP SIXTEEN QUALIFYING PLAYERS TO TRAVEL TO REAL MADRID WITH VIVA

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced that the top 16 qualifying players will be travelling to Madrid in Spain, to practice at Real Madrid Academy's ground in Valdebebas sport city, from 31 August until 7 September, 2016.

Commenting on this occasion, Abdulrazzaq Bader Al-Essa, Director of Corporate Communications at VIVA said: "We are looking forward to an exciting trip with this group of young players (between 13 and 16 years old), as they have shown great potential and are keen to learn more. We are very pleased to have been able to support these young athletes in bringing them closer to their dream of

becoming professional football players." He added: Real Madrid Soccer School "RMSS" is one of the initiatives that VIVA aims to support the youth through it, enhance their skills and grant them the opportunity to learn and communicate with international and professional coaches to earn the needed experience that lead them to fulfill their dreams."

Players were selected from over 400 participants who joined the RMSS tryouts, held in last May, and will get the opportunity to travel to Madrid to join a training camp to get trained by famous soccer team coaches. A team from VIVA in addition to professionals and coaches will accompany the players to ensure their safety.

A judging committee from RMSS chose the top 16 players. Each of them were judged based on their foot-balling capability and talent, physical fitness, discipline, their communication skills amongst each other as players and their general conduct on and off the field. The training program focused on different technical areas, such as dribbling, short passing, turning and finishing. The programs were also designed to develop young players in other fields, such as tactical understanding, and mental, physical and social growth. Players' daily trainings will be covered through VIVA's official social media platforms on Snapchat "VIVAtelcom" and Instagram "VIVAtelcom."



KFH SPONSORS PLASTIC BOTTLES RECYCLING ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has announced sponsorship of plastic bottles recycling environmental project (Omnia) as an environmental partner and the first sponsor for this national project. KFH is the first bank to embrace this idea that aims at increasing the awareness of the importance of recycling the plastic bottles in Kuwait. KFH's partnership stems from its commitment to assume the corporate social responsibility, and

its keenness to increase the awareness of having a clean and healthy environment.

In collaboration with Omnia, KFH will contribute in the efforts of providing collection points for plastic bottles in different governorates in Kuwait. The project has 3 stages to recycle bottles that include spreading the awareness of trash sorting, distributing carton boxes at schools, houses, universities, hotels, hospitals etc. and recycling the plastic bottles

in cooperation with the industrial authorities in an attempt for the latter to produce grains of plastic used to manufacture plastic bottles or new packaging materials.

The project is based on an array of successful experiments and studies in several countries in the world. It is the initiative of a group of ambitious Kuwaiti youth who participate in raising the environmental awareness while assuring protecting and preserving the environment.





**Prayer or politics?
 US evangelist rallies
 Christians in Boston**

'DAY OF THE DISAPPEARED': SOUTH ASIA'S TORTUROUS WAIT FOR THE MISSING

FIGHT AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT BEARING FRUIT

99.3% OF EGYPTIAN WOMEN HAVE EXPERIENCED AT LEAST ONE FORM OF HARASSMENT

CAIRO: Eight years after the first woman in Egypt won a conviction against a man for sexual harassment, activists and lawyers see progress in transforming attitudes and more harassers being jailed. In 2008, Noha Elostaz broke social taboos by disclosing details of an assault as she pushed for her harasser's conviction. Sherif Gebreel had reached out from his vehicle, groped her, hit the accelerator and dragged her along. As she fell, she saw him laughing.

Her defiance, a landmark three-year sentence for Gebreel and years of campaigning by volunteers have now shifted the tide from the days when authorities and the public treated harassment as trivial, isolated incidents usually blamed on women. "Now I hear about so many cases, girls who take men to police stations, and people now have a sense of familiarity with this act," Elostaz, 34 said. "In daily life, things have improved. I can personally feel it on the street." According to a 2013 UN study, 99.3 percent of Egyptian women have experienced at least one form of harassment, and 82.6 percent said they did not feel safe in the street.

Public debate over the problem intensified in the aftermath of the January 2011 uprising against former president Hosni Mubarak. The protests centered around Cairo's Tahrir Square, where constant media coverage also highlighted sexual attacks and helped to uproot public denial of the phenomenon. "Of course there is progress," said Mozn Hassan, the executive director of

Nazra for Feminist Studies, a leading women's rights group.

Sisi's 'message'

Hassan said her organization has won more than 50 sexual harassment cases, mostly involving prison terms, since authorities directly criminalized sexual harassment in June 2014, days before President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's inauguration. One of the worst of these attacks happened in June 2014, during celebrations marking Sisi's inauguration. A widely shared video showed the bloodied naked body of a woman as a mob pulled and pushed her to the ground and policemen tried to rescue her. Shortly afterwards, Sisi visited her in hospital bearing flowers, apologized and vowed to crack down on harassment.

The following month, seven men were sentenced to life and two to 20 years over assaults around Tahrir. For Sisi to visit the victim "was a message to the state that this is no longer acceptable," Hassan said. Michael Raouf, a lawyer with the El Nadeem Centre for the Management and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence, said he realized the impact of such rulings when he overheard young men commenting about the clothing of a nearby woman. "One was saying 'Look what she's wearing. Her brother or father let her leave the house looking like that, and if you say anything they put you in jail,'" Raouf recalled. From the very beginning, anti-harassment efforts sprang from the grassroots.

Public debate

The issue was brought to the fore-



CAIRO: Noha Elostaz, the first woman in Egypt to have won a conviction against a man for sexual harassment, speaks to journalists in her apartment in the Egyptian capital Cairo. — AFP

front of public debate in 2006, when throngs of men assaulted women in central Cairo during a public holiday. Newspapers ignored the incident, but bloggers reported it. Following the

2011 uprising, anti-harassment graffiti spread around downtown Cairo, volunteers organized to rescue women from mob attacks, and more women shared their own stories publicly. In February 2013, women took to the streets brandishing knives in a symbolic protest against sexual violence.

"Those who recall Noha's case, those who remember 2006 and people calling us crazy, those who recall 2013 with people saying 'No, these things do not happen in Tahrir, now there is a difference,'" said Hassan.

Even those who make excuses for harassers can change their minds when volunteers discuss it with them, said Alia Soliman, a spokeswoman for anti-harassment group HarassMap. "When we approach them little by little, with awareness they reconsider their convictions," said Soliman.

HarassMap organised talks at universities, trained Uber drivers and broadcast anti-harassment campaign advertisements on television and radio. But for 22-year-old Yosra Abdelaziz, the change is not coming

fast enough. She tried to report harassers but without success. Even at home, she says her older brother harasses her. "This thing with my brother, I used to tell no one. Now I tell everyone and write about it on Facebook," Abdelaziz said. She has now found some peace and let go of the guilt and shame, and is looking for her own apartment so she can lead an independent life. "Imagine if we weren't standing up to it, what the situation would be like," said Elostaz. "In the end, what's happening here is resistance." — AFP



CAIRO: Mozn Hassan, the executive director of a leading women's rights group Nazra for Feminist Studies, is filmed as she speaks to a journalist at her office in the Egyptian capital Cairo. — AFP

NORTH KOREA REGIME EXECUTES VICE PREMIER FOR 'DISRESPECT'

SEOUL: North Korea has executed a vice premier for showing disrespect during a meeting presided over by leader Kim Jong-Un, South Korea said yesterday, after reports that he fell asleep. The regime also banished two other senior officials, Seoul said, the latest in a slew of punishments Kim is believed to have ordered in what analysts say is an attempt to tighten his grip on power. "Vice premier for education Kim Yong-Jin was executed," Seoul's Unification Ministry spokesman Jeong Joon-Hee said at a regular briefing.

Kim was killed by a firing squad in July as "an anti-party, anti-revolutionary agitator," added an official at the ministry, who declined to be named. "Kim Yong-Jin was denounced for his bad sitting posture when he was sitting below the rostrum" during a session of North Korea's parliament, and then underwent an interrogation that revealed other "crimes," the official told reporters. The mass-selling JoongAng Ilbo reported on Tuesday that top regime figures had been punished, but identified the education official by a different name. "He incurred the wrath of Kim after he dozed off during a meeting presided over by Kim," it quoted a source as saying. "He was arrested on site and intensively questioned by the state security ministry."

Fall of spymaster

The unification ministry said two

other senior figures were forced to undergo re-education sessions. One of them was Kim Yong-Chol, a top official in charge of inter-Korean affairs and espionage activities against the South. The 71-year-old Kim is a career military intelligence official who is believed to be the mastermind behind the North's frequent cyberattacks on Seoul. Kim is also blamed by the South for the sinking of a South Korean warship in 2010 near the disputed sea border with the North in the Yellow Sea.

Kim was banished to a farm in July for a month for his "arrogance" and "abuse of power," the ministry official said. The spymaster, who was reinstated this month, is likely to be tempted to prove his loyalty by committing provocative acts against the South, the official said. "Therefore, we are keeping close tabs on the North," he said. Professor Yang Moo-Jin at the University of North Korean Studies said the vice premier's execution could be indirectly verified when Pyongyang's state media reveals the names of attendees at the government's anniversary ceremony on September 9. That confirmation will be important; Seoul in February said North Korean military chief of staff Ri Yong-Gil had been executed-only for Ri to turn up at a party rally in May.

Uncle

South Korea's Yonhap news agency put the number of party offi-

cially executed during Kim Jong-Un's rule at over 100. The most notorious case was that of Kim's uncle and one-time No 2 Jang Song-Thaek, who was executed for charges including treason and corruption in December 2013. In April 2015, it was reported that Kim had his defence minister Hyon Yong-Chol summarily executed with an anti-aircraft gun. Cheong Seong-Chang, a senior researcher at the private Sejong Institute, said the "reign of terror" that is characteristic of a Stalinist state showed no sign of abating under Kim. "But the intensity of the reign of terror depends on changes to the internal and external political environment", Cheong said. Reports of the latest execution coincide with a series of high-profile defections from the North.

North Korea's deputy ambassador to Britain sought refuge in the South with his family, the unification ministry said earlier this month. Thae Yong-Ho was driven by "disgust for the North Korean regime" and concerns for his family's future, it said. Twelve waitresses and their manager who had been working at a North Korea-themed restaurant in China also made headlines when they arrived in the South in April as the largest group defection for years. About 10 North Korean diplomats made it to the South in the first half of this year alone, Yonhap said, quoting informed sources. — AFP

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SHIMIZU, Japan: Photo shows a house swept down a river at the town of Shimizu in Hokkaido prefecture, after Typhoon Lionrock struck overnight. —AFP

TURKEY POST-COUP PURGES SHAKE HIGHER EDUCATION

FIFTEEN UNIVERSITIES, 1,000 SECONDARY SCHOOLS SHUT

ISTANBUL: With the summer holiday almost over, computer science student Hande Tekiner should be gearing up for a year of cram sessions and late-night homework. Instead, she may have nowhere to return to, as her university was shut after Turkey's failed coup. Authorities have closed 15 universities and around 1,000 secondary schools linked to Fethullah Gulen, the US-based Muslim cleric blamed for the July 15 attempted putsch.

Gulen has denied involvement in the plot and condemned it. The closures

final year at Mevlana University in the central city of Konya before the coup. "I have doubts if I will be able to finish my studies," she said. Tekiner said she and others were harassed on social media, labelled by anonymous accusers as supporters of the coup because they attended Gulen schools.

President Tayyip Erdogan and the government say the cleric's network used the schools to recruit followers who then infiltrated the military, civil service and judiciary. Gulen, who has lived in

initially saw the cleric as useful in taming the influence of the military and secular elite who had dominated Turkey since the founding of the modern republic. For years Gulen's followers have run schools across Turkey and as far afield as Africa and the United States, blending Islam with an emphasis on science and interfaith dialogue.

The schools helped to open up higher education to Erdogan's voter base - the pious masses often from poorer regions who were traditionally shut out of elite universities in Istanbul

be close to home," said another student from Konya's Mevlana University. "As a girl, my family would never allow me to study in another town." The Council of Higher Education, known as "YOK" in Turkish, provoked widespread outrage when it said students would be placed at new universities based on exam scores, meaning they could end up at a school on the other side of the country. It later relented following a number of social media campaigns, including one under the hashtag "#YOKbizmagduretme" or "YOK, don't victimise us".

Purges

Roughly 80,000 people in the military, civil service, and judiciary have been sacked or suspended in the purges. Around half of those have been in education, according to state media. Teachers' unions and some opposition politicians say authorities are targeting educators based on evidence that is tenuous at best - such as having opened a savings account at Bank Asya, a now defunct lender founded by Gulen's followers.

The government has said the investigations and other measures are necessary to prevent another coup. But Kamuran Karaca, who heads one of Turkey's biggest teachers' unions, said the wrong people were being targeted. Since the coup, 88 members of his Egitim-Sen union have been suspended. "All of our members who have been suspended, rather than being supporters of Gulen, are on the contrary people who strive for secular education and a secular life," said Karaca. "We believe they were blacklisted because they deposited their rent in Bank Asya, or took a loan from it, or a relative took a loan from it."

Gaye Usluer, a lawmaker from the opposition Republican People's Party, criticized what she said was a "sweeping" crackdown that has also harmed people who may be innocent. Candan Badem, a Marxist historian, was briefly detained for possessing a book by Gulen in his home, his lawyer told Reuters. He was later released. Badem signed an "Academics for Peace" petition this year that criticized military action in the largely Kurdish southeast. Erdogan denounced the more than 1,000 signatories, which also included US linguist and activist Noam Chomsky, and some Turkish academics were detained over it. —Reuters



ISTANBUL: People hold Turkish National flags as they march from Kizilay to Anitkabir, Mausoleum of Turkish Republic's founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk during a parade, celebrating the 94th Anniversary of Turkey's Victory Day in Istanbul on August 30, 2016. —AFP

have left about 200,000 students in Turkey in academic limbo, wondering if they can continue their studies and worried about the black mark of a Gulen school on their college record. Tens of thousands of academics and school teachers have also been purged, deepening concern about curtailment of academic freedom and free speech.

"As students at universities that have been shut, we are being victimized, even though those schools were opened with state approval," said Tekiner. The 23-year-old had been due to start her fourth and

charges. Turkey has asked the United States to extradite him but Washington says only a federal court can make that decision. Since the coup, in which at least 240 people died, Turkey has detained about 40,000 people and formally arrested half of them. Rights groups and some in the West fear Erdogan is using the purges to stifle dissent and tighten his grip on power.

Pious masses

Until a public falling-out in 2013, Erdogan and Gulen were allies. Erdogan

and Ankara. Erdogan, himself a graduate of a religious school, has fought to bring religious education into the mainstream of constitutionally secular Turkey and worked to overturn a ban on the headscarf in parliament and universities. But the closure of Gulen schools is troubling for students in towns where there are no other universities. Those from modest backgrounds - and female students from pious families - cannot afford, or may not be allowed, to live away from home.

"The reason I chose my university is to

ELDERLY JAPANESE AMONG 11 DEAD IN TYPHOON ONSLAUGHT

TOKYO: Heavy rain from Typhoon Lionrock flooded towns across Japan's north and left at least 11 people dead, most of them elderly residents at a nursing home who could not escape rising floodwaters, officials said yesterday. The home in the town of Iwaizumi, which only had the ground floor, included people suffering from dementia who were in their 80s and 90s. Police discovered nine bodies there yesterday while checking another facility in the inundated neighborhood. As floodwaters rapidly rose on Tuesday night, all 85 elderly residents and staff at a three-story facility next door were rescued uninjured after evacuating to the top floor, said Iwate prefectural official Reiko Ouchi.

A caretaker at that facility notified the town office about their evacuation to the third floor, noting that the nine residents next door were stuck, NHK TV reported. Ouchi said officials are looking into if and how town officials responded to the call. An evacuation order was not issued. Hiroaki Sato, a senior official at the company that runs the nursing homes, said floodwater poured into the compound in a matter of 10 minutes, making it impossible for the nine elderly residents to escape. The water was at chest-high Tuesday evening.

Despite earlier warnings of the approaching typhoon, only one of the eight staff was on overnight duty, Sato told Kyodo News, adding that a telephone line was cut off due to flooding and she could not reach police or firefighters. "An overnight staff attended the residents, but in the end they all died, including one in (her) arms," Sato told nationally televised NHK news. "I'm so sorry we could not help any of the nine residents," he said, as he bowed deeply in apology, his teary voice trembling. The identity of the victims and other details, including the whereabouts of their caretakers, were not immediately known, said Takehiro Hayashijiri, a prefecture disaster management division.

Authorities found two more bodies in Iwate - one in the same town and the second in another town of Kuji, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency. Footage on NHK showed the nursing home partially buried in mud, surrounded by debris apparently washed down in the swollen river. A car by the home was turned upside down. At another nursing home, a rescue helicopter was perched atop a flat roof, airlifting residents, each wrapped in a blanket and carried by their helpers. "We're making a government-wide effort to assess the extent of damage," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters. The government sent troops to help in the rescue and cleanup effort.

Farther north, on the island of Hokkaido, at least two rivers broke through their banks. The disaster management agency said at least one person went missing in a car that went down with a bridge torn away by the flood. Authorities in the town of Minamifurano reported hundreds of people trapped in houses and shelters by flooding from the Sorachi river, the agency said. Hundreds of others were also trapped in buildings and isolated in several towns in Iwate. Typhoon Lionrock made landfall Tuesday evening near the city of Ofunato, 500 kilometers northeast of Tokyo on the Pacific coast and crossed the main island of Honshu before heading out to the Sea of Japan.

It was the first time a typhoon has made landfall in the northern region since 1951, when the Japan Meteorological Agency started keeping records. The scene of large parts of northern Japan covered with muddy water was a shocking reminder of the major tsunami that struck the same region five years ago. Iwate prefecture, the hardest-hit by the typhoon, is one of the areas still rebuilding from the March 2011 tsunami and earthquake, which left more than 18,000 people dead along Japan's northeastern coast. —AP



JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (right) chairs the weekly Cabinet meeting at his office in Jerusalem. —AFP

ISRAEL APPROVES 466 SETTLEMENT HOMES

JERUSALEM: Israeli authorities approved 466 settlement homes in the occupied West Bank yesterday, settlement watchdog Peace Now said, despite growing international criticism over such projects. The approvals mostly involved new housing units, but a retroactive green light was also granted to 179 existing homes in the Ofarim settlement. Around 50 new units received final approval, while others were given preliminary authorization at different stages in the review process.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government "continues to plan and build all over the West Bank, while also giving settlers the message that any construction done without planning will be retroactively legalized," Peace Now said. Nickolay Mladenov, the United Nations coordinator for the Middle East peace process, told the UN Security Council on Monday that Israeli settlement expansion has surged in the two months since a key report called for a halt.

The report by the diplomatic Quartet - the European Union, Russia, the UN and the United States - said construction of settlements on land earmarked to be part of a future Palestinian state is killing off prospects for a peace deal based on a two-state solution. In response, Netanyahu's office called criticism of Israeli settlement building "absurd", particularly related to east Jerusalem. The Palestinians see east Jerusalem, occupied by Israel in 1967 and later annexed, as the capital of their future state. Israel sees all of Jerusalem as its capital. "The claim that it is illegal for Jews to build in Jerusalem is as absurd as saying Americans can't build in Washington or the French can't build in Paris," Netanyahu spokesman David Keyes said in response to Mladenov's comments.

Comments on minorities

Meanwhile, Israel's police chief faced a whirlwind of criticism yesterday after he suggested officers would "naturally" suspect minorities, including Israelis of Ethiopian descent, of crimes more than others. Members of the Ethiopian community in Israel, who account for more than

135,000 of the eight million population, called for police commissioner Roni Alsheich to be sacked after his comments on Tuesday. "Ethiopian Jews are Israeli Jews in every way," Alsheich told a lawyers' conference in Tel Aviv where he was asked about police violence against Ethiopian-Israelis. "But every criminology study worldwide shows that immigrants are more involved in crime than others."

He said that young people too were more often implicated in crimes and, that when the two factors were combined, police "naturally" suspected them more than others. Alsheich also mentioned Arab Israelis, who account for more than 17 percent of the population. He accepted, however, that there was "over-policing" of Ethiopian Israelis that must be addressed. The subject is particularly sensitive among Ethiopian Israelis, who have protested against what they see as discrimination and abuse by police.

A spokeswoman for the Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews called for Alsheich to resign, saying his comments were "intolerable." "Not only are we not immigrants as he says, but he also only reinforces stereotypes that portray all young people from our community as delinquents and criminals," Hanna Elazar said. Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan defended Alsheich in a statement, saying his comments did not defend "over-policing" or racial profiling of Ethiopian-Israelis. "He did exactly the opposite and courageously said that there is a problem that the police are addressing," Erdan said.

"We are working with members of the community and their leaders to address the errors of the past." Police spokeswoman Meirav Lapidot however told army radio that the sensitive topic "should have been explained differently." Of the 135,000 Ethiopian Jews in Israel, some 50,000 were born in the country. The community is the result of Israeli authorities eventually officially recognizing the Ethiopian Jewish community as Jews, leading to two waves of immigration in 1984 and 1991. They have alleged discrimination and other types of mistreatment. —Agencies

IS LEADERS KILLED IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

BEIRUT: US-led air strikes have killed several senior figures in the Islamic State group since April, the latest being Abu Mohamed Al-Adnani, described as the "principal architect" of jihadist attacks on the West. Coalition aircraft have also targeted Al-Nusra Front, the former Syrian branch of the jihadist group Al-Qaeda, rebranded in July as Fateh Al-Sham Front. Here is a short list of departed warlords:

Abu Mohamed Al-Adnani

On Tuesday, the IS announced via its news service Amaq that Abu Mohamed Al-Adnani, a Syrian national, had died in Aleppo province of northern Syria and pledged to avenge his death. Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook, used an alternative name for IS, said an air strike near Al-Bab had targeted Adnani, describing him as the "principal architect of ISIL's external operations and... ISIL's chief spokesman." A US defense official who declined to be named linked Adnani to attacks in Brussels, Istanbul and Paris, and said that if true, his death was "a very significant blow for ISIL." The US had offered \$5 million for information that led to him.

'Omar the Chechen'

On July 13, Amaq announced the death of senior IS commander Omar Al-Shishani, also known as "Omar the Chechen", near Mosul in northern Iraq. The Pentagon confirmed that coalition aircraft had targeted the IS leader, but not that he had been killed. Known for ruthless tactics and his thick red beard, Shishani, whose Georgian name was Tarkhan Batirashvili, was one of the most sought IS leaders in Syria, described by US officials who put a \$5-million bounty on his head as the group's de facto defence minister.

IS Anbar chief Abu Wahib

On May 6, another airstrike killed Abu Wahib, "military emir" of IS for the vast western Iraqi province of Anbar, near the town of Rutba. Abu Wahib, a former Al-Qaeda militant and three other IS jihadists died when their vehicle was hit, and Pentagon spokesman Cook said he was considered "a significant leader in ISIL leadership overall, not just in Anbar province." Wahib had appeared in chilling IS execution videos and did not mask his identity despite the clear risk to his security.

Abd Ar-Rahman Mustafa Al-Qaduli

On March 25, US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced that Abd Ar-Rahman Mustafa Al-Qaduli, believed to be number two in the IS leadership, had been "eliminated" during a US operation in Syria. Carter also referred to Al-Qaduli as Haji Imam. The US Justice Department had offered a bounty of up to \$7 million for information leading to Qaduli, identified as the group's finance minister and a key figure behind some foreign plots. On March 31, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said a US drone strike had killed Abu al-Hija, a high-ranking Tunisian IS leader who was heading to Aleppo province on orders of IS chief Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, for whom the US has offered a \$10-million reward.

Al-Nusra spokesman

On April 3, Al-Nusra Front spokesman Abu Firas al-Suri, also known as Radwane Nammous, died when US planes attacked a training camp in the northwestern Syrian province of Idlib. In late July, the former Al-Qaeda affiliate announced it was breaking ties with the jihadist network, and that it would now call itself Jabhat Fateh Al-Sham (Front of the Conquest of Syria). —AFP

RUBIO AND MURPHY SECURE FLORIDA'S SENATE PRIMARIES

TALLAHASSEE: Republican Sen Marco Rubio and Democratic US Rep Patrick Murphy each easily won their Senate primaries Tuesday, setting up a November showdown that's guaranteed to be nasty as each party grapples for a majority in the chamber. Rubio, who decided at the last second to seek a second term, easily fended off millionaire home-builder Carlos Beruff and Murphy used the backing of President Barack Obama and other Democratic leaders to defeat US Rep Alan Grayson, who was counting on his party's most faithful liberal voters to overcome Murphy's money and establishment support.

In other races, US Rep Corrine Brown lost a primary as she faces felony fraud charges. She was one of the first African-Americans elected to Congress from Florida since Reconstruction. US Rep Debbie Wasserman Schultz, who recently resigned as Democratic National Committee chair, won her primary - the first tough race since being elected to Congress in 2004. Rubio's and Murphy's victory speeches set the tone for the Senate race. "Marco Rubio is the worst of Washington because he puts himself first every time. He gave up on his job. He gave up on Florida. He earned the worst voting record for any Florida senator in 50 years," Murphy said shortly after polls closed. Rubio spoke about an hour later and said Murphy has lied about his education and his career and is only successful because of his wealthy father.

"How can someone with that kind of record think he can be elected to the US Senate? The answer is he has a sense of entitlement, because when everything you've ever had in your life is given to you, you think you deserve it all," Rubio said. Rubio had declared during his failed presidential campaign that he would not run again for Senate. But he nearly cleared what had been a crowded GOP field with his last-minute turnabout. Beruff rolled the dice to see if the anti-establishment mood powering Donald Trump's presidential campaign could send him to Washington as well. But after spending \$8 million of his own money and going nowhere in the polls, he essentially shut

down his campaign ahead of the primary.

"I voted for Marco only because I've been a longstanding supporter," said Diane Martin-Johnson, 66, after voting early Tuesday in Pinellas Park. "It's unfortunate he didn't do his job fully in Washington this term. I do think he deserves another chance. He thought he was doing the right thing (by running for president). That's my only complaint against him. He's a good man." Murphy, a former Republican, quickly earned party support and raised significantly more money. He was also backed by Vice President Joe Biden and Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid. Grayson, a fiery liberal known for brash comments and hamstrung by a difficult divorce, relied mostly on small donors and feuded with party leaders.

Todd Martin, 53, and his 18-year-old daughter Haley, voted together in Tallahassee, where they recently moved as she starts college. They both chose Murphy, in part because they like his efforts to get government to address algae outbreaks near their former home in Vero Beach. "I grew up on the river and it's a shame what they let happen," Todd Martin said. "I like where Patrick Murphy stands on the algae. It's very important to me." More than 1.75 million Floridians already cast ballots by mail or at early-voting stations before polls opened Tuesday.

This year's primary turnout could top ones held in 2012 and 2014 - a sign that competitive races for Congress and the Florida Legislature could be driving up turnout this time around. Wasserman Schultz easily beat Tim Canova, a Bernie Sanders-backed law professor who was able to raise more than \$3 million in a primary colored by leaked emails revealing that DNC officials had worked against Sanders to favor Hillary Clinton in the presidential race. Brown lost to longtime state lawmaker Al Lawson, who has previously run for Congress. Democrats hope to gain seats in Florida's heavily Republican House delegation after court mandated redistricting chipped away the advantages of some incumbents. — AP



BOSTON: Ernestine Cuellar, of Boston's Charlestown neighborhood, raises her hands in prayer during a mass prayer rally on Boston Common held by evangelist Franklin Graham (inset) as part of a tour to urge evangelicals to vote. Graham's rally is a stop on his 50-state "Decision America" tour. — AP

PRAYER OR POLITICS?

EVANGELIST RALLIES CHRISTIANS IN BOSTON

BOSTON: The son of evangelist Billy Graham urged a gathering on the historic Boston Common on Tuesday to vote in the November election but stressed he was taking no sides publicly in the US presidential race. The event was the latest stop on the Rev Franklin Graham's 50-state Decision America tour, during which he asked Christians to take a pledge to support, whenever possible, candidates who uphold biblical principles.

Making no direct reference in his remarks to Republican Donald Trump or Democrat Hillary Clinton, Graham said the nation was in trouble spiritually, economically and politically and neither major party could turn that around. "I have no hope in the Democratic Party all right, zero hope," Graham said to some applause, adding quickly that before Republicans in the audience "high-five each other, I have no hope for the Republican Party."

Organizers of the event estimated the crowd at about 3,400 on the balmy late summer day. No official count was available. Similar rallies were scheduled this week in Providence, Rhode

Island, and Hartford, Connecticut. New England is believed to have proportionately fewer evangelical Christians than many other parts of the country. Less than 10 percent of Christians in Massachusetts identify as evangelical, according to recent estimates.

Boston Common, established in 1634 by the Puritan founders of the Massachusetts Bay colony, has often been called America's first public park. It has occasionally hosted religious-style events, including the first US Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II during his 1979 visit. While a smattering of Trump signs were evident Tuesday, many in the crowd echoed Graham's largely non-partisan theme. "This for me is spiritual, not political," said Robbie McNeerney, a Massachusetts native who was taking a break from missionary work in Vietnam.

McNeerney, who attended with his Vietnamese-born wife, Mihloan McNeerney, and their two young children, said he had not chosen between Clinton and Trump. "Neither of the political candidates can solve our problems," he said. "I think whoever is our next president will

need the grace of God." Daniel Hamil and his wife, Sarah Hamil, retirees from Bolton, said they had decided who to vote for but preferred not to say. They cited the nation's "moral decline" as their main concern. Speaking in the shadow of the Massachusetts Statehouse, Graham did not directly criticize state politicians but railed against progressives who he argued were taking away individual rights to religious expression.

Massachusetts was the first state to legalize same-sex marriage, and its current leaders are strongly pro-abortion rights. The pledge calls on voters to support politicians who uphold the "sanctity of life and the sacredness of marriage." Graham met with Trump last week during the Republican's visit to flood-ravaged parts of Louisiana. After the rally, Graham, who said he had known Clinton longer than he had known Trump, repeated his assertion he was not instructing people who to vote for. "Both parties, Democrat and Republican, have turned their backs on God and embraced secularism," he said. — AP



FLORIDA: Florida Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) speaks with supporters as he stops to thank volunteers at a phone bank on the final day before the Florida primary election in Miami, Florida. — AFP

JITTERS IN REBEL HEARTLAND OVER PEACE IN COLOMBIA

PLANADAS: Esperanza Rivera, who grew up in the same mountains that gave birth to the FARC guerrillas, is happy about the Colombian peace deal-but worries about what comes next. After nearly four years of negotiations, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the government of President Juan Manuel Santos reached an agreement in Havana yesterday to end 52 years of warfare. The deal needs to be ratified in an October 2 popular vote.

"What we want is for the peace deal to be signed and for the plebiscite to win," said Rivera, 41, a farmer interviewed in the town of Planadas, where a 1964 armed peasant uprising gave birth to the FARC. Rivera warns however that "another conflict, which no one talks about," is emerging, in a country where drug gangs have also fueled the violence. "As long as the guerrillas were here, criminals were kept away," Rivera said. "But now, since the criminals will have no one to fear, we will be unprotected." Police "do not come out to the countryside, there is no security force to defend us from common criminals," she said.

Not even a hen

In Planadas "the bandits greatly feared the guerrillas, so they wouldn't steal even a hen because there was someone to punish them." Rivera hopes that with peace they will also get "more help from the government, which has abandoned us." Another local, 59-year-old Jorge Ardila, said that he also wants peace but has doubts about what was negotiated. "I don't think that there is anyone in the universe that doesn't want peace," he said. "But before taking a stance I should know what was agreed upon."

Ardila claims that his father, Pedro Antonio Ardila, was a nurse for FARC founder Manuel "Tirofijo" (Sureshot) Marulanda, who died in 2008 of apparent natural causes. Ardila said that his father became Marulanda's nurse soon after the FARC was formed while working at the same time as an army nurse. "He would perform his medical services in the army and then, in a clandestine way, also help the guerrillas," Ardila said. Eustacio Jimenez, 75, is even more skeptical about the peace accord. "Reaching peace in Colombia is very

difficult because there is a lot of poverty and unemployment," he said.

Negotiations are fine, but there will be no peace if those issues are not also included in the bargaining, he said. Jimenez's prediction: "more blood will be spilled." According to Jimenez, there are "more people under arms than working in the field." A life-long farmer, Jimenez knows well the mountains surrounding Planadas, which for decades have been key corridors the FARC to reach other rural areas.

Power vacuum

Many locals are silent about their true thoughts about the future, wary of what could happen if they speak out. They conflict, which has left 260,000 dead and 45,000 missing, has forced them to hone their survival skills. "Here there are eight, nine sets of laws: those set by the guerrillas, the paramilitary groups, the gangs ..." a local who preferred to not identify himself said. Experts say the power vacuum that will emerge when the FARC demobilizes might be filled by other illegal groups. — AFP

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CALIFORNIA'S FARMWORKERS ON EDGE OVER OVERTIME BILL

MENDOTA: Many California farmworkers who make up the backbone of the nation's No 1 agricultural state were praising historic legislation that brings them closer to receiving the same overtime pay as the rest of the state's workers who are paid by the hour. If signed into law by Gov Jerry Brown, a new overtime bill would put California at the forefront nationally of farm labor pay and mark a victory in the fight to improve farmworkers rights in the decades old movement launched by Cesar Chavez, the legendary co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association who fought for higher farm worker pay.

Brown, a Democrat, has not said whether he will sign the law that would be the first of its kind for the United States. Florentino Reyes, 48, has been picking tomatoes and working a wide variety of crops in California's fertile

Central Valley for more than two decades and says he could make another \$60 weekly. That would give him more purchasing power to buy better food and clothes for his wife and three children and ease his stress over paying down bills. "For me, it's discrimination," said Reyes, finishing up Tuesday's harvesting of green tomatoes near the town of Mendota.

But other farmworkers are nervous about California farmers' claims that the higher overtime pay could hurt them economically and outprice California products from the marketplace in favor of crops grown in other states and countries. Gonzalo Najera, who drives a tractor on Salinas Valley's lettuce, carrots and broccoli fields, said some farmers are saying the extra overtime payments could drive them out of the state, but he doesn't buy the argument. "The growers

can't leave," Najera said. "They can't take their dirt with them." The 35-year-old father of four also has parents back in Mexico, who rely on money he regularly sends. He earns about \$33,000 a year and said he has worked seven days a week since March this year.

The added overtime pay he expects to receive will correct a longstanding injustice so farm workers are no longer treated as second class California employees, Najera said. Under the current law, California employers must pay time-and-a-half to farmworkers after 10 hours a day or 60 hours a week. Lawmakers in Sacramento on Monday sent the legislation to Brown that would give them overtime after eight hours in a day or 40 hours a week. It is backed by the United Farm Workers, which Chavez helped found in 1962, more than three decades before his death. — AP

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SANTA CLARA, Cuba: Airport workers receive the JetBlue flight 387 holding United States and Cuban national flags on the airport tarmac yesterday. — AP

ROUSSEFF STRIPPED OF PRESIDENCY

Continued from Page 1

"I will not associate my name with this infamy," read a sign held up by one senator. "Coup plotters!" others chanted.

Renan Calheiros, the Senate president, rejected Rousseff's claim of a coup, saying her impeachment might not have been perfect, but had "the DNA of democracy, the DNA of the constitution". Brazil's first female president, holed up in the presidential palace on the outskirts of the capital Brasilia with close aides, was expected to make a statement. Her vice president turned bitter political enemy, Michel Temer, was to be sworn in as her replacement, the Senate president announced. Temer, a veteran center-right politician, was then to leave for a G20 summit in China.

Rousseff, from the leftist Workers' Party, is accused of taking illegal state loans to patch budget holes in 2014, masking the country's problems as it slid into its deepest recession in decades. She told the Senate during a marathon 14-hour session on Monday that she is innocent and that abuse of the impeachment process put Brazil's democracy, restored in 1985 after a two-decades-long military dictatorship, at risk.

Recalling how she was tortured and imprisoned in the 1970s for belonging to a leftist guerrilla group, Rousseff urged senators to "vote against impeachment, vote for democracy... Do not accept a coup." However, huge anti-Rousseff street demonstrations over the last year have reflected nationwide anger at her management of a country suffering double-digit unemployment and inflation. The once mighty Workers' Party, meanwhile, has struggled to stage more than small rallies.

Temer, who was in an uncomfortable partnership with

Rousseff before finally splitting, will be president until the next scheduled elections in late 2018. The 75-year-old, known more as a backroom wheeler-dealer than street politician, took over in an interim role after Rousseff's initial suspension in May. He immediately named a new government with an agenda of shifting Brazil to the right after more than a decade of leftist rule that saw 29 million people lifted from poverty, but became bogged down in corruption and the economic slump. Temer has earned plaudits from investors. It remains uncertain whether he will have voters' support to push through the painful austerity reforms he promises.

About 50 leftist demonstrators gathered outside the presidential palace to show their support for Rousseff. "We are protesting against the coup and fighting for democracy," said 61-year-old farmer Orlando Ribeiro. In the center of the capital, extra security and the closing of avenues near the Senate caused massive traffic jams. Police said they were preparing for large protests later in the day.

On the Senate floor, emotions crackled in the run-up to the vote, then overflowed as senators made final speeches on what both sides of the debate agreed was history in the making. Senator Aecio Neves, Rousseff's narrowly defeated center-right opponent in her 2014 re-election, pronounced triumphantly: "The constitution won. Brazil won!" But Senator Vanessa Grazziotin was scathing in her summing up of an "illegal process that is called impeachment but is a coup". "Temer does not have legitimacy to govern this country," she warned. "This is a farce, a farce, a farce," shouted another pro-Rousseff senator, Lindbergh Farias. Shaking his fists at the majority backing impeachment, he cried: "They're going in the garbage can of history." — AFP

WEALTHY QATARIS TASTE AUSTERITY

Continued from Page 1

The austerity measures may be light compared with those felt by expatriate workers and poorer energy-producing countries, but they have nevertheless unnerved some locals for whom affluence and stellar economic growth have been the norm. A merger of several ministries early this year did not affect the salaries or benefits of Qataris - which are still viewed as sacrosanct - but did entail sharp cuts in "discretionary" spending, according to three government ministry officials.

"We stopped receiving a daily paper," said one of the officials, who said colleagues had been encouraged not to fly business class and to cut back on trips abroad for overseas conferences. "Journal subscriptions were cancelled. Some who had their own offices were moved into shared offices." The economy, finance and labor ministries did not respond to requests for comment.

Overseas Travel

Another official, from the labor ministry, said as a result of the merger hundreds of Qatari government employees had been left with no work since January as the government scrambled to find them new positions while continuing to pay their salaries. Staff in the labor ministry were told that travelling abroad for further education while working for the government - an appealing aspect of the job for many Qataris - was now limited to those pursuing technical or vocational degrees, the official said. He and the other officials declined to be named as they are not authorized to speak publicly.

Qatari authorities say the oil price slump provides an opportunity to curb the excesses of government agen-

cies that have been plagued by inefficiencies for years. An economic adviser to the government, who also asked to remain anonymous as he is not authorized to speak publicly, said there was a freeze on recruitment in some government departments and more scrutiny on spending. He said reducing inefficiencies, while painful, would benefit the state in the long run, even once oil prices rebounded.

Many Qataris are drawn to public-sector positions which typically involve more favorable working hours and better salaries and benefits than private companies. It is not yet clear how successful the efficiency drive has been, although in the 2016 budget "minor capital expenditure", an area of discretionary spending that traditionally includes smaller building projects such as refurbishments, fell by 70 percent year-on-year.

Salaries account for 50 billion riyals (\$13.7 billion) - about a quarter - of Qatar's expenditure. Previous austerity steps in Qatar, such as utility bill rises in late 2015 and a reduction in fuel subsidies earlier this year, have fallen hardest on poorly paid foreign construction workers - as will a 5 percent sales tax on consumer goods and services planned for 2018. This trend risks increasingly polarizing the country between wealthy Qataris at the top and Asian blue-collar workers at the bottom.

However Syed Bashar, a former economist with Qatar's central bank, said Qatari workers could increasingly feel the weight of austerity as the government targets state entities to narrow the deficit. "The government will not be able to provide the vast majority of Qatari jobs indefinitely," he added. "Nor can it guarantee that salaries keep rising as they did. This will be upsetting for some nationals." — Reuters

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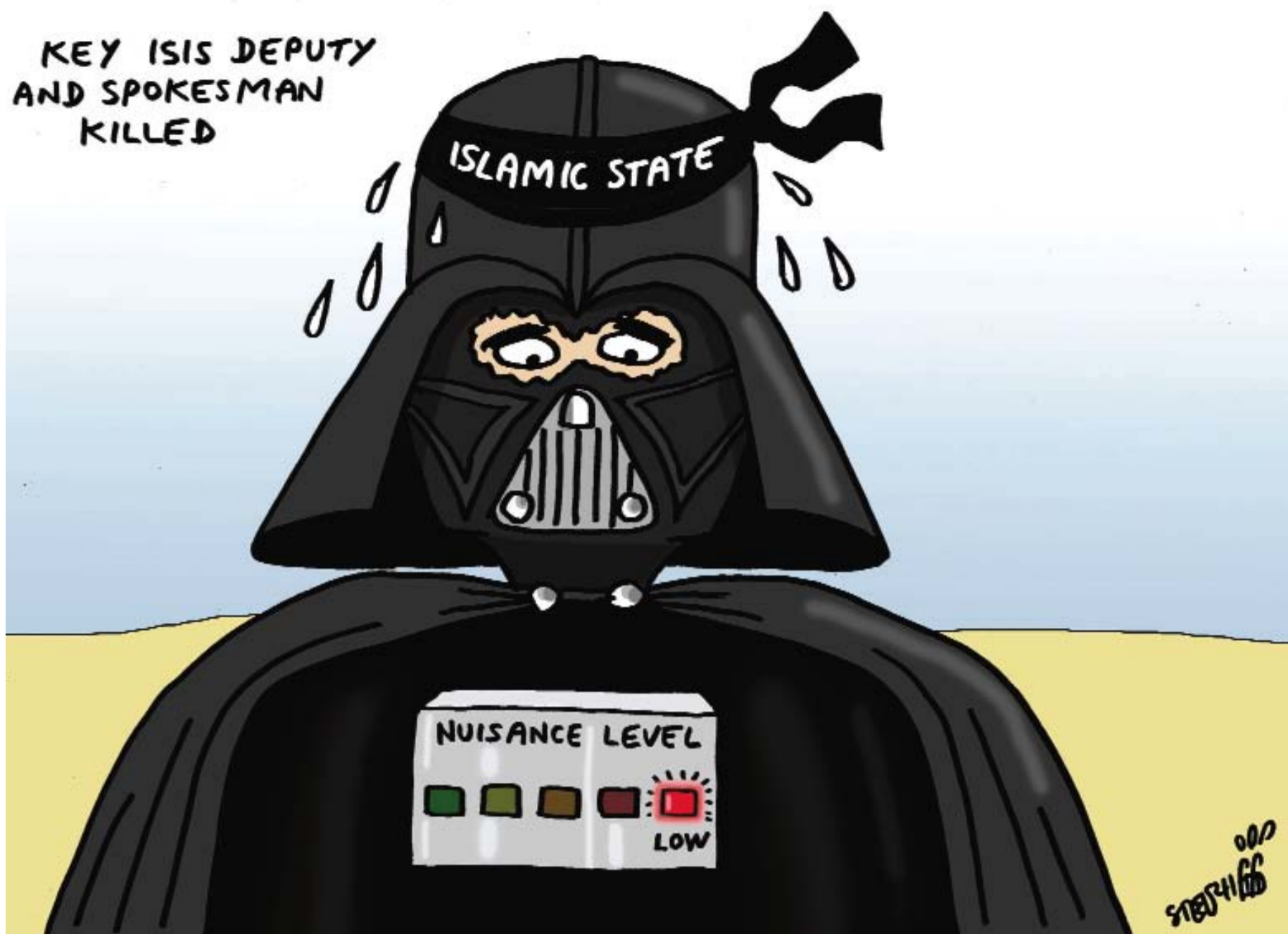
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KILLED

DEATH OF IS TACTICIAN COMES AT CRITICAL MOMENT

By Samia Nakhoul and Angus McDowall

The US air strike believed to have killed Abu Mohammad Al-Adnani has deprived Islamic State of the architect of its attacks on the West, as it faces the loss of swathes of its heartlands. One of the last survivors of the Al-Qaeda militants who originally formed Islamic State last decade in Iraq, including its self-appointed caliph Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, Adnani had risen to become one of its most influential leaders.

"It's a major morale and propaganda blow to the group because it shows that their top leadership is being targeted by an effective and organised chain," Brig Gen Yahya Rasool, spokesman for the joint operations command of Iraq's army, told Reuters in Baghdad. Not only did Adnani orchestrate Islamic State's propaganda effort, an undertaking at the heart of its quest to lay waste modern nation states, but he also served as one of its principle military planners. If his death is confirmed, those skills will be hard to replace, even in a group as resilient as Islamic State, after a series of territorial losses and killings of top leaders.

In recent months Islamic State's losses in Iraq have mounted. Fallujah has fallen in the west and Iraqi forces have captured key approaches to Mosul, the ancient Tigris city whose fall in 2014 signalled the group's lightning rise. Meanwhile, advances by a US-backed coalition in Syria have all but cut Islamic State off from the Turkish border, after the loss of the key town of Manbij, and started to press into its Euphrates valley heartland.

Few people expect further advances against Islamic State to be rapid or straightforward, but the group's enemies have built a clear momentum in both Iraq and Syria that has pushed it to adopt a strategy of attacks overseas. Adnani was the man behind that policy, demonstrating an ideological and tactical flexibility that allowed the group first to capitalise on its seizure of land, and then to adapt as it was forced to retreat.

In doing so, Islamic State has made a switch in emphasis from its dreams of unifying all Muslims under a single, militant caliphate, to an older jihadist strategy of striking terror into its enemies by attacking them in their own countries. But it has done this partly by harnessing shock tactics and social media to inspire and guide attacks by radicalized amateurs, rather than rely solely upon the highly trained but cumbersome militant cells of an earlier era. This, in part, was Adnani's legacy.

Apocalyptic Prophecy

Islamic State said on Tuesday Adnani was killed "while surveying the operations to repel the military campaigns

against Aleppo. It pledged to avenge his death but did not disclose details on how he died or who was killed with him. A US defense official told Reuters the United States targeted Adnani on Tuesday in a strike on a vehicle travelling in the Syrian town of Al-Bab. He stopped short of confirming Adnani's death, however. Such US assessments often take days and often lag behind official announcements by militant groups.

Adnani's presence in the Aleppo countryside may reflect its strategic and symbolic importance to Islamic State. The northwest has become both the most active theatre of Syria's war and an arena for competing regional and global powers. The government and mainstream rebel groups, which between them hold most of Syria's western, most populous, regions, have focused on their battle for control of Aleppo, Syria's biggest city before the war, and a strategic prize.

But to the north and east, a secondary conflict has played out as US-backed Kurdish fighters and Turkey-backed rebels,

who are also fighting each other, have squeezed IS' once expansive tracts along the Turkish border and Euphrates basin. These advances have all but cut off Islamic State from its last foothold on the Turkish border, its link to new foreign recruits, while a steady push from the north has brought its enemies to within 30 km of its Syrian capital Raqqa.

But these strategic setbacks are not Islamic State's only interest in the Aleppo countryside: Just 30 km northwest of Al-Bab, where Adnani was reportedly killed in an airstrike after arriving to tour the battlefield, is the village of Dabiq. A few streets surrounded by fields, it will be the site, says Islamic prophecy, of a final battle between Muslims and infidels that will herald the apocalypse. So important is this event in Islamic State propaganda, of which Adnani was the chief, that Dabiq was the name chosen for its online magazine that sought to inspire new recruits to its militant cause and instruct them in the ways of global jihad.

HAMMERED

Hammered by two years of US-led coalition air strikes and military losses on the ground, Adnani increasingly called in audio messages for attacks against the United States and Western countries. His group said it was behind deadly attacks in Paris, Nice and Brussels. The shift was partly born of tactical necessity after Western and regional governments made it harder for would-be militants to travel to Syria or Iraq to join the group. "If the tyrants close the door of migration in your faces, then open the door of jihad in theirs and turn their actions against them," he said in an audio clip.

Born in 1977 as Taha Subhi Falaha in Syria's Idlib Province southwest of Aleppo, he pledged allegiance to Islamic State's predecessor, Al-Qaeda, more than a decade ago and was once imprisoned by US forces in Iraq. He left Syria to travel to Iraq to fight US forces there after its 2003 invasion, and only returned to his homeland after the start of its own civil war in 2011, a person who knew his family said. A biography posted on militant websites says he grew up with a "love of mosques" and was a prolific reader.

A US counter-terrorism official who monitors Islamic State said Adnani's death would hurt the militants "in the area that increasingly concerns us as the group loses more and more of its caliphate and its financial base ... and turns to mounting and inspiring more attacks in Europe, Southeast Asia and elsewhere". Hisham Al-Hashimi, a Baghdad-based security analyst that advises the Iraqi government on IS affairs: said: "As a military target, Adnani is less important than (ex-war minister Omar) Al-Shishani... (killed earlier this year in Iraq). His death is mainly a blow to their morale, he is the one who inspires the fighters to join in Syria." — Reuters



Abu Mohammad Al-Adnani

LONE CHILDREN SEEKING UK ASYLUM RISING

By Lin Taylor

When Alan, a British foster parent, first took in a teenager who had fled poverty and political repression in Eritrea, the boy was so scarred by his journey to the UK that he barely spoke. Then 16, the boy was smuggled into Britain underneath a truck nursing a broken arm, having fallen from the vehicle somewhere in France. Five years on, the traumatized teenager was now a 21-year-old man with a home of his own in Kent, southeast England. And when Alan walked into the young man's housewarming party, it was one of the proudest moments as a foster parent.

"We all went to his moving-in party and it was fantastic," said Alan, who declined to give his full name to protect other foster children in his care. "When they arrive, they're so anxious and frightened. And to see them feel more at home and making friends, that is so rewarding. They are the standout moments," Alan said in a phone interview with the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The British father of six and his partner have been fostering unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Kent for nearly seven years, looking after teenagers from Iran, Iraq, Vietnam, Albania and currently a 17-year-old boy from Afghanistan. As difficult as it is to gain their trust and to support them as they adjust to a new life in Britain, it is nothing compared with the journey these children have taken, Alan said. "Some witnessed a member of their

family being killed or arrested. They might have been trafficked. They're all traumatized when they get here," he said.

Overstretched

As Europe grapples with its worst refugee crisis since World War Two, the need for British foster carers and support services is greater than ever, charities and government officials say. In 2015, nearly 96,000 lone children sought asylum in the European Union, almost four times as many as the previous year, according to the European Asylum Support Office. In Britain alone, 3,472 children applied for asylum in the 12 months to June this year, an increase of 54 percent compared with the previous year which had 2,252 claims. The highest number of claims came from children arriving from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Iran.

Foster carers hosted 2,630 asylum-seeking children in 2015, a 29 percent increase on 2014 (2,030) and a 35 percent increase on 2013 (1,940), according to government data. Although the number of people wishing to foster child asylum seekers continues to grow, there are not enough legal aid, mental health services or schooling for new arrivals, charity workers said. "The social services are greatly stretched. The whole situation is a bit difficult in Kent for young people and for the council as well," said Asma Salah, a British Red Cross caseworker in one of the main arrival points for migrants crossing the English Channel.

As the closest British county to Calais, where

hundreds of child migrants have ended up living in squalid camps, Kent is on the frontlines of refugee arrivals in the UK with 825 unaccompanied minors in its care as of Aug 22, compared with 730 last September. Under the Children Act 1989, British councils have a legal responsibility to care for children who arrive from abroad, seeking asylum.

Though new arrivals have dropped, Kent council says it is struggling to support the children they have in their system, and has urged other local authorities to take in some minors through a voluntary dispersal scheme launched in July. With around 20 young people dispersed so far, and very few councils expressing interest to resettle them, Peter Oakford, Kent's councillor in charge of children's services, said the scheme should be mandatory. "The dispersal program really isn't any good. We can't even get a list of local authorities from government that have signed up to participate," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

But the head of the local government's refugee taskforce, David Simmonds said the interests of the child would be better served if councils were not forced to take them in. Simmonds, who recently returned from his first visit to Calais, said British local authorities were doing a reasonable job with limited resources. "The big challenge is if there's going to be a very significant increase in numbers," he added.

Best Interest of the Child

Rape, forced labor, beatings and death are

just some of the dangers faced by children travelling without their parents, the UN children's agency, UNICEF, says. Given the risk of abuse, UNICEF said Britain should do more to resettle lone children stranded in Calais and across Europe. "There should be more resettlement places for those children whose best interest is to be in the UK, along with legal routes like family reunion," said Melanie Teff, policy advisor at UNICEF UK. "We're not saying the UK should take every unaccompanied child in Europe but ... we're dealing with a global refugee crisis and the UK needs to step up and play its part in responsibility sharing for that."

For Joanne in Kent, fostering a child asylum seeker for the first time in November was a natural response to the refugee crisis. "I just don't think there's enough people willing to open their homes within the UK to the real problems that are out there," said Joanne, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "There's a lot of ignorance. I do believe that a lot of people have no understanding of these children - and they really don't understand that they've had a horrific journey coming here."

Alan said despite the challenges, he will continue to take in unaccompanied children as long as there is a need. "We're embracing them and giving them a big cuddle, so to speak. We want to guide them, show kindness and let them know that they've got somebody here that they can rely on." — Reuters

ELECTIONS, RUNNING
CLOCK FRUSTRATE
OBAMA TRADE DEALS

By Paul Handley

US President Barack Obama's two most ambitious trade deals appear increasingly in trouble, victims of electoral politics at home and in Europe and a ticking clock on his administration. Neither the Trans-Pacific Partnership nor the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership is dead, but analysts say the hurdles to getting either completed by the end of Obama's term next January 20 are now almost insurmountable.

For the TPP, already negotiated with 11 other Pacific Rim countries and only needing ratification by the Congress, the political atmosphere has been soured with both presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, pitching for votes, saying they are opposed to it. As for TTIP - a treaty with the entire European Union - negotiations are stuck on the toughest issues and European politicians, facing elections next year, are likewise declaring opposition.

French President Francois Hollande said Tuesday that TTIP talks "will not lead to an agreement by the end of the year," and hours earlier his junior minister for trade Matthias Fekl called for an end to the talks. "There is no more political support in France for these negotiations," he said. And in Germany, vice chancellor and economy minister Sigmar Gabriel said the talks "have de facto failed".

While negotiators from both sides quickly responded that the talks were certainly alive and making progress, analysts said both TTIP and TPP would likely be stalled to at least 2018. "The clock has basically run out," said Gary Hufbauer, a trade expert at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington. "I agree more with the 'more dead than alive' camp in this debate," he told AFP.

Not a big free trade advocate before he was first elected in 2008, Obama has strongly pursued what he has called "trade deals for the 21st century". Each would dwarf any previous free trade treaty, going beyond cutting goods tariffs to establish rules governing data trade, investment rights, intellectual property rights and other issues not covered in past deals. Both deals were set up to be negotiated largely in secret and be presented to respective governments and legislatures as completed deals for up-or-down votes.

Hot Issue

The 12 TPP countries reached agreement in Oct 2015, and the main challenge to implementing it is ratification by the US Congress. But with opponents arguing that previous trade deals have cost US jobs, TPP has become a hot issue ahead of the US presidential and congressional elections coming on Nov 8. TTIP has not figured much in the US campaign, but this week's comments show it will in the French and German elections next year. "Election periods are always not good times for trade agreements," Hufbauer told AFP.

Moreover, relative to TPP, the TTIP talks have been rushed, and have been tripped up by Britain's June vote to withdraw from the European Union, potentially removing a key US ally from the deal. "It was never going to be easy between the US and the EU because basically you have the two elephants (of global trade) negotiating with each other," said Frances Burwell at the Atlantic Council. Obama has a chance to move both deals forward before leaving office. He could submit TPP to Congress for ratification after the election, and before the new Congress takes office in early January, when legislators could vote with less political pressure.

But Daniel Ikenson, a trade expert at the Cato Institute, gives that "about a one percent chance" of succeeding. "I think the votes are really not there," he said, with the normally pro-free trade Republican Party deeply divided. Obama could also drive his chief trade negotiator, Michael Froman, to finish a TTIP deal before he exits. But that could require big US compromises, which could create a political firestorm for his successor. "There is some chance that we will be very close to what is known as a political agreement by the end of Obama's term, but it's dicey. It's not a sure thing," said Burwell.

Both deals, then, are almost certain to be left to the next president, widely expected to be Clinton. As Obama's secretary of state she supported the negotiating effort but has opposed TPP on the campaign trail. Never mind that, said Ikenson. "Presidential candidates tend to be more populist and more anti-trade. Presidents themselves see the light... Clinton will find a way to support it." Trump is more of a cipher, with his campaign advisors including some anti-trade ideologues, noted Ikenson. But even then, existing laws and industry pressure could force a president Trump into supporting the deals, he posited. —AFP

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'IMPOSSIBLE' TO IMPROVE MADRID SQUAD: PEREZ

MADRID: Real Madrid president Florentino Perez insists the European champions' squad is "impossible to improve" after an uncharacteristically quiet transfer window. Perez, known for splashing hundreds of millions of euros in previous years on the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo, Gareth Bale and James Rodriguez, has limited his spending to just a 30-million-euro (\$33.5 million) buy-back of Alvaro Morata from Juventus. "We have won the European Super Cup and the first two games in La Liga," Perez said of Real's 100 percent start to the season. "We have a spectacular squad and it is impossible to improve." Madrid appealed a one-year transfer ban imposed by FIFA to allow them to sign players this summer, but they could be barred from registering new players after Wednesday's deadline until January 2018 should their appeal fail. Zinedine Zidane inspired a remarkable turnaround in Madrid's fortunes after being hired as coach in January, leading Real to an 11th European Cup. — AFP



VERA CASLAVSKA, CZECH GYMNASTICS GREAT DEAD

PRAGUE: Vera Caslavka, a multiple Olympic gymnastics gold medalist who stood up against the 1968 Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia, has died. She was 74.

The Czech Olympic Committee yesterday said Caslavka died in Prague late Tuesday. Caslavka had cancer of pancreas and underwent surgery on May 15 last year, the committee previously said. She had later undergone chemotherapy treatment.

Born on May 3, 1942 in Prague, Caslavka claimed her first Olympic medal - a silver - at the 1960 Rome Games. Her golden era began three years later. She won three Olympic golds in Tokyo in 1964 - in the vault, the individual all-round and the balance beam - to establish herself as a major force in her sport.



Vera Caslavka

Four years later, Caslavka became an outspoken supporter of Alexander Dubcek's liberal reforms meant to lead toward democratization of communist Czechoslovakia, an era known as the Prague Spring. She signed the Two Thousand Words manifesto published in June 1968 that called for deeper pro-democratic changes. That document angered the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, who ordered the Warsaw Pact's troops to invade

Czechoslovakia to crush the reforms in August. Facing a possible persecution, Caslavka went into hiding and was allowed only just before the Mexico Olympics to join the national gymnastics team.

She triumphed in four disciplines, winning the Olympic gold in the vault, the individual all-round, the floor exercises and the uneven bars. With another two silver medals at the 1968 Games, she became the top medalist and was later named the world's best female athlete of the year.

For many, she will be remembered for her silent protest against the Soviet invasion. Standing on the top of the medal stands alongside Soviet gymnast Larisa Petrik, with whom she shared the gold in the floor exercise, Caslavka turned her head down and to the right when the Soviet national anthem was played.

Combined with her gymnastic performances, the gesture made her the star of the games. At home, Caslavka faced persecution from the post-invasion hard-line Communist regime. It wasn't until 1974 that she was allowed to work as coach in her country and later, in 1979-81, in Mexico.

After the 1989 anti-communist Velvet Revolution led by Vaclav Havel ended more than 40 years of communism, Caslavka became Havel's adviser and was elected the president of the Czechoslovak and later of the Czech Olympic Committee. In 1995-2001, she was a member of the International Olympic Committee. She received the UN's Pierre de Coubertin Prize for promoting fair play in 1989 and was also awarded the Olympic Order.

In a personal setback, her marriage with Josef Odlozil, an athlete whom she married during the Mexico Games, ended in the 1980s. Her son, Martin, was found guilty of assault that led to his father's death in 1993 and was sentenced to four years in prison. Although he was soon pardoned by Havel, Caslavka had to undergo treatment for depression and withdrew temporarily from the public life. — AP



In this Oct., 1968, file photo, Vera Caslavka of Czechoslovakia holds her four Olympic medals, three gold and one silver which she won in the gymnastics competition. Caslavka, multiple Olympic gold medalist in gymnastics and the most famous Czech sports woman of all times who stood up against the 1968 Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. — AP

BRAZIL'S BRAZ TO RAIN ON LAVILLENIE'S PARADE AGAIN

ZURICH: Brazilian upstart Thiago Braz Da Silva has already rained on Renaud Lavillenie's parade once this season, stealing the Frenchman's thunder to take a shock gold at his home Olympics in Rio.

While Lavillenie already has a record seventh consecutive Diamond Race title in the bag, Braz is ready to push for a symbolic season-ending pole vault victory over France's 2012 Olympic champion at Thursday's Diamond League meet.

Lavillenie was reduced to tears at Rio's Olympic Stadium as the raucous, partisan crowd got behind local hero Braz and jeered the Frenchman both during competition and when he collected his silver medal on the podium.

He was later consoled, among others, by IOC president Thomas Bach and IAAF chief Sebastian Coe. "He remains an opponent," Braz said of Lavillenie Wednesday, with the two vaulters enjoying somewhat frosty relations.

"Whether he wins or not, that doesn't change anything for me. I have to do my job. Now I wish we have good relations. I tried to calm down the public when the jeering started, but they carried on," Braz said of the hostility shown Lavillenie,

adding: "As a professional athlete, Renaud should have prepared for everything. Personally I couldn't change anything."

Braz, whose winning 6.03-metre vault in Rio was his personal best, added: "I don't go out wanting to beat Renaud or the French vaulters, but simply to go as high as possible." In potential bad news for Lavillenie and his French cohorts, however, Braz signalled his intention to up his level of competition next season, when the world athletics championships will be held in London in August. "In 2017, I want to vault more often after a season focused on the Olympics," said the Brazilian, who has had just eight competitions this year.

"Next year I'll be more present in European meets, a dozen or so of them to give a continuity to my results."

Braz said he had been slightly overwhelmed by the reactions in Brazil to his gold medal-winning performance.

"In Brazil, there's no real culture of athletics, of pole vaulting. But kids have come up to me in the street to ask me how to do pole vault," he said. "It's odd to have this sudden celebrity. I saw famous sportspeople on the television before and now it's me. — AFP

POLICE FIRE TEARGAS AT SRI LANKA CRICKET FANS

DAMBULLA: Sri Lankan police fired teargas to disperse hundreds of fans trying to force their way into a stadium where the home team were playing their fourth one-day international against Australia yesterday. About 300 fans tried to force their way into the 18,000-capacity Dambulla stadium after the authorities announced that all tickets had been sold and asked anyone without tickets to leave the area, a police official said. "We asked them to go, but they tried to break in while some blocked the main road by sitting down," said a police official in Dambulla, around 150 kilometres (90 miles) north of Colombo. "The situation was quickly brought under control," added the official who spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to speak to the media. There were no immediate reports of casualties. There were also chaotic scenes during the third ODI at the same venue on Sunday when fans without tickets broke through barricades and entered the stadium en masse, dislodging thousands of ticket-holders from their seats. Sri Lankans are cricket-crazy, but interest in the game has soared to new heights since Angelo Mathews and his team recorded a historic whitewash in their recent three-match Test series against Australia. — AFP

BONY JOINS STOKE ON LOAN FROM MAN CITY

LONDON: Ivory Coast striker Wilfried Bony has joined Stoke City on a season-long loan from Manchester City, the two Premier League clubs announced yesterday. The 27-year-old joined City from Swansea City for a reported fee of 25 million pounds (\$32.8 million, 29.5 million euros) in January 2015, but has made only 46 appearances since then, scoring 10 goals. "#SCFC delighted to announce the season-long loan signing of @wilfriedbony from @ManCity," Stoke wrote on their official Twitter page. Bony was pictured holding a club shirt at Stoke's training ground. He had earlier tweeted: "It's a new day and I look forward to a new exciting challenge." Bony has made 44 appearances for Ivory Coast, scoring 13 goals, and was a member of the team that tasted glory at the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations in Equatorial Guinea. He was signed by City to provide back-up for Sergio Aguero, but young Nigerian striker Kelechi Iheanacho moved ahead of him in the pecking order. — AFP



SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS: Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands smiles prior to the third practice session at the Belgian Formula One Grand Prix circuit in Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium. — AP

VERSTAPPEN IN FOCUS AS HAMILTON EYES HAT-TRICK

MONZA: Formula One is braced for the next episode of the Max Verstappen show as Red Bull's teen sensation heads for Ferrari's home circuit only days after making the Italian team's drivers see red.

While triple world champion Lewis Hamilton is aiming for his 50th grand prix win on Sunday, to become the first since Argentine Juan Manuel Fangio in the 1950s to win three years in a row at Monza, Verstappen will be the talk of the town.

"I told him not to tell anyone where he is staying in Monza because there might be a few angry fans," team boss Christian Horner joked after a controversial Belgian Grand Prix last weekend. The 18-year-old tangled with Kimi Raikkonen and Sebastian Vettel at the start before aggressively defending against the former later in the race and then refusing to accept any criticism.

"I think they should be ashamed to cause a crash like that with their amount of experience and then complain about me," the unrepentant Dutchman said. "Vettel can come and talk to me

(at Monza), but I think he first has to realise what he did in turn one." Raikkonen, the 2007 world champion for Ferrari, warned afterwards that Verstappen's late block that forced the Finn to brake on the straight at Spa could have triggered a big accident. Monza is even faster, with the turbo hybrid cars hitting 360 km per hour on the straight, and Sunday's race promises another battle between Ferrari and Red Bull to be best of the rest behind leaders Mercedes.

ELBOWS OUT

While Verstappen has thrilled fans, with the youngster busy rewriting the record books after winning in Spain and starting on the front row in Belgium, there are those who feel limits need to be set.

"He comes in here, no fear and no respect," said Mercedes motorsport head Toto Wolff in Spa. "He puts the elbow out and it reminds me of the great ones. It reminds me of Lewis and it reminds me of Ayrton Senna."

"And you can clearly see that some guys

around are starting to think twice how to overtake him... I just fear that it might end up in the wall heavily one day. For me it is refreshing but dangerous." Wolff will be hoping his drivers are safely out in front, with Hamilton seeking to extend his nine-point lead over Nico Rosberg in the last European race of the season.

The Briton took a hit at Spa, starting at the back after taking engine penalties, but still finished third behind his team mate and now has a plentiful supply of fresh power units to last him the rest of the campaign. "The speed, the history, the atmosphere... it's just so iconic in every way," he said of the 'Pista Magica' outside Milan.

"Standing on that amazing podium, looking out over a sea of fans on the straight, has to be up there as of the most incredible experiences a sportsman can have," he said.

"I had a perfect weekend on track there last year. If I can repeat that it would be amazing... It's game on for me now with the penalties out of the way and fresh engines ready to use. I can't wait to get back out there." — Reuters

GOLDEN ROSE BACKS RYDER ROOKIE PIETERS

HONG KONG: Olympic gold medalist Justin Rose gave Ryder Cup rookie Thomas Pieters a ringing endorsement yesterday after the big-hitting Belgian was picked for the biennial match against the US next month.

"The really difficult decision was choosing Thomas Pieters over Russell Knox, two guys who are in form, two guys who deserve their place in the team," Rose told a news teleconference, as he confirmed he would defend his Hong Kong Open title in December. "Choosing one of them was always going to be very, very difficult but I think what Thomas has shown Darren (Clarke) in the last few weeks has been incredible," added Rose.

Europe's Ryder Cup captain Darren Clarke announced England's Lee Westwood, Germany's Martin Kaymer and Pieters as his three wildcards on Tuesday.

Clarke had been widely expected to turn to experienced Ryder Cup campaigners Westwood and Kaymer, but Pieters was picked ahead of Scotland's Russell Knox who was the highest ranked player not to qualify automatically.

"The phone call to Russell was one of the hardest I have ever had to make," admitted Clarke as he announced his choices for the match at Hazeltine National in Minnesota.

But Rose, who will be making his fourth Ryder Cup appearance, said he fully backed his captain's judgement.

Rose noted that Pieters had made a bold statement for inclusion with a stunning opening round of 62 playing alongside Clarke on his way to victory at last week's Made in Denmark tournament.

Two weeks earlier Pieters had just missed the podium in Rio. In between he was runner-up at the Czech Masters.

"He finished fourth in the Olympics and then second and first in his last two events," said Rose. "And the style and manner in which he won over the weekend I think really impressed the captain."

Rose believes the 24-year-old Pieters has the type of game that can suit the team format of the Ryder Cup, where players need to adapt to foursome (alternate shot), fourball and singles play over three days of intense competition.

"I think Thomas is a great young talent. He's good for the dynamic of the team," said Rose.

"He's very long off the tee and has a great short game so I think maybe the captain has the option of playing him in many different formats with many different players."

Rose promised he would bring his Olympic gold medal to Hong Kong when he defends his title in December.

There he will come up against Masters champion Danny Willett, who also confirmed his participation Wednesday in the co-sanctioned European Tour and Asian Tour event at Fanling from December 8-11. — AFP



FARMINGDALE: Olympic gold medal winner, Justin Rose of England, tees off from the first hole during the final round of The Barclays golf tournament in Farmingdale, NY. — AP

REJUVENATED WEBSTER RELISHES CASTLEFORD RETURN

LONDON: Despite almost quitting a year ago, Jake Webster believes he has up to three years left in him as he prepares to return to action with Castleford Tigers this week.

The former Melbourne Storm veteran, 32, sat out the end of last season with nerve damage in his shoulder and was beginning to question whether to move on from professional rugby altogether.

But a 45-mile (72-km) move from Hull to Castleford to be closer to the Tigers, along with a successful pre-season, has rejuvenated him and he is raring to go against Wakefield in the Super 8s on

Friday. "Last season I was looking at some easier options, perhaps not playing full-time anymore, but then pre-season gave me a bit of hope," said Webster, who signed a new deal with the Tigers earlier this season.

"I've really found a new lease of life at the club this season. I got my chance because of injuries and now I'm loving it again. "I feel I've got a least another year in the legs and hopefully two or three. We moved to Castleford with my wife, which took 45 minutes off my journey, and that helps the legs as well.

"The injury last year was nerve dam-

age in my arm, which was a bit of a scare. This year I damaged my ankle ligaments so it's been a bit of torture having to watch the guys. "But I'm getting back and hopefully will be good to go against Wakefield." Friday's clash is a must-win for the Tigers if they are to maintain any hope of making the Super League playoffs. Currently sixth, they must win all four of their remaining games and hope that St Helens in the fourth and final spot lose all of theirs.

BURNS HOMEWARD BOUND

This weekend, therefore, they need a

favour from Hull FC, the table-toppers and newly minted Challenge Cup winners. Black and Whites coach Lee Radford believes the best is still to come from his squad. "That's the togetherness we have in this team," he said. "We have the ingredients there to go on from this. We have the foundations in place to go and achieve more. "There's the League Leaders' Shield to still play for and then we could be only 80 minutes away from a Grand Final."

Saints this week announced they are releasing Travis Burns, their Australian stand-off, who is currently on loan at

Leigh. The 32-year-old former Hull KR co-captain had another year left on his contract with Saints, but has not played for them since April and will return with his family to Australia.

"It is the right time to move back home and take up a new challenge," said Burns. "My wife and kids have followed me around Australia and the UK for several years and now it's time to put them first." Wigan kick off the round by welcoming Widnes today, while Challenge Cup runners-up Warrington will aim to bounce back at Catalans Dragons on Saturday. — AFP

THREE RUSSIANS FAIL RETROACTIVE BEIJING DOPE TESTS

LAUSANNE: Three more Russian Olympic medallists have tested positive for banned substances in retroactive dope tests originally taken at Beijing 2008. Six sportsmen-five weightlifters and one track and field athlete-four of whom won medals, were named on Wednesday as doping controllers use new methods to analyse samples taken from both Beijing and the London 2012 Games. The other three athletes were from the former Soviet Republics of Armenia, Moldova and Azerbaijan.

Russia's 4x400m women's silver medalist Tatiana Firova, the only athlete, tested positive for the banned steroid turinabol and testosterone. Russian weightlifter Nadezda Evstuykhina, who was third in the women's -75kg, was found to have turinabol and the blood booster EPO in her system, and Marina Shainova, who was second in the under 58kg category, had traces of turinabol and stanozolol, another steroid.

Armenia's Tigran Martirosyan, who won bronze in the under 69kg category, was

positive for turinabol and stanozolol.

Moldovan Alexandru Dudoglo and Azeri Intigam Zairov, who lifted respectively in the -69kg and -85kg divisions, are also suspended. Weightlifting has a sorry history when it comes to doping with five athletes excluded from the Rio 2016 Games earlier this month due to positive tests.

Just days after the Olympics in Brazil came to an end, the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) revealed the names of 15 more athletes, including three Beijing gold medallists, to have failed reanalysed Games dope tests.

Around 100 athletes have failed retested Olympic doping samples from Beijing and London, including many Russians as the IOC grapples with numerous drug scandals that rocked the build-up to the Rio Games.

The plethora of doping scandals resulted in around a third of the Russian delegation being prevented from taking part in Rio as various international sporting federations punished the country in the wake of a damaging World Anti-Doping Agency report accusing Russia of state-sponsored doping. — AFP

RUSSIA TO HOLD ALTERNATIVE EVENT FOR BANNED ATHLETES

MOSCOW: Russia will hold a two-day competition next week for its Paralympic squad banned from Rio, a top sports official said yesterday after Switzerland's federal court rejected their final appeal. "We're planning to hold on September 7-8 a series of tournaments for the country's Paralympic athletes at the training bases in the Moscow region," R-Sport news agency quoted Russia's Paralympic Committee head Vladimir Lukin as saying.

Switzerland's Federal Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected an appeal aimed at overturning a blanket ban on Russia from the Paralympics over allegations of state-run doping.

The ruling-which followed an earlier rejection by the Lausanne-based Court of Arbitration for Sport-means that Russia

appears to have exhausted all legal alleyways to get back into the Paralympics before they start on September 7.

Last week Russian President Vladimir Putin lashed out against the ban, calling the decision "outside the law, morality, humanity". But Putin vowed to give Russia's banned Paralympians a platform "to show all their skills".

A Kremlin spokesman said yesterday that it was still to be decided if Putin would attend the event. Russia's Olympic squad narrowly escaped a total ban from the Rio Games, although all of their track and field team except US-based long-jumper Darya Klishina were prevented from competing due to the allegations of state-sponsored drug cheating and corruption. — AFP



KUWAITI ATHLETES LEAVE FOR RIO 2016 PARALYMPICS

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait's disabled team will head to Rio de Janeiro today to participate in the Paralympics to be held there from Sept 7 until Sept 18.

Kuwait Disabled Club President Shafi Al-Hajiri said the team will participate in Athletics with five players, Hamad Al-Adwani, Ahmad Naqa, Nasser Saleh, Abdallah Al-Seif and Mohammad Mijbel, in addition to shooter Atif Al-Dousari.

Al-Hajiri said the team will participate under the Kuwaiti flag as per laws of the International Disabled Sports Federation, and hoped Kuwait



athletes win Olympic medals to have Kuwait's flag and anthem there. He said the club prepared its six players through foreign training camps the last of which was in Turkey for the athletics and in Germany for shooter Al-Dousari.

Al-Hajiri appreciated the attention Kuwait's disabled sports are receiving from Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, who provided all types of support to the club to enhance the players' level. He also thanked Director General of Public Authority for Sports Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah for his continued support.

ANTI-DOPING GROUP SEEKS REFORM OF 'DEEPLY DAMAGED' SYSTEM

COPENHAGEN: Top officials of the IOC and other sporting bodies would be banned from being members of anti-doping agencies under new proposals for tackling drugs in sports.

Leaders of 17 anti-doping organizations met in Copenhagen this week to consider ways of fixing a "global anti-doping effort that has been deeply damaged" and to "ensure that the disturbing events of recent years are not repeated."

Among the group's aims was to remove the "fundamental conflict of interest that exists when anti-doping decisions are controlled by sports organizations" - a shot at the current ties between the World Anti-Doping Agency and International Olympic Committee.

The president of WADA is Craig Reedie, a senior IOC member from Britain whose dual role has come under scrutiny during the scandal over state-sponsored doping in Russia. Reedie served as an IOC vice president and member of the policy-making executive board until his term expired during the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. He is now a regular IOC member. The Copenhagen summit proposed a rule that would forbid officers, directors, employees and all decision-makers of anti-doping bodies from also holding a top position in any international federation or "major event organization."

The Institute of National Anti-Doping Organizations said the proposal would "prevent the inherent conflict of interest that exists when a sports organization is tasked with both promoting and policing itself."

The IOC set up WADA in 2009 and provides 50 percent of the agency's funding, with national governments covering the other half.

IOC President Thomas Bach has proposed making the anti-doping system independent from sports organizations and called for the creation of an independent agency to carry out global drug testing. The IOC has scheduled a meeting for Oct. 8 to consider ways of improving the international system.

The exposure of widespread doping in Russia has led to a crisis in confidence in the entire global anti-doping fight. IOC members blamed WADA for not acting early enough to deal with evidence of Russian doping, while the IOC was accused of being soft on Russia by not banning



President of WADA Craig Reedie

the country entirely from the Rio Games.

The anti-doping leaders meeting in Denmark represented countries that included the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany and Britain. They said WADA should be strengthened and given the independence and authority to impose sanctions for "large scale subversions of the anti-doping system," such as the state-backed system in Russia. WADA currently has had no power to impose sanctions against a sport or a country, leaving that to the IOC and other bodies. "WADA must have authority and capacity to investigate and to impose proportional sanctions and consequences for all instances of code non-compliance," the officials in Copenhagen said in their final statement.

They also expressed "unequivocal support" for the completion of the investigation into Russian doping by Canadian lawyer Richard McLaren. His report detailed manipulation of drug samples at the 2014 Sochi Winter Games,

as well as cover-ups of doping tests across dozens of summer and winter sports.

The leaders called for "increased protection and support" for whistleblowers, including Yulia Stepanova and her husband, Vitaly, who helped expose the doping culture in their homeland.

"All relevant organizations should do everything in their power to protect and ensure safety, security and sustainable future for Yulia and Vitaly and the other whistleblowers," the statement said. The IOC rejected Stepanova's bid to compete in the Rio Games after the IAAF recommended the 800-meter runner be allowed to participate as a neutral athlete.

Stepanova and her husband have been living in the United States. She said recently that she fears for her safety and has switched residences after hackers breached a WADA database that records her whereabouts. Bach said in Rio that the IOC was "not responsible for dangers to which Mrs. Stepanova may be exposed." — AP



KUWAIT DISABLED SPORTS CLUB HONOUR NAJI AL-HAI

KUWAIT: Kuwait Disabled Sports Club lauded the achievement of Kuwait's formative artist Naji Al-Haii at the London innovative Arabs gathering, which witnessed the participation of a large number of Arab innovators in many fields.

KDSC Secretary General Abdallah Al-Azmi, during the reception of Artist Al-Haii, that his win of two prizes, the first for his work through competing with other artists, and the second was in appreciation of the organ-

izing committee of the winning work.

Al-Azmi said, the club under the leadership of Shafi Al-Hajiri is keen on supporting its members in all fields and allow them to innovate, and asked all disabled innovators to utilize their energy to hoist Kuwait's flag high in the field of formative arts.

He dedicated this achievement to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Kuwait people.



BALTIMORE: Baltimore Orioles' Manny Machado flips his bat as he rounds the bases after hitting a two-run home run in the fifth inning of a baseball game against the Toronto Blue Jays in Baltimore, Tuesday. — AP

WIETERS' HOMER LEADS ORIOLES PAST BLUE JAYS

BALTIMORE: Matt Wieters hit a tiebreaking two-run homer off Jason Grilli in the eighth inning, leading the Baltimore Orioles to a 5-3 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays on Tuesday night. The Orioles pulled within three games of the first-place Blue Jays, who had won four in a row. Michael Saunders tied it at 3 with a two-run homer against Orioles starter Ubaldo Jimenez in the seventh. Jonathan Schoop walked with two outs in the Baltimore eighth and Wieters followed with a drive to right off Grilli (4-2) for his 12th homer of the season. Brad Brach (8-2) picked up the win with 1 1/3 scoreless innings. Zach Britton got his league-leading 39th save.

METS 7, MARLINS 4

Curtis Granderson came off the bench and homered twice, powering the Mets to the victory. Asdrubal Cabrera extended his recent tear at the plate, hitting a two-run homer in his return to the lineup after missing one start due to a sore left knee. Rookie right-hander Seth Lugo (2-2) pitched six effective innings and Jeury Familia earned his major league-leading 43rd save as the Mets won for the eighth time in 10 games. By taking the first two games of the four-game series, New York (68-64) moved ahead of slumping Miami for second place in the NL East. Christian Yelich hit a two-run homer for the Marlins, who have dropped four straight and six of eight overall. Tom Koehler (9-10) got the loss.

NATIONALS 3, PHILLIES 2

Max Scherzer struck out 11 in eight innings, helping Washington to the road win. Scherzer (15-7) allowed two runs and three hits. Mark Melancon pitched a scoreless ninth for his 37th save. Phillies starter Jerad Eickhoff (9-13), who had walked just six batters in his last eight starts, issued three walks and yielded five hits and three runs through six innings. Ryan Howard hit a two-run homer in the seventh for Philadelphia, which has dropped six of eight to fall 12 games below .500.

CUBS 3, PIRATES 0

Kyle Hendricks threw seven dominant innings to lower the majors' best ERA to 2.09 and Anthony Rizzo homered in the Cubs' 21st victory in August. Hendricks (13-7) allowed three hits and walked one. Carl Edwards Jr. worked the eighth and Aroldis Chapman finished the fourth

hitter for his 31st save as the Cubs improved to 21-6 this month, one win shy of the best August in franchise history set in 1932. Rizzo belted a two-run homer off Chad Kuhl (3-2) in the first and Miguel Montero added an RBI single as the Cubs improved to 84-47. Kuhl allowed four hits in five innings as the Pirates lost their second straight after winning four in a row.

RANGERS 8, MARINERS 7

Rougned Odor hit a game-ending two-run homer, sending the AL best Rangers to the victory. Odor's 25th homer was a drive to the hill in center field on a 2-2 pitch from Edwin Diaz (0-3), who had converted his first 11 save chances of the season. Adrian Beltre also homered for the Rangers, who won their fourth straight game and have a 10 1/2-game lead over third-place Seattle in the AL West. Houston remained 8 1/2 games back after winning earlier Tuesday against Oakland. Matt Bush (6-2), who yielded a go-ahead sacrifice fly to Robinson Cano in the eighth, came back for the ninth to finish the game.

INDIANS 5, TWINS 4

Francisco Lindor drove in the go-ahead run in the fifth inning and Cleveland extended Minnesota's losing streak to 12 games. Lindor's double off Alex Wimmers (0-1) snapped a 4-4 tie and helped the Indians maintain their lead over second-place Detroit in the AL Central. Rajai Davis hit a three-run homer and Jason Kipnis added a solo shot for Cleveland, which trailed 4-1 in the second after the Twins knocked around Josh Tomlin. Dan Otero (4-1) pitched 2 2/3 hitless innings, Bryan Shaw worked out of a jam in the seventh and Andrew Miller got five outs for his third save since joining Cleveland. Minnesota's current slide is the third longest in club history. The Twins lost 13 straight in 1961 and a team-record 14 consecutive games in 1982.

TIGERS 8, WHITE SOX 4

Ian Kinsler homered and drove in four runs, helping Detroit rally for the win. Kinsler came into the game hitting .085 (4 for 47) in his last 13 games, but he hit a two-run homer in the fifth and added a two-run single in Detroit's four-run sixth inning. Jacoby Jones had two hits and two RBIs for the Tigers in his major league debut. Bruce Rondon (5-2) picked up the win in relief of

Daniel Norris, who allowed three runs in five innings. Todd Frazier homered for Chicago. Matt Albers (2-6) got the loss.

CARDINALS 2, BREWERS 1, 10 INNINGS

Zach Duke stranded the bases loaded with a strikeout in the 10th after Randal Grichuk hit an RBI single in the top half of the inning, lifting St. Louis to the road win. Seung Hwan Oh (4-2) pitched out of a jam in the ninth to get the win. Duke got his first save with the Cardinals by striking out pinch-hitter Manny Pina after Matt Bowman walked three batters. The Cardinals' Jhonny Peralta led off the 10th with a single off Corey Knebel (0-2) and moved to third on Yadier Molina's ground-rule double. Jeremy Hazelbaker, who ran for Peralta, scored the winning run on Grichuk's flare to right. St. Louis' Adam Wainwright and Milwaukee's Wily Peralta dueled for seven innings, leaving a 1-1 game for the bullpen.

ASTROS 3, ATHLETICS 1

Collin McHugh threw six scoreless innings for Houston, and Colby Rasmus and Evan Gattis homered. Rasmus put Houston up 1-0 with a homer in the second inning in his first at-bat since returning from the 15-day disabled list. Rasmus went on the DL on Aug. 5 with a cyst in his right ear. Gattis hit a solo homer in the seventh to make it 3-0. McHugh (9-10) allowed four hits and struck out five. Ken Giles pitched the ninth for his sixth save. Houston remained two games behind Baltimore for the second AL wild card. Oakland's Kendall Graveman (10-9) allowed three runs and four hits in seven innings.

RAYS 4, RED SOX 3

Evan Longoria broke a tie with a solo homer in the eighth inning, clearing Fenway Park's "Green Monster" and rallying Tampa Bay to the victory. Tampa Bay's Luke Maile hit a two-run drive with two outs in the seventh for his second career homer. Enny Romero (2-0) pitched a scoreless seventh for the win and Alex Colome got three outs for his 29th save. Hanley Ramirez hit his 18th homer and drove in two runs for Boston. Clay Buchholz (5-10) took the loss, pitching the eighth and allowing Longoria's 31st homer.

BRAVES 7, PADRES 3

Julio Teheran won for the first time in 10 starts, and Braves rookie Dansby Swanson drove in three runs. Teheran began the night with the lowest run support in the major leagues, but the two-time All Star used a rare offensive outburst by Atlanta to earn his first home victory since last Oct. 2, a span of 14 starts. Oswaldo Arcia homered for San Diego. Edwin Jackson (3-5) was charged with five runs and seven hits in 2 2/3 innings. Teheran (4-9) allowed two runs and struck out eight in seven innings.

ANGELS 4, REDS 2

C.J. Cron hit two home runs to help the Los Angeles Angels beat Cincinnati. Mike Trout went 3 for 4 with two doubles and he scored on Cron's home run in the first inning and on Andrelton Simmons' bloop single in the eighth. Cron homered in the third inning to give the Angels a 3-0 lead. It was his fourth multi-home run game this season and brought his total to 14. Jered Weaver (10-11) limited the Reds to two earned runs and eight hits, walked none and struck out five. Weaver pitched into the seventh inning for the first time since July 17, but ran into trouble after getting the first out. Eugenio Suarez hit a two-run homer to make it 3-2 and Jose Peraza hit a line drive single to right field. Mike Morin relieved and retired the next two batters to strand Peraza. — AP

LAWSUIT PENDING, BOUCHARD OUT, SERENA, VENUS WIN

NEW YORK: Eugenie Bouchard wrung her hands at her post-match news conference. She rubbed her lower lip. She squeezed her left arm. While her body language screamed discomfort Tuesday, when the main topic of discussion was Bouchard's ongoing lawsuit against the US Open rather than her first-round loss, her words were measured. The once rising star answered every question.

A year ago at Flushing Meadows, Bouchard got a concussion from a fall at the facility and withdrew before playing in the fourth round, and then missed most of the rest of the season. She filed suit against the US Tennis Association in US District Court in Brooklyn in October, and that case is still pending, putting the 2014 Wimbledon runner-up in the odd position of competing this week at an event whose organizers she is suing.

"If I sit down and think about it, yeah, it's definitely a strange situation. But it's something that's so far in the back of my mind. I don't think about it on a daily basis, at all. I have people, lawyers, working on that side of it," Bouchard said. "So it's really not something I think about much at all. Obviously, being here, it's crossed my mind. But besides that, I mean, it has nothing to do with my day-to-day life." Her 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 exit against 72nd-ranked Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic, a player who only once has been as far as the third round at a major tournament, was filled with 46 unforced errors by Bouchard, who also was treated for blisters on her feet. It represented the latest early loss for a 22-year-old Canadian who reached three Grand Slam semifinals two years ago - and none since.

In other first-round action on Day 2 at the year's last Grand Slam tournament, Serena Williams started her bid for a record-breaking

23rd major title by showing zero signs of trouble from a right shoulder she's said was sore, hitting 12 aces in a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Ekaterina Makarova. Also under the lights: Andy Murray got off to a similarly easy beginning to his attempt to become the fourth man in the Open era to reach all four Grand Slam finals in a single season.

The 2012 champion at Flushing Meadows and seeded No. 2 this year, Murray beat Lukas Rosol 6-3, 6-2, 6-2. Murray lost to No. 1 Novak Djokovic in the finals of the Australian Open in January and French Open in June, and then won his second Wimbledon title last month.

Earlier, Williams' sister Venus got through a tougher-than-expected 6-2, 5-7, 6-4 win against Katerina Kozlova. "It was great to be challenged and to be pushed," said the 36-year-old Venus, a two-time U.S. Open champion, "because I had to get in those situations that you know you're going to face in the tournament."

There were various upsets around the grounds during the afternoon, including 19-year-old American Jared Donaldson's 4-6, 7-5, 6-4, 6-0 elimination of 12th-seeded David Goffin, and a loss by No. 29 Sam Querrey, who stunned Djokovic at Wimbledon. Three seeded women departed, including former No. 1 and 2008 French Open champion Ana Ivanovic. When she was at her peak, and a seeded player, an early major loss by Bouchard was rather newsworthy. Her up-and-down 2015 and 2016 have changed that, in part because she is ranked only 39th now, after a best of No. 5. She lost 14 of 17 matches leading into the 2015 US Open but, after working a bit with Jimmy Connors, appeared to be back on the upswing in New York by reaching the fourth round. — AP



NEW YORK: In this Sept. 4, 2015, file photo, Eugenie Bouchard, of Canada, takes a break between games against Dominika Cibulkova, of Slovakia, at the US Open tennis tournament in New York. Bouchard won that match. Bouchard fell at the facility and suffered a concussion, and withdrew before her fourth-round match. Bouchard missed most of the rest of the season. She filed suit against the US Tennis Association in US District Court in Brooklyn in October, and that case is still pending, putting the 2014 Wimbledon runner-up in the odd position of competing this week at an event whose organizers she is suing. — AP

MLB results/standings

Baltimore 5, Toronto 3; Washington 3, Philadelphia 2; Detroit 8, Chicago White Sox 4; NY Mets 7, Miami 4; Cleveland 5, Minnesota 4; Atlanta 7, San Diego 3; Tampa Bay 4, Boston 3; Chicago Cubs 3, Pittsburgh 0; Texas 8, Seattle 7; Houston 3, Oakland 1; St. Louis 2, Milwaukee 1 (10 innings); NY Yankees 5, Kansas City 4 (10 innings); LA Angels 4, Cincinnati 2; Arizona 4, San Francisco 3.

American League Eastern Division					National League Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	L	PCT	GB
Toronto	75	57	.568	-	Washington	77	55	.583	-
Boston	73	59	.553	2	NY Mets	68	64	.515	9
Baltimore	72	60	.545	3	Miami	67	65	.508	10
NY Yankees	68	63	.519	6.5	Philadelphia	60	72	.455	17
Tampa Bay	56	75	.427	18.5	Atlanta	49	83	.371	28
Central Division					Central Division				
Cleveland	75	56	.573	-	Chicago Cubs	84	47	.641	-
Detroit	71	61	.538	4.5	St. Louis	70	61	.534	14
Kansas City	69	63	.523	6.5	Pittsburgh	67	63	.515	16.5
Chicago WSox	63	68	.481	12	Milwaukee	56	76	.424	28.5
Minnesota	49	83	.371	26.5	Cincinnati	55	76	.420	29
Western Division					Western Division				
Texas	79	54	.594	-	LA Dodgers	73	58	.557	-
Houston	70	62	.530	8.5	San Francisco	71	60	.542	2
Seattle	68	64	.515	10.5	Colorado	63	68	.481	10
LA Angels	58	74	.439	20.5	Arizona	56	76	.424	17.5
Oakland	57	75	.432	21.5	San Diego	55	76	.420	18

WORLD CUP HERO MILUTINOVIC URGES QATAR TO 'SEIZE' CHANCE

DOHA: For a country which craves World Cup experience, it is fitting that one of the tournament's greatest ever coaches, Bora Milutinovic, now calls Qatar home.

The "Miracle Worker" is the man who was a penalty shootout away from taking Mexico to the semi-finals in 1986, saw his Costa Rica team beat Scotland and Sweden in 1990 and watched his USA side progress to the knockout stage in 1994, helping kindle fresh interest in football in the States.

Alongside Brazilian Carlos Albert Perreira he is the only person to have coached five different sides at World Cup finals. He guided Nigeria at the 1998 finals and China in 2002.

A cult hero, Milutinovic's name is almost as much part of World Cup folklore as Franz Beckenbauer, Mario Kempes, Johan Cruyff and Zinedine Zidane.

Although he has no official coaching

role in Qatar, Milutinovic is regularly seen at matches in Doha and travels to see games across Asia.

Who then better to ask if Qatar can realise a nation's - and World Cup 2022 organisers - dream and reach the finals for the first time in Russia in two years' time?

On Thursday, Qatar begin the Asian Football Confederation's third round of qualifiers, having powered through the second round, topping their group winning seven games out of eight.

Now they are playing with the AFC big boys and have been drawn in Group A, which contains Iran, South Korea, China, Uzbekistan and Syria.

Qatar are 80th in the FIFA world rankings. Their seeding suggests Qatar should finish fifth, form means a chance of finishing third and forcing themselves into a play-off for Russia, and hope equates to securing one of the top two spots in the

group and automatic passage to the World Cup finals. "I think in this group there are two favourites, South Korea and Iran," says Milutinovic. But, he adds, if they falter, Qatar is the team best placed to take advantage. "Qatar in qualification, they were the best team. They only lost once."

Qatar has a new coach, a new team and they have the players who can adapt.

"The minimum should be third; Qatar needs to seize the minimum." One concern he has though is the schedule. The first game is in Tehran, away to the group favourites and in front of its formidable crowd.

"Iran has an advantage-the stadium. It is the most difficult stadium in Asia," he says wistfully, because of the atmosphere. A home game against Uzbekistan follows five days later, then in October Qatar find themselves away to the second seeded team in the group and World Cup

perennials, South Korea.

A poor start could crush Qatar's dream of avoiding becoming the first side since Italy in 1934 to host a World Cup without ever before playing in a finals. A good start though and Qatar will have the backing of the public. Milutinovic says Qatar should learn from Iceland's example during the Euros and make sure the team and the supporters make "a connection" for the home matches.

ROD STEWART, HUGO SANCHEZ

The Serb is engaging company. An invitation for a quick chat about Qatar's World Cup dreams quickly turns into several coffees, tea, lunch and lots of talk.

Ground covered includes Rod Stewart, the 1991 Soviet coup, Eric Wynalda, England's last disastrous World Cup campaign, a deadly explosion at a Northern Irish checkpoint, Germany's 1974 World

Cup winners versus the 2014 team, his footballing brothers, wearing a bullet proof vest in Baghdad, Hugo Sanchez and Tom Jones.

Milutinovic scribbles furiously on napkins, drawing penalty areas and showing positions he would like his players to take up. He speaks a mixture of English, Spanish and French. He interrupts himself to take calls from Serbia, bumps into a Chinese family and speaks Mandarin.

He turns 72 on September 7, but has the energy of a man half his age and would clearly relish a return to international football. Asked if he would have taken the recent England or Belgium vacancies, he says: "I would have gone like this," pointing to his t-shirt and shorts.

And despite talking for four hours, he says he has happily given little away. "I've done my job. I spoke a lot but said nothing," Milutinovic says with a smile. — AFP



MONCHENGLADBACH: Germany's midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger reacts during the ceremony marking his last match for his country prior to the football friendly match between Germany and Finland in Monchengladbach, western Germany yesterday. — AFP

GERMANY SWANSONG SCHWEINI CLINGS TO MAN UTD DREAM

BERLIN: Bastian Schweinsteiger will wear the Germany jersey one last time, insisting he has not given up on his dream of playing for Manchester United despite Jose Mourinho's snub. "My absolute dream is still to play for Manchester United," Schweinsteiger said on the eve of Germany's friendly against Finland in Monchengladbach, which serves as his farewell on his 121st - and final-Germany appearance.

"I have no personal problems with Jose Mourinho, he has explained his side of the situation to me. One thing is for sure: I'm not going to stop playing football and I still believe in my own ability."

"I could still help Man United if given a fair chance," he added at the German FA press conference in Duesseldorf. "We have to wait to see what happens in September and October and how things will develop."

United's coach Mourinho has echoed Schweinsteiger in insisting there is "no problem" between the pair, but the midfielder's plea for a "fair chance" with Manchester hung in the air in Duesseldorf.

The vastly experienced 32-year-old has captained Germany since Philipp Lahm stood down as die Mannschaft's skipper after the pair helped win the 2014 World Cup. His United contract expires in June 2018, leaving him facing the prospect of spending the next two years languishing in United's reserves, all the while reportedly being paid 160,000 (187,672 euros, \$209,338) per week.

Schweinsteiger joined United in 2015 after 17 years with Bayern Munich, which saw him win every major title available to the Bavarian giants.

OUTRAGE IN BAVARIA

His high-profile transfer to Old Trafford meant he linked up with ex-Bayern manager Louis van Gaal.

But a knee injury in January flared up again on Germany duty in March, so he played just a handful of minutes in the second half of the 2015/16 season.

Germany coach Joachim Loew allowed Schweinsteiger a late cameo off the bench in the opening 2-0 win over Ukraine at the European championships.

He scored with only his third touch of the ball, but was back on the bench for the remaining group stage games and the opening fixtures of the knock-out rounds.

Manuel Neuer captained Germany until

the semi-final defeat to hosts France, the only Euro 2016 game Schweinsteiger started. Following his celebrity wedding to tennis star Ana Ivanovic in July, new-arrival Mourinho made it clear Schweinsteiger's Old Trafford honeymoon was over. The German was one of nine players told to clear his first-team locker and train with the Under-23s.

But while others transferred out of Old Trafford, Schweinsteiger insisted on staying. Mourinho's snub of Schweinsteiger led to outrage in Bavaria. Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said such treatment showed "a lack of respect for a worthy player," but Munich's new head coach Carlo Ancelotti said Schweinsteiger "was not part" of their plans.

'VERY DIFFICULT'

Last Friday, Mourinho effectively closed the door on Schweinsteiger playing for the seniors this season, saying it would be "very difficult" for the German, given competition for midfield places at United. "We have a decision completely made about Paul Pogba, Ander Herrera, Morgan Schneiderlin, Marouane Fellaini and Michael Carrick," said Mourinho. "We have five players for two positions. It's very difficult that an opportunity will arrive." With speculation rife that Schweinsteiger's Old Trafford exit was imminent, he took to Facebook last week to insist United will "be his last club in Europe."

Ex-Germany coach Rudi Voeller, who gave Schweinsteiger his international debut back in 2004, said the United midfielder still has "at least two years playing at the top" left in him.

And in Tuesday's press conference, Schweinsteiger admitted the North American MLS might be a future option, should things not improve in Manchester over the course of the season.

The Finland friendly is a chance for Schweinsteiger to show Mourinho what he can do, but is the first to admit that with no first-team football under his belt, he may struggle for fitness.

"I'm so happy that I was able to make it to 120 games for Germany," said Schweinsteiger. "I haven't played a game yet (this season), so I don't know how the lungs will hold up."

The transfer window closes at midnight yesterday. United's directors must be hoping an overseas offer emerges in the January window so their expensive asset does not spend the next two years with the reserves. — AFP

PREMIER LEAGUE RICHES FUEL TRANSFER SCRAMBLE

LONDON: International stars Mario Balotelli, Moussa Sissoko and Jack Wilshere were all reportedly poised for moves yesterday as the clock ticked down towards the European transfer deadline. Spending by English Premier League clubs has broken through the one billion pounds (1.17 billion euros, \$1.3 billion) barrier in one window for the first time, fuelling transfer activity across the continent. Balotelli, Liverpool's wayward Italian striker, was on the verge of joining French club Nice on a season-long loan, having spent last season on loan at former club AC Milan.

"If the situation works out, maybe late in the day it will be done," an official from Nice told French sports daily L'Equipe. "If we don't agree with Liverpool, he will leave again." Newcastle United midfielder Sissoko was given permission to leave France's Clairefontaine training base in order to complete a transfer. Newcastle, relegated from the Premier League last season, were reported to have rebuffed an initial 16 million pounds bid for Sissoko from Tottenham Hotspur.

Sissoko, 27, was France's stand-out player in the hosts' loss to Portugal in the Euro 2016 final and had expressed a desire to join Real Madrid. Arsenal midfielder Wilshere, 24, was reportedly mulling over loan offers from Bournemouth and Crystal Palace after slipping down the pecking order at the Emirates Stadium.

Arsenal spent around 50 million pounds on Tuesday to sign German defender Shkodran Mustafi from Valencia and Spanish striker Lucas Perez from Deportivo La Coruna.

Wilshere's England colleague Joe Hart, meanwhile, is due to complete a loan move to Italian side Torino after being frozen out by new Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola.

The blond-haired goalkeeper was pictured posing with a Torino shirt on Tuesday. City striker Wilfried Bony, who has also failed to win over Guardiola, was pictured at Stoke City's training ground.

Bony tweeted: "It's a new day and I look forward to a new exciting challenge." Samir Nasri, another City outcast, was thought to be close to joining Sevilla, while Eliaquim Mangala was reportedly due to sign for Valencia.

INTER SNARE 'GABIGOL'

Leicester City, England's fairytale champions



NYON: Newcastle United's coach Rafael Benitez looks on next to a picture of Argentinian forward Lionel Messi after a meeting of the Elite football Club Coaches Forum at the UEFA headquarters in Nyon, yesterday. — AP

last season, were reported to be closing in on deals for Sporting Lisbon pair Islam Slimani and Adrien Silva. Both deals would be expected to eclipse Leicester's 16.6 million pounds club-record move for Nigerian forward Ahmed Musa last month. Elsewhere, Inter Milan and Barcelona paid top dollar for Brazil's Olympic gold medal-winning striker Gabriel 'Gabigol' Barbosa and Valencia forward Paco Alcacer respectively.

Inter confirmed the signing of Barbosa on his 20th birthday late on Tuesday. "Gabigol is an Inter player," the Serie A giants said in a statement, announcing a five-year contract.

Inter did not release financial details, but the Gazzetta dello Sport website reported Inter had paid Santos 27.5 million euros for 'Gabigol', who has drawn comparisons with his countryman Neymar. Alcacer, who turned 23 on Tuesday, joined Barcelona from Valencia in a 30 million euros, five-year deal, the Catalan side announced. The Spain international, who scored

13 goals in 34 league appearances last season, will heighten competition in the Barcelona frontline already led by Neymar, Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez. Analysts predict European spending will easily be the highest yet when the two-month transfer window closes, between 1600 GMT for the Bundesliga and 2200 GMT for the Premier League. Flush from the proceeds of a new 5.14 billion pounds domestic television rights deal, English clubs have led the way.

Manchester United set a new world record with an 89 million pounds deal to bring French midfielder Paul Pogba back to the club from Juventus. Christian Heidel, sporting director for German club Schalke, said the Premier League has forced up prices everywhere. "If English managers are on the phone, then the sums are automatically higher," Heidel said on a talk show for Kicker magazine.

"If the negotiations are within Germany, then it is often difficult to exclude the higher sums from England." — AFP

SAMIR NASRI JOINS SEVILLA ON LOAN

MADRID: French midfielder Samir Nasri has joined La Liga side Sevilla from Manchester City on a season-long loan deal, both sides confirmed yesterday.

Nasri scored 27 goals and won two Premier League titles in five years in Manchester, but after an injury-plagued 2015/16 season, new City boss Pep Guardiola had criticised his condition when he returned to pre-season overweight.

"The attacker arrives on loan from Manchester City until June 30 2017 without an option to buy," Sevilla said in a statement. "@ManCity it's been a pleasure thanks to everyone in the club and the fans for the 5 amazing years and wish you best of luck for the season," Nasri posted via his official Twitter account. After making a strong impression as a substitute for the last 15 minutes of City's 3-1 win over West Ham on Sunday, Guardiola even opened the door for Nasri to stay and fight for his place at the Etihad. "Samir arrived overweight but after seven days, 10 days, it was fantastic how he trained. His quality is on another level," said Guardiola. "It depends on him. If he wants to help us and stay to be part of something, it depends on him." However, Nasri faced stiff competition from the likes of David Silva, Kevin de Bruyne, Raheem Sterling and new signings Leroy Sane and Gabriel Jesus for a place in Guardiola's new-look side.

Instead, the 29-year-old has opted to try and relaunch his career in Spain with Europa League winners Sevilla also offering the lure of Champions League football.

Nasri becomes Sevilla's 11th signing of the window with the huge turnover sparked by coach Unai Emery's departure to Paris Saint-Germain with the notoriously attack-minded Argentine Jorge Sampaoli now in charge at the Sanchez Pizjuan. "This is the last piece that the coach asked from us," said Sevilla sporting director Monchi. "We have found the player we have been looking for practically since the market opened."

"A player who can play as a false winger and inside, a player with quality, capable of maintaining the ball and generating important possession in the opponent's half." Sevilla lost in both the Spanish and European Super Cups to Barcelona and Real Madrid respectively, but have started the La Liga season under Sampaoli brightly with four points from their opening two games. — AFP



GOLD COAST: This file photo taken on July 18, 2015 shows Samir Nasri of Manchester City controlling for the ball during the friendly football match between English Premier League side Manchester City and A-League side Melbourne City at Cbus Super Stadium on the Gold Coast on July 18, 2015. The French midfielder Samir Nasri, is now on loan for the season Sevilla FC have announced the two clubs yesterday. — AFP

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DAMBULLA: Australian cricketer George Bailey (R) plays a shot as Sri Lanka's wicketkeeper Kusal Perera looks on during the fourth one day international (ODI) cricket match between Sri Lanka and Australia at The Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium in Dambulla yesterday. — AFP

AUSTRALIA CRUSH SRI LANKA, CLINCH ODI SERIES

DAMBULLA: John Hastings claimed six wickets before Aaron Finch and George Bailey's attacking half-centuries powered Australia to a series clinching six-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the fourth one-day international in Dambulla yesterday.

Australia rode on Finch's 19-ball 55 and an unbeaten 90 from Bailey to chase down 213 in 31 overs and take an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match series.

Earlier Hastings' career-best bowling figures of 6-45 helped bowl out Sri Lanka for 212 after electing to bat first despite Dhananjaya de Silva's fighting 76.

In reply, Finch's opening blitz gave Australia a rocket start against a Sri Lankan attack that missed skipper Angelo Mathews' medium pace after the all-rounder hurt his calf while batting.

Finch, who equalled the record for the fastest fifty in 18 balls-by an Australian, struck eight fours and three sixes as he carted the Sri Lankan spinners to all parts of the ground.

Left-arm spinner Sachith Pathirana's triple strike in the space of five deliveries checked the visitors' surge but only for a brief while.

Pathirana got the wickets of danger man Finch and Usman Khawaja for nought in his opening over of the innings. He then bowled skipper David Warner for 19 on the first ball of his next over.

Bailey, who registered his 21st ODI fifty,

carried the momentum forward as he anchored Australia's chase with his 85-ball knock, laced with 11 fours and a six.

"Tough to muscle your way out of a form slump. Couldn't be happier for George (Bailey), has had to play out of his skin. He's been innovative, he's been our backbone and rock in the middle," said Warner.

Bailey got the perfect partner in Travis Head, who scored 40, as the duo put on 100 runs for the fourth wicket.

Head was trapped lbw off Dilruwan Perera but Matthew Wade, who remained unbeaten on eight, joined Bailey at the crease to hit the winning six.

The victory comes as a welcome relief for the visiting side after they suffered their first series whitewash against Sri Lanka in the three Test matches.

"Very very pleasing. Thrilled to win the series, hard-fought effort. Conditions here are quite challenging," said Warner, who was appointed captain after the second ODI to give Steve Smith some rest.

HASTINGS' HEROICS

Sri Lanka suffered from a lack of partnerships as their innings ran out of steam as they folded on the last ball of the 50th over.

Australia's pace spearhead Mitchell Starc struck in the very first over to have debutant batsman Avishka Fernando trapped lbw for

nought.

Man of the match Hastings soon got Kusal Mendis caught behind for one. The on-field umpire gave the batsman not out before Australia successfully reviewed the decision.

Scott Boland, who replaced Josh Hazlewood in the Australian starting XI, joined the pace charge to dismiss previous match centurion Dinesh Chandimal-caught behind to leave Sri Lanka reeling on 31 for three. De Silva and Mathews then started a rebuilding act, mixing caution and aggression against a persistent Australian attack.

Mathews, who was badly shaken after being hit on the back of his helmet off a Boland bouncer, made a gritty 28 before retiring hurt with a calf injury that hampered his footwork and running between the wickets.

De Silva, whose maiden ODI half-century included nine boundaries, looked a little edgy after Mathews' departure and soon departed after spooning a catch to mid-wicket off Hastings.

Australia's spinners then got in on the act as Adam Zampa and Head took two more wickets to land Sri Lanka in deeper trouble.

Pathirana chipped in with a crucial 24-run cameo to help Sri Lanka pass the 200-run mark from a precarious 165 for seven.

Hastings' double strike in the 48th over brought him his maiden five-wicket haul in ODIs.

SCOREBOARD

DAMBULLA, Sri Lanka: Final scoreboard of the fourth one-day international between Sri Lanka and Australia in Dambulla yesterday:

Sri Lanka	Runs	Bowling
D. de Silva c Finch b Hastings	76	Boland 10-1-36-1, Faulkner 10-0-39-0, Zampa 8-0-30-1, Head 2-0-5-1
A. Fernando b Starc	0	
K. Mendis c Wade b Hastings	1	Australia
D. Chandimal c Wade b Boland	5	D. Warner b Pathirana 19
A. Mathews c Bailey b Hastings	40	A. Finch lbw b Pathirana 55
A. Perera c Wade b Zampa	7	U. Khawaja lbw b Pathirana 0
K. Perera c Warner b Head	6	G. Bailey not out 90
T. Perera c Finch b Hastings	13	T. Head lbw b D. Perera 40
S. Pathirana c Faulkner b Hastings	24	M. Wade not out 8
D. Perera c Wade b Hastings	18	Extras (b 1, lb 1, w 2, nb 1) 5
A. Aponso not out	1	Total (4 wickets; 31 overs) 217
Extras (b 4, lb 2, w 15)	21	Fall of wickets: 1-74 (Finch), 2-74 (Khawaja), 3-97 (Warner), 4-197 (Head)
Total (all out; 50 overs)	212	Bowling: T. Perera 3-1-24-0, Aponso 8-0-59-0, D. Perera 7-0-69-1, Pathirana 8-0-37-3, de Silva 4-0-21-0, A. Perera 1-0-5-0
Fall of wickets: 1-1 (Fernando), 2-18 (Mendis), 3-31 (Chandimal), 3-115* (Mathews, retired hurt, not out), 4-121 (de Silva), 5-130 (A. Perera), 6-134 (K. Perera), 7-165 (T. Perera), 8-199 (D. Perera), 9-200 (Pathirana), 10-212 (Mathews)		Did not bat: J. Faulkner, J. Hastings, M. Starc, A. Zampa, S. Boland
Bowling: Starc 10-1-51-1, Hastings 10-0-45-6,		Result: Australia won by 6 wickets.

A limping Mathews, who scored a gutsy 40, returned to bat in that same over to add some useful runs to the Sri Lankan total, which in the end proved insufficient for the rampaging visitors.

"Really disappointed with the way we played, didn't click as a batting unit

through the series. We didn't do well," said Chandimal, who led the the side in Mathews' absence in the Australian innings.

The fifth and final match of the series is scheduled on September 4 in Pallekele. —AFP



NEW YORK: Serena Williams of the US reacts to a point against Ekaterina Makarova of Russia during their 2016 US Open Women's Singles match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on August 30, 2016 in New York. — AFP

MURRAY, SERENA POWER INTO US OPEN SECOND ROUND

NEW YORK: Wimbledon champions Andy Murray and Serena Williams powered into the second round of the US Open as the stars came out on Arthur Ashe Stadium court on Tuesday night.

Williams, launching her latest bid to rewrite the record books, started strong and didn't let up in 6-3, 6-3 victory over 29th-ranked Ekaterina Makarova.

The US world number one appeared untroubled by the balky right shoulder that has hindered her in recent weeks, delivering a dozen aces and 27 winners overall in the 63-minute contest.

"I knew today I needed to be focused because I've played her. She's gotten to the semi-finals. She goes deep in majors," Williams said of the Russian left-hander who beat her in the fourth round of the 2012 Australian Open.

"She knows how to play big matches on big courts. She's not intimidated. I knew I had to really come out today. It was my only option really." Williams said she wouldn't know until she'd slept on it how her shoulder might respond to the effort.

"Every day, I'll just see how it goes," said Williams, who is chasing a record seventh title on the hardcourts of Flushing Meadows where she first triumphed in 1999.

A victory would see her break the Open Era record of 22 Grand Slam titles she now shares with German

Steffi Graf and close in on Margaret Court's all-time mark of 24 major titles. While Williams has struggled since Wimbledon, Murray went from claiming a second title at the All England club to a successful defence of his Olympic gold in Rio.

Vying to become the fourth man in the Open Era to reach all four major finals in a calendar year, Murray, too, produced a dominant service performance in a 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Czech Lukas Rosol.

"I don't think I had any break points against me, which is very good," the Scot said. Before the floodlights came up, Serena's elder sister Venus claimed a Grand Slam record of her own as her 6-2, 5-7, 6-4 victory over Ukraine's Kateryna Kozlova marked her 72nd appearance in the main draw of a major.

The 36-year-old Venus, enjoying a resurgence in a 2016 season that includes a WTA title in Taiwan, survived 63 unforced errors against the rising 22-year-old, although she was pleased that her aggressive approach also yielded 46 winners.

"The good part is I'm playing the game I want to play, I'm playing aggressively and moving forward," Venus said. "It's just about making a few less errors and it's a completely different story." Fourth seed Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland, trying to make it to the quarter-finals in New York for the first time, breezed past US qualifier Jessica Pegula 6-1, 6-1 and fifth-seeded

Romanian Simona Halep also eased through with a 6-0, 6-2 victory over Belgian Kirsten Flipkens.

Men's third seed Stan Wawrinka of Switzerland, a two-time semi-finalist, reached the second round with a 7-6 (7/4), 6-4, 6-4 win over Spain's Fernando Verdasco.

Kei Nishikori, who became Asia's first men's Grand Slam finalist in New York in 2014, when he fell to Marin Cilic in the final, also advanced, downing German Benjamin Becker 6-1, 6-1, 3-6, 6-3.

A LOT OF ACES

Eighth-seeded Dominic Thiem of Austria needed five sets to secure his second-round spot, downing Australia's John Millman 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-4, 6-3.

Juan Martin del Potro, the 2009 US Open champion whose career was nearly ended by three wrist surgeries, advanced with a 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) victory over fellow Argentine Diego Schwartzman.

There was a little record-setting on the men's side as well, with Croatian Ivo Karlovic belting a US Open record of 61 aces in a 4-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/5), 7-5 win over Taiwan's Lu Yen-Hsun.

Karlovic, 37, beat the previous best of 49 aces for one match in New York established by Richard Krajicek in 1999. "I knew there were a lot of aces because there was a period when almost every serve was an ace," Karlovic said. — AFP

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NEW YORK: Specialist Jason Hardzewicz (right) works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange yesterday. Stocks are opening slightly lower on Wall Street as a thin batch of earnings gave investors little to get excited about. — AP

ME FUNDS BECOME MORE WARY OF BONDS: POLL

SAUDI, KUWAIT AND BAHRAIN SET TO ISSUE GLOBAL BONDS

DUBAI: Middle East fund managers have turned negative towards fixed income for the first time since January because of the prospect of US monetary tightening and a flood of bond supply expected from governments in the region, a monthly Reuters poll found. The poll of 14 leading fund managers, conducted over the past week, found 21 percent expect to cut back allocations to Middle East fixed income in the next three months while 14 percent expect to raise them. Last month, 21 percent anticipated reducing their fixed income allocations with 29 percent increasing them. One reason for the shift is statements by Federal Reserve officials suggesting an increased chance of a US interest rate hike by the end of this year.

Also, the last couple of months have seen a strong rally in Gulf Cooperation Council debt

instruments, in line with emerging market bonds in general. Meanwhile, supply of GCC debt has been surging as governments cover budget deficits caused by low oil prices, with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain expected to issue international bonds in coming months. Mohamed Eljamal, managing director of capital markets at Abu Dhabi's Waha Capital, said yields of most of regional benchmark names were trading at year-to-date lows, and anticipated supply would weigh on returns.

"For the remainder of the year, a strong pipeline of bond supply from the region - both sovereign and corporate - is anticipated north of \$30 billion, which should cap performance until the supply clears."

SELECTIVE ON STOCKS

The poll found 36 percent of funds expect

to increase their allocation to Middle East equities and 14 percent to reduce them, a lower net positive than last month's rates of 43 percent and 14 percent respectively. Sentiment has on balance turned negative towards Qatar, where 43 percent now expect to reduce equities allocations and 21 percent expect to increase them - the most bearish balance since April. Last month, 14 percent anticipated a reduction and 36 percent an increase.

Qatar's stock market has been supported in recent weeks by anticipation of index compiler FTSE upgrading the bourse to emerging market status in mid-September. But several fund managers think many Qatari shares are now trading at or above fair value, leaving the market vulnerable to a correction. Islamic lender Masraf Al Rayan, trading around 38.90 riyals, is

at a 33 percent premium to the mean fair value of 29.19 riyals estimated by six analysts surveyed by Reuters.

Funds have also turned less positive towards Saudi Arabia's stock market with 29 percent expecting to increase allocations and 21 percent to cut them back, compared to last month's rates of 50 percent and 14 percent.

Riyadh's bourse has lagged its peers over the last month because of factors including a sharp economic slowdown due to low oil prices and government austerity steps, and political tensions linked to Saudi Arabia's military intervention in Yemen. "Weaker third-quarter earnings expectations, as the fiscal tightening bias continues, are another major concern for the near-term outlook," Eljamal of Waha Capital said.

Funds are most bullish towards United

Arab Emirates equities. Talal Samhoury, head of asset management at Qatar's Amwal, cited relatively strong corporate results in the UAE and its diversification away from oil.

Egypt's stock market has not benefited much from Cairo's preliminary agreement early this month to obtain a \$12 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund. Fourteen percent of funds now expect to increase equity allocations and 21 percent to decrease them; last month, the rates were 28 and 43 percent. Foreign investors are reluctant to move back into Egypt in a big way until details of the loan agreement are known. Sebastien Henin, head of asset management at Abu Dhabi's The National Investor, said that once the deal was approved and the government adopted ambitious economic reforms, foreign interest would revive. — Reuters

G20 TO GO LONG ON RHETORIC, SHORT ON ECONOMIC POLICY

BEIJING: G20 leaders will meet in China this weekend in a climate of economic uncertainty and sluggish global growth-but the absence of an urgent crisis means the forum will be short on breakthroughs, analysts say. Eight years after the first G20 summit in Washington, when countries coordinated a response to the financial meltdown, Beijing has set a modest agenda for the Hangzhou gathering-focusing on making the world economy "innovative, invigorated, interconnected, and inclusive."

But as countries' economic needs diverge-the US is mulling a rate hike, Japan is toying with fresh easing, Germany is skeptical of fiscal stimulus, Chinese overcapacity remains huge, and Britain has voted to quit the EU-the prospects for major unified action are dim.

"At the moment there's simply not a lot of common overlapping interests between the major economies," Christopher Balding, professor of economics at Peking University HSBC Business School, told AFP. The G20 is made up of the world's leading industrialised and emerging economies, which together account for 85 percent of the world's gross domestic product and two-thirds of its population.

But its failure to deliver on past pledges has raised questions about the credibility of future promises. Compliance with vows made in 2015 has fallen to a low of 63 percent, according to analysis by the University of Toronto.

Disappointing growth

"Ongoing economic malaise has been accompanied by the unwillingness of G20 members to sustain their commitment to the structural reforms

needed to meet the growth pledge," said Tristram Sainsbury and Hannah Wurf of the G20 Studies Centre at Australia's Lowy Institute in a report.

Despite repeated promises to achieve the G20's mission of strong, sustainable, balanced growth, members are "not achieving any of those three terms", Sainsbury told AFP.

Every year since 2011 the IMF has revised downwards its economic forecasts made at the beginning of the year as hopes for recovery have disappointed. This summer it again cut its forecast

for global growth in 2016 to 3.1 percent. It is a far cry from the sunny pledges of the Brisbane Action Plan two years ago, when G20 leaders set a goal of lifting collective GDP an extra 2.1 percent beyond baseline IMF predictions by 2018. Leaders said at the time that doing so would add \$2 trillion and millions of jobs to the world economy.

"The best way to think of the forum is a dinner party that happens to include leaders of 85 percent of the world economy around the table making pledges," said Sainsbury. — AFP



HANGZHOU: Helicopters hover around the main venue which will hold the upcoming G20 summit in Hangzhou in east China's Zhejiang province. — AP

OPEC OUTPUT HITS RECORD; GULF GAINS COUNTER AFRICAN LOSSES

LONDON: OPEC's oil output is likely in August to reach its highest in recent history, a Reuters survey found on Wednesday, as extra barrels from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf members make up for losses in Nigeria and Libya. Production in top OPEC exporter Saudi Arabia has likely reached a fresh record, sources in the survey said, as it meets seasonally higher domestic demand and focuses on maintaining market share.

Other big Middle Eastern producers, except Iran, also boosted output. Supply from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries has risen to 33.50 million barrels per day (bpd) from a revised 33.46 million bpd in July, according to the survey based on shipping data and information from industry sources.

The gain could add to scepticism about renewed OPEC talk of freezing output to support prices. Oil has risen towards \$48 a barrel from \$42 at the start of August, helped by such speculation, but these hopes have waned in recent days. "OPEC does not really want to freeze production," said Olivier Jakob, oil analyst at Petromatrix. "But it dreams of freezing prices at current levels."

Supply has risen since OPEC in 2014 dropped its historic role of fixing output to prop up prices as Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran pumped more. Production has also climbed due to the return of Indonesia in 2015 and Gabon in July as members. The membership changes have skewed historical comparisons. August's supply from

OPEC excluding Gabon and Indonesia, at 32.54 million bpd, is the highest in Reuters survey records starting in 1997.

In August, Saudi Arabia is expected at least to match July's record of 10.67 million bpd, sources in the survey said. Other industry sources told Reuters a new record as high as 10.90 million bpd was possible in August. There is no sign of any deliberate cutbacks. Saudi Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih told Reuters last week that August production had remained around July's level, without giving a precise figure. The United Arab Emirates continues to expand output, hitting 3.0 million bpd in August for the first time in the Reuters survey. Iraq and Kuwait pumped slightly more than in July, the survey found.

Supply in Iran, OPEC's fastest source of production growth earlier this year after the lifting of Western sanctions, has held steady this month as output nears the pre-sanctions rate. Iran is seeking investment to boost supply further. Of countries with lower output, the biggest drop came from Nigeria as militants attacked oil facilities. The Qua Iboe stream, the country's largest, was under force majeure for the whole month, reducing exports.

Libyan output slipped further and another decline occurred in Venezuela, hit by an economic crisis. The Reuters survey is based on shipping data provided by external sources, Thomson Reuters flows data, and information provided by sources at oil companies, OPEC and consulting firms. — Reuters

ZAIN LAUNCHES HAJJ ROAMING PROMOTION FOR FREE

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced the launch of its special promotion for customers traveling to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj. The new promotion enables postpaid smartphone users to enjoy their existing local Internet cap in the Kingdom without any additional charges.

Zain's latest promotion comes as

part of its keenness to keep customers connected to each other and to their loved ones during Hajj season and without any additional charges from their part. The offer allows postpaid smartphone customers to use their existing local Internet caps over Zain KSA's network with no additional charges.

Upon arrival to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, postpaid smartphone

customers can simply activate the promotion by sending DATA ON to 99990 to enjoy their local Internet caps. The limited time offer starts from 1 September 2016. Additionally, when customers exceed the limit of their Internet capacity, they can visit connect.kw.zain.com to get additional Internet caps at the same local rate.

Zain continuously offers services that are tailored to match its cus-

tomers' expectations and needs during their travels, and to keep them connected to their loved ones and businesses with more convenience and around the clock.

By launching this exciting offer, Zain continues to reinforce its leadership position and its pledge in offering the best services and offers to meet customers' professional and personal telecommunications needs.



ASIAN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT BANK



BEIJING: Canadian Minister of Finance Bill Morneau adjusts a microphone as he sits with the President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank Jin Liqun (right) during a news conference at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in Beijing yesterday. —AP

CANADA APPLIES TO JOIN CHINA-BACKED AIIB

BEIJING: Canada will apply to join the China-backed Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the bank's president Jin Liqun said yesterday, making it the latest ally of the United States to join the new international development bank. The multilateral institution, seen as a rival to the Western-dominated World Bank and Asian Development Bank, was initially opposed by the United States but attracted many US allies including Britain, Germany, Australia and South Korea as founding members.

Japan and the United States are the most prominent nations not represented in the bank. The United States said in April it is not presently considering an investment in the AIIB.

"This is really for us, as a new government, the earliest possibility at which we could indicate our interest," Canadian finance minister Bill Morneau said in response to a question asking why

Canada was only applying to join the bank now. "We believe the bank is clearly showing that it's going to be a highly effective multilateral institution," he added.

Morneau is on a trip to China with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau seeking to deepen ties with the world's second-largest economy, a distinct change from his predecessor Stephen Harper who was more cautious in his approach to China.

"The Canadians' decision to join this bank will greatly strengthen the management of this institution," Jin told reporters. "We can see that the US's attitude towards AIIB is showing signs of changing, as it's encouraging the World Bank to cooperate more with the AIIB," Jin added.

Canada will submit its application to join the AIIB by the end of 2016, said David Lauzon, a Canadian finance ministry official said. —Reuters

IPO CHINA MAY OPEN SHARE MARKETS TO SAUDI ARAMCO

ARAMCO APPOINTS NEW VICE PRESIDENT

KHOBAR: China has shown interest in opening its stock markets to Saudi Aramco when the national oil giant conducts an initial public offer of its equity, the kingdom's energy minister Khalid Al-Falih said yesterday.

"For sure, all the stock markets in every country we visit, and every country whose officials visit us, are very keen and wish the most valuable and most important company in the world to be listed on their markets," Falih told the Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya television channel during a visit to China.

"It is normal that China discusses these options and for sure we will take it into consideration," he said, adding that no details had been discussed so far. Under sweeping economic reforms, the Saudi government plans to offer up to 5 percent of Saudi Aramco for sale, possibly raising tens of billions of dollars; Saudi officials

have estimated the company's total value at over \$2 trillion.

Officials have said Saudi Aramco might obtain multiple listings in Riyadh and other markets such as London and New York. The Saudi bourse alone might be too small to absorb such a giant offer.

Falih told Reuters last week that Riyadh hoped to conduct the IPO by early 2018 and that an international listing had not yet been decided. There are no plans for Aramco to take on a strategic partner, he said. Yesterday, he said the IPO was still being studied carefully. "All I can say is that it is under study and it will be the most successful and best listing in the world."

Meanwhile, Saudi Aramco has appointed a new vice president for its southern area operations replacing Zuhair Al-Hussain, who retired after working at the state oil

giant for more than three decades, industry sources said yesterday. Ghawar oilfield, the world's largest onshore oilfield is under the southern area's operations. The Arabian Sun, Aramco's weekly magazine reported on the retirement of Hussain, who joined Aramco as petroleum engineer in 1978 and has had many roles including vice president of drilling and workover.

The magazine did not say who will replace Hussain, but industry sources told Reuters that Khalid Al-Buraik, vice president of petroleum engineering and development will assume this role, replaced by Nasir Al-Naimi. Naimi's last post was vice president of corporate planning. That was taken over by Motassim Al-Maashouq. Saudi Aramco did not immediately respond to an e-mailed request for comment. —Reuters



KARLSRUHE: Boxes with commissions for a citizens' lawsuit against the free trade agreement CETA are transported to the Federal Constitutional Court via a human chain in Karlsruhe, Germany yesterday. More than 125,000 German citizens have joined the lawsuit. —AFP

RUSSIAN OIL PRIVATIZATION SAGA POINTS TO LIMITS OF PUTIN'S AUTHORITY

MOSCOW/UFA, Russia: Russia's decision to postpone the privatization of a mid-sized oil company has sent a message to investors: for all his power, President Vladimir Putin has failed to stop political infighting getting in the way of business.

Foreigners have long been wary of buying assets in Russia because of concerns that the state has little respect for ownership rights, but the tussle between competing clans over control of Bashneft has been particularly fierce. Economy Minister Alexei Ulyukayev said the delay in the sale of the government's majority stake in the provincial oil firm, announced on Aug. 16, reflected market conditions and investor readiness for the deal.

But the battle over Bashneft is a reminder for foreign investors that winning one camp's backing is no guarantee of protection for an investment because interests and influence can shift rapidly in the Kremlin. "Foreign investors ... all understand what is happening, which is an internal battle they are not involved in," Chris Weaver, a senior partner at Macro-Advisory Ltd, a consultancy that advises investors on Russia, told Reuters.

On one side, sources close to the government and Bashneft say, is Igor Sechin, head of state oil firm Rosneft and a Putin lieutenant. Opposing him are economic liberals in the government who believe Bashneft should be in private hands.

Putin has avoided taking sides, the

sources said. "With Bashneft it's clear it's a political story," said one source close to talks on the company's privatization. "Bashneft is a good company, which is worth something, and which one of the Russian players would buy. But it's clear there is no political decision on who can buy it." Foreign investors are concerned the same fate might await other assets the Kremlin is planning to privatize, including a 25 percent stake in shipping firm Sovcomflot, which the government has said was worth 24 billion roubles (\$368 million).

FAMILY FEUD

There is a sense of déjà vu in the Bashneft saga for long-term investors in Russia. Reflecting on how Bashneft has changed hands repeatedly in the last three decades, a source at a western bank said: "The only one way to sell Bashneft is to sell it to Russian oligarchs. Foreigners see lots of risks."

Named after the region of Bashkortostan where its oil is extracted and where it operates three oil refineries, Bashneft produces around 400,000 barrels of crude oil a day—about the same as Vietnam produces and about 4 percent of Russia's output. After the collapse of communist rule in 1991, Bashneft was in the hands of the Bashkortostan regional government based in the city of Ufa and there was little oversight from Moscow, leaving regional leader Murtaza Rakhimov to hold sway. —Reuters



PARIS: France's former Minister of the Economy Emmanuel Macron speaks as he hands over power to French Minister of Finance and also current Minister of Economy Michel Sapin in Paris yesterday following his resignation as economy minister. —AFP

EUROZONE INFLATION STILL STUBBORNLY WEAK

BRUSSELS: Eurozone inflation and jobless data yesterday fell short of analyst forecasts as the economy bumps along amid speculation the European Central Bank will have to adopt more stimulus measures.

The official EU statistics agency Eurostat said eurozone consumer prices rose 0.2 percent in August, the same rate as in July. Eurozone unemployment meanwhile was unchanged at 10.1 percent in July.

Analysts surveyed by financial services company Factset had expected inflation at 0.3 percent and unemployment at 10.0 percent in the 19-nation eurozone. Inflation is a key indicator as it reflects underlying consumer demand in the economy and the figures have been well off the ECB's target of around 2.0 percent for several years.

The ECB, which has so far pumped up the economy with more than one trillion euros in

easy money, has promised to do whatever it takes to prevent deflation. Deflation—when prices fall outright—can be fatal as consumers put off purchases to wait for cheaper goods.

Doing so, however, undercuts demand and then investment, hitting employment and putting the economy into a dangerous downward cycle.

Analysts said the data will disappoint the ECB but they were divided on whether it will take additional action at its meeting next week or choose to wait and see. Stephen Brown at Capital Economics said flat inflation in August "highlights the fact that price pressures in the eurozone remain weak and boosts the case for more monetary easing from the ECB."

The jobless figures meanwhile show "there is still a large amount of spare capacity in the labour market," Brown said. Howard Archer at IHS Markit said the inflation report would be

"largely disappointing news for the ECB."

"Adding to ECB concerns, there are signs that the eurozone labour market is faltering in reaction to recent slower growth and uncertainties over the outlook being magnified by the UK's vote to leave the EU," Archer said. "It looks to be a very tight call as to whether or not the ECB acts on 8 September or decides to maintain a 'wait and see' stance," he added.

Recent economic data has been mixed, with Britain's shock June vote to quit the European Union hitting sentiment as feared but not to the disastrous extent some had warned of.

On Tuesday, the European Commission said its Economic Sentiment Indicator (ESI) for the eurozone dropped one full point to 103.5 in August. Last week, however, data monitoring company Markit said the economy continued to prove resilient, with companies still ready to invest in their business. —AFP

UAE BANKRUPTCY LAW MAY BE FINALIZED BY END-2016

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates may finalize a long-pending bankruptcy law by the end of this year, the economy minister said yesterday, a move that could help smaller companies in particular as the economy slows because of low oil prices. "The need for a bankruptcy law is there, as soon as possible," Sultan Saeed Al-Mansouri said

reporters. "It is in the process. It should be finalized by the end of the year, that is my estimate." The UAE does not have modern bankruptcy regulations, making it difficult for companies to restructure or wind themselves up. Under existing legislation, unpaid debt or the issue of a bounced cheque can lend businessmen in jail.

This has proved problematic for smaller companies in particular as some executives of troubled firms have fled the country, leaving behind bad debts. The UAE Banks Federation, an industry body, has been lobbying the government to expedite the new insolvency law, chairman Abdul Aziz Al-Ghurair said in March.

Mansouri also said the UAE's new investment law might be finalized by the end of 2016 as a draft would soon be presented to the cabinet. Among other reforms, the investment law is expected to allow majority foreign ownership of companies in some sectors where it is currently limited to 49 percent or less. —Reuters



NEW 2016 CAPTIVA 'ELITE EDITION'

STYLISH AND ELEGANT CHEVROLET VEHICLE FROM YUSUF AHMED ALGHANIM & SONS AUTOMOTIVE

KUWAIT: Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, provides its customers with a wide array of cars that suits every style and taste at amazingly affordable prices. If you are looking to own a stylish, sleek and elegant vehicle, look no further than the New 2016 Captiva "Elite Edition."

Chevrolet Alghanim has created this "Elite Edition" with new appearance package which includes the front/rear bumper, side skirts, roof rails, and fog light trim. The packages also includes chrome grille, sidesteps, and a leather seats to add more value from the inside as well.

Captiva continues its successes, amid growing demand for the SUV category, which today has become one of the fastest growing

segments of the automotive industry. Combining great capacity and aesthetics, the new Captiva redefines the sport utility vehicle (SUV) with its superior infotainment system that boasts the new generation Chevrolet MyLink. And with the addition of many new and innovative safety features, Captiva will get you to wherever you want to go and anywhere you need to be.

The new Captiva offers its customers the advantages of connecting with smartphones. It also comes with the latest equipment in the field of safety, and internal and external developments and design give the car a new look in line with the design features characteristic of current models of Chevrolet. The powerful engine comes with a 2.4L DOHC 4-cylinder

capable of generating 167 horsepower at 5,600 rpm and 230 Nm of torque at 4,600 rpm.

As one of the most popular Chevrolet models, the Captiva provides a unique design, keeping the same famous exterior design of this model. In terms of design, the most notable change in the 2016 Captiva is the front-end design, especially in the headlights, which have become more integrated and interdependent with daylight lamps. Similarly, the backend development and touches of chrome on the edges of the exhaust with LED backlight lamps bestow a more sophisticated look.

Apart from the design of the interface, newly-added features include rear-cross traffic alert, rear-vision camera, blind spot zone alert,

grille with black chrome bar, instrument panel, black high gloss and real time damping and trailer stability assistance. Other improvements include a new screen to display driver information with easy-to-read images, including new icons to distinguish between activating cruise control and stopping it.

Stability and active safety systems include a responsive Captiva 2016 electronic stability control system with anti-lock brakes and traction control system, controls for inclinations and slopes, dual airbags and double safety belt tensioners. Captiva has been designed for those who seek safe, family-friendly drives. The royally-designed Captiva has the strength and space of a sports utility vehicle and the style and practicality of a family car.

Alghanim Chevrolet urges its customer to take advantage of this new edition by visiting any of its Chevrolet showrooms around the country, in Safat Alghanim Al-Rai, Sharq, Fahaheel, Al-Ahmadi, and Shuwaikh.

All customers who purchase a Chevrolet from Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons will receive the benefits of the Chevrolet Care Program, which entails new levels of post-sale support and trust. The Chevrolet Care is an exceptional customer service that is based on four main pillars: competitive and transparent service costs (especially for four-wheel drive vehicles), scheduled service appointment booking with same day delivery, quality service by certified technicians and 3yr/100,000km warranty with 24x7 roadside assistance for 4 years.



BACK TO SCHOOL: SPECIAL PROMOTIONS FOR TEACHERS

KUWAIT: Kuwait Automotive Imports Co WLL (Al Shaya & Al Sagar), the exclusive dealer of Mazda, Peugeot and Geely celebrates the Back to school season. On this occasion we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the contribution of teachers in the development of the future generation and in the progress of the nation.

KAICO is pleased to share with Kuwait teachers the special offers customized to the need of the Teachers. Teachers can lease from a range of comfortable and stylish cars from Mazda, Peugeot or Geely and get the best deal ever.

They will enjoy a free unlimited Mileage, free insurance, car replacement if needed, delivery at door step, very attractive referral bonus, moreover even interna-



tional driving license can be insured too.

Because we value the work they do. We will offer the right car for them with very attractive prices.

Kuwait Teachers are invited to look around our website, or visit our showroom in Al Rai area, meet our leasing team and enjoy test driving one of our cars.

QATAR FALLS BEFORE FTSE LIST, EGYPT UP

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Gulf shares retreated yesterday, with Qatar's main stock index dropping 2.9 percent as investors booked profits across the board, though Egypt's main index climbed as investors welcomed economic reforms by the government. After Wednesday's market close index compiler FTSE is expected to release a list of Qatari stocks to be included in its emerging market index from mid-September.

But Qatari blue chips had already risen over the last few weeks in anticipation, taking them to levels many fund managers see as at or above fair value. Such stocks were sold on Wednesday, with Islamic lender Masraf Al-Rayan falling 2.4 percent and Qatar National Bank losing 3.8 percent.

A monthly Reuters poll of leading Middle East fund managers showed sentiment has on balance turned negative towards Qatar for the next three months because of valuation issues. Elsewhere in the Gulf, markets were hit by Brent oil's drop below \$48 a barrel. All traded petrochemical shares in Saudi Arabia retreated, with bellwether Saudi Basic Industries falling

0.9 percent. The market's main index closed down 0.8 percent in this year's thinnest trading volume.

Consumer discretionary stocks were among the top losers because of Saudi Arabia's economic slowdown. Retailer Fawaz Alhokair, which owns franchises such as Banana Republic and Starbucks, lost 3.2 percent. Dubai's index edged down 0.3 percent after rising in early trade. GFH Financial fell 1.0 percent, erasing some of its 4.3 percent jump in the previous session.

Blue chips dragged Abu Dhabi's index 0.5 percent lower. Union National Bank dropped 3.0 percent and National Bank of Abu Dhabi declined 1.9 percent.

ECONOMIC REFORMS

By contrast, Cairo's main index rose 1.0 percent with a little over half of traded shares gaining. Telecom Egypt, the state-owned landline monopoly, advanced 2.7 percent after saying it had acquired the country's first 4G mobile licence for 7.08 billion Egyptian pounds (\$797 million), paving the way for it to become the fourth mobile

provider in Egypt. El Sewedy Electric, which rose 2.1 percent on Tuesday after reporting a 68 percent jump in second-quarter profit, added a further 3.8 percent yesterday. Parliament has approved several reforms this week including a plan to introduce value-added tax and steps to make settling tax disputes easier.

Wafik Dawood, portfolio manager at Cairo-based Mega Investment Securities, said such reforms were crucial to attracting foreign funds. "The proactive steps taken will show just how serious the government is about fixing the problems which have been hindering the country over the last five years," said Dawood.

He said investors were keen to know how authorities would handle Egypt's next currency devaluation. "All eyes will be on the mechanism of the devaluation, which this time around will come with fiscal reforms - unlike the March devaluation, which was just a change in the price of the currency." "Bottom line, a devaluation will be good for the stock market." —Reuters

HISTORIC DELL AND EMC TRANSACTION SET TO CLOSE

ROUND ROCK, Texas: Dell Inc and EMC Corp yesterday announced that they intend to close the transaction to combine Dell and EMC on Wednesday, September 7, 2016. Dell Technologies, the name of the new combined company, will begin operating immediately following the close of the transaction. The announcement follows regulatory approval of the Dell and EMC transaction by China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), which has granted clearance for the companies' proposed combination. MOFCOM approval was the final regulatory condition to closing the transaction. EMC shareholders approved the transaction on July 19,



EMC's Jon Tucci

with approximately 98 percent of voting EMC shareholders casting their votes in favor of the merger, representing approximately 74 percent of EMC's outstanding common stock.

"This is an historic moment for both Dell and EMC. Combined, we will be exceptionally well-positioned for growth in the most strategic areas of next generation IT including digital transformation, software-defined data center, converged infrastructure, hybrid cloud, mobile and security," said Michael Dell, chairman and CEO of Dell Technologies. "Our investments in R&D and innovation, along with our 140,000 team members around the

world, will give us unmatched scale, strength and flexibility, deepening our relationships with customers of all sizes."

"I am proud of everything we've built at EMC - from humble beginnings as a Boston-based startup to a global, world-class technology company with an unyielding dedication to our customers," said Joe Tucci, chairman and chief executive officer of EMC. "The combination of Dell and EMC creates a new powerhouse in the industry - providing the essential technology for the next era in IT."

At closing, EMC shareholders will receive \$24.05 per share in cash in

addition to a newly issued tracking stock linked to a portion of EMC's economic interest in the VMware business. Based on the estimated number of EMC shares outstanding at the close of the transaction, EMC shareholders are expected to receive approximately 0.111 shares of new tracking stock for each EMC share. Upon close of the transaction, EMC shares under the ticker symbol "EMC" will be suspended from trading on the New York Stock Exchange. Shares of the tracking stock, trading under the ticker symbol "DVMT," are expected to begin trading on the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday, September 7.

DRONES HELPING CALIFORNIA FARMERS SAVE EVERY DROP

TECHNOLOGY PAVING WAY TO EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES

LOS BANOS: A drone whirred to life in a cloud of dust, then shot hundreds of feet skyward for a bird's-eye view of a vast tomato field in California's Central Valley, the nation's most productive farming region. Equipped with a state-of-the-art thermal camera, the drone crisscrossed the field, scanning it for cool, soggy patches where a gopher may have chewed through the buried drip irrigation line and caused a leak.

In the drought-prone West, where every drop of water counts, California farmers are in a constant search for ways to efficiently use the increasingly scarce resource. Cannon Michael is putting drone technology to work on his fields at Bowles Farming Co. near Los Banos, 120 miles southeast of San Francisco. About 2,100 companies and individuals have federal permission to fly drones for farming, according to the drone industry's Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International. Federal regulators Monday relaxed the rules on small, commercial drones, a

move that could spur even greater use of such aircraft on farms.

'Only way to stay in business'

Michael is descended from Henry Miller, a renowned cattle rancher, farmer and Western landowner who helped transform semi-arid central California into fertile farmland 150 years ago by building irrigation canals, some still flowing today. Six generations later, Michael farms a 17-square-mile portion of that same land, growing melons, carrots, onions, cotton and almonds, while carrying on in the same pioneering spirit as Miller. "I've always been a big fan of technology," said Michael, 44, mindful of how climate change is making water more precious. "I think it's really the only way we're going to stay in business."

On his 2,400-acre tomato crop alone, Michael estimates that this year his leak-detecting drones could save enough water to sustain more than 550 families of four for a year. California endured the

driest four-year period on record before a relatively wet and snowy winter this year overflowed some reservoirs in the northern part of the state. Southern California, however, remains dry, and the statewide drought has not ended.

Beyond California, drones are becoming fixtures on farms in places such as Canada, Australia, South Africa and Latin America as they become more affordable and easier to use, said Ian Smith of DroneDeploy, a San Francisco-based industry leader in drone software development. A farmer can order a commercial-grade drone online for \$2,000 and receive it in the mail days later, he said. Its video camera is then paired up with a smartphone or computer tablet that is used to control the drone. "Hook it up to a smartphone. Boom. Take off and you're in business," Smith said.

Full potential

Many farmers, however, have yet to grasp the full potential beyond capturing video images of

crops or using infrared cameras to spot color variations in the plants that can signal a problem. Few have used technology and invested in it to the degree Michael has. This year he began using the thermal camera, which can cost up to \$10,000 and can show moisture variations in soil. He also created a new management position at his company dedicated to overseeing drones.

Recently, Danny Royer, the new vice president of technology at Bowles, stood at the tailgate of his pickup studying live images transmitted to the screen of his tablet as a drone buzzed 300 feet overhead. Rows of mature tomato plants appeared on the screen in glowing burnt orange, indicating warmer, drier areas, while dark patches of purple showed the cool moist soil hidden below the plants.

After taking the images back to his office to analyze them, he decided there were no leaks to repair, but the soil needed to be enriched in places to help the field grow evenly. On Monday, the Federal Aviation Administration eased the rules so that operators of commercial drones that weigh less than 55 pounds will no longer need to go through the long, expensive process of earning an airplane pilot's license.

Instead, they will have to take a written test - but not an actual flying test at the controls of a plane - and will be issued a drone license for \$150. The rule change and emerging technology could make drones more attractive tools for farmers, said Brandon Stark, director of the University of California's Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Safety, based at the Merced campus. However, he said that until federal regulators clarify parts of the new rules, commercial drones must continue to fly below 400 feet, limiting their use on very large fields.

Stark is seeking what he calls the Holy Grail of drone use in agriculture - enabling them to directly diagnose what ails a tree, whether it's deficiencies in water or nutrients, or a pest - without having to send a person into the field. "We're just getting started," Stark said. "The research is really still in its infancy." —AP



LOS BANOS: In this photo taken July 25, 2016, Danny Royer, vice president of technology at Bowles Farming Co, prepares to pilot a drone over a tomato field near Los Banos. —AP

CISCO MIDDLE EAST APPOINTS SHUKRI EID AS EAST REGION'S MANAGING DIRECTOR

DUBAI: Cisco Middle East has announced that Shukri Eid has been appointed Managing Director of its East Region effective immediately. In his new role, Shukri will lead the Cisco's business in the UAE, Oman, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Yemen and work closely with partners to support private and public sector customers in their efforts to digitize and transform their operations. Shukri is a Cisco veteran of nearly 10 years and has worked in multiple leadership capacities across the organization. Over his 20-year career he has led high-profile strategy, business and technology transformational engagements, working with senior officials and executives across emerging markets.

Commenting on Shukri's appointment, Mike Weston, Vice President for Cisco Middle East said, "This is a dynamic time where we are experiencing fast-paced changes and evolving trends across industries. As a technology leader, our focus is on accelerating our ability to respond to our customer and partner needs in support of their aspirations. Shukri Eid is a passionate leader with an extensive track record of achievements under his belt, and I am confident of our ability to capture the tremendous opportunities that exist across our markets with him at the helm of the East Region. His management expertise and profound appreciation for the opportunities presented by digitization position us ideally to execute against

our strategic priorities and drive continued growth." In addition to his focus on developing and delivering on business strategy, Shukri will champion people development and build on the momentum achieved in making Cisco one of the most attractive



Managing Director Shukri Eid

places to work for top talent in the technology sector.

"I look forward to my new role during what is an exciting time for Cisco and the region. The time is ripe to harness the power

of digitization and there is greater need from our partners, customers and governments across our markets to help accelerate their journeys towards becoming smarter, more competitive and more connected in the new economy," said Shukri Eid, Managing Director - East Region, Cisco Middle East. "Our talented team and expanding portfolio of solutions place us at the forefront of their efforts to capture this immense potential."

A Cisco Leadership Pipeline Program alumna, Shukri most recently held the position of Senior Director of Country Digitization Acceleration (CDA) in Cisco's EMEAR region, working with government and industry leaders to accelerate national digitization strategies. Prior to that he was the Director managing Cisco Consulting Services in the same region, where he led a team advising large customer organizations across public sector and enterprise as well as telecom service providers. Prior to joining Cisco, Shukri held a number of senior consultancy roles at leading blue chips, including IBM Global Business Services and Pricewaterhouse Coopers, with engagements involving local and federal government, education, financial services, and defense. He holds a master's degree in business administration from Strathclyde University and a bachelor's degree in electrical and computer engineering from Jordan University of Science and Technology.



AUCKLAND: Live streaming equipment is seen during the third day of internet mogul Kim Dotcom's extradition appeal at the High Court. —AFP

DOTCOM'S BATTLE TO AVOID TRIAL GOES LIVE

AUCKLAND: The protracted battle to have Megaupload founder Kim Dotcom face video piracy charges in the United States broke new ground yesterday with live-streaming of his appeal against extradition. Dotcom won approval to live-stream his bid to avoid leaving New Zealand after successfully arguing that global interest required more than standard brief television clips.

The case, in the Auckland High Court, is expected to last six to eight weeks and while the verdict in at least one previous New Zealand trial has been broadcast live, this is the first time a hearing has been live-streamed in full. "Show me a short video or picture of how you are watching the live stream right now. Here's mine," Dotcom tweeted during the lunch adjournment with a photo of himself watching his lawyers on TV.

Judge Murray Gilbert ruled the case could only be streamed with a 20-minute delay, to allow the court time to prevent any restricted material from being published, and all footage was to be removed from the internet when the hearing ends. Dotcom, a German national with permanent residency in New Zealand, faces decades in jail if convicted in the United

States of piracy, which US authorities say cost copyright owners hundreds of millions of dollars. He was first arrested nearly five years ago during a police raid on his mansion near Auckland after the FBI shut down Megaupload's servers.

After several legal battles, a court ruled in December last year there was "overwhelming" evidence to support extradition of the 42-year-old and three other Megaupload founders. However, the case could rumble on for several more years with Dotcom vowing to continue legal challenges if he loses this appeal. The prosecution has argued that Megaupload willfully breached copyright by hosting illegally created movie, music and software files.

Dotcom claimed Megaupload was a genuine file-sharing site that did its best to police copyright infringement but had 50 million daily users and could not control every aspect of their activity. Dotcom has denied any wrongdoing and accused US authorities of pursuing a vendetta against him on behalf of politically influential Hollywood studios. The FBI alleges Megaupload netted more than US\$175 million in criminal proceeds and cost copyright owners more than US\$500 million by offering pirated content. —AFP

BERLIN'S IFA TECH FAIR DONS VIRTUAL REALITY HEADSETS

BERLIN: Virtual and augmented reality gadgets are expected to hog the limelight at Berlin's mega consumer electronics show IFA this week, as Pokemon Go gave a tantalizing preview of the appetite for reality-altering technologies. VR headsets and cameras will jostle for attention, while analysts expect smartphone makers to also unveil new models compatible with the latest in such technologies.

The annual IFA show, which began as an exhibition on the new medium of radio more than 90 years ago, is today a massive showcase for consumers to touch and feel the latest in technological innovations. Over six days from Friday, tech giants will be seeking to grab consumers' attention with novelties as diverse as the latest in high definition resolution television screens to 3D printers to fitness gadgets.

Being the last major show before Christmas, it has a large influence over the critical European holiday gift giving season. Smartphones and tablets have in recent years dominated the headlines at the show, but faced with a maturing market, manufacturers are struggling to find new innovations to persuade consumers to swap their already fancy phone with an even fancier one. But virtual reality and augmented reality may be the next cash cow.

Gaming app Pokemon Go, which combines both, has been a runaway hit, sending millions of people young and old out into the streets to catch digital monsters. "The game gives a preview of how fascinating reality technology is for many people. Virtual reality has the ability to turn our daily habits upside down," said Hans-Joachim Kamp, who heads gfu,

Germany's federation for consumer and home electronic firms.

'Very early market'

Goldman Sachs predicted earlier this year that the virtual reality and augmented reality markets would reach \$80 billion by 2025. The difference between the two is that while virtual reality blocks the user's view of the real world through special glasses, augmented reality blends real life with virtual reality. For IHS Insight analyst Ian Fogg, "VR is very much a trend of the moment, a trend of what's happening." "The really interesting thing is how big is the market, what role do smartphones play in this, what kind of concept will work on VR and what kind of consumers will embrace VR," he said. Fogg said the industry was still testing the waters.

"A lot depends on Google Daydream initiative, whether they're going to talk about that around IFA, or whether they are going to wait until a date in the autumn," he added. Daydream is essentially a mobile store for VR games and apps. Once that is up, it could potentially spur consumers to purchase headsets or motion controllers that are compatible with Daydream. It is unclear when Daydream will launch, but a key hurdle was cleared last month when Google released the Nougat update of its Android operating system that is capable of running the platform.

Beyond VR, major smartphone and smartwatch makers have all lined up to unveil new offerings. Annette Zimmermann from research agency Gartner Deutschland believes that the South Korea's Samsung and Chinese giant Huawei are likely to roll out new smartwatches, while Japanese group Sony may well present its latest Xperia smartphone. —AFP

HOSPITAL, HEPATITIS C OUTBREAK VICTIMS REACH LEGAL SETTLEMENT

BISMARCK: Trinity Health and its hospital in Minot have agreed in principal on a legal settlement with 21 victims of the largest hepatitis C outbreak in recent US history, though Trinity's legal fight with a nursing home where most people were sickened will continue. Trinity attorneys filed a request asking state Judge Todd Cresap to dismiss the lawsuit, saying Trinity recently reached a confidential settlement resolving the plaintiffs' claims. They asked Cresap to allow a connected legal dispute between the hospital and the former ManorCare nursing home to be resolved in federal court, where it originated. Cresap has not yet ruled.

Behdad Sadeghi, an attorney for the plaintiffs,

told The Associated Press that the settlement still needs to be finalized, but that his side told the court an agreement had been reached in principle. He declined to comment further. Hepatitis C is a viral infection that can cause serious liver damage or death. Fifty-two people were sickened in the outbreak that began in August 2013, including 48 residents or former residents of ManorCare. It was the nation's largest outbreak in 13 years, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Victims began suing in federal court in April 2014, seeking unspecified money damages. Last March, 21 victims and the nursing home joined in a separate lawsuit in state court alleging that an employee of

Trinity's outpatient laboratory service reused needles and didn't follow infection control practices, causing the outbreak. State and federal health officials suspect the outbreak might have been associated with blood services provided to ManorCare residents, though they never pinpointed an exact cause.

Trinity has rejected the notion that it's responsible and asked Cresap to dismiss the lawsuit earlier this year. Attorney Randall Hanson did not immediately respond to a request for comment Tuesday on why the hospital decided to settle. The victims sought compensation for expensive drugs used to treat the disease and unspecified damages for economic harm, personal injury and the wrongful death

of at least three people.

ManorCare alleges that Trinity fraudulently blamed the nursing home for the outbreak, hurting its business and leading to the sale of the nursing home to a Wisconsin-based partnership last year at a price far below its true value. Trinity disputes that. Trinity, which operates medical facilities in 10 northern North Dakota cities, maintains in court documents that its battle with ManorCare is best suited for federal court, where it began and which "has a greater familiarity with the parties' dispute." It asks Cresap to allow the matter to play out in federal court once the individual victims are no longer involved in the case. — AP



WEST KALIMANTAN: This picture taken on August 4, 2016 shows three orphaned orangutan babies hanging on a tree whilst attending "jungle school" at the International Animal Rescue centre outside the city of Ketapang. — AFP

JUNGLE SCHOOL HELPS RESCUED ORANGUTANS RETURN TO WILD WORLD HAS NEVER BEEN MORE PERILOUS FOR THESE PRIMATES

KETAPANG, Indonesia: Ignoring the shrieks of his rowdy, wrestling classmates, baby orangutan Otan practices swinging alone at his "jungle school" on Borneo island, switching hands and hanging upside down as he builds confidence high above the forest floor. The three-year-old is learning to fend for himself since being found wandering a palm oil plantation, alone and suffering smoke inhalation, at the height of fires last year that razed huge swathes of rainforest in Indonesia's part of Borneo.

Otan and the other orphans must build nests, find food and avoid predators especially man-to prove they're ready to "graduate" and return to the wild, but life in the real world has never been more perilous for these primates. Last month, for the first time in history, Bornean orangutans were declared critically endangered-one step away from total extinction. Experts warn these majestic tree dwellers-who could once cross Borneo without ever touching the ground-could vanish entirely from the island within 50 years as the ancient rainforest they've inhabited for centuries is felled and burned at alarming speed. "It's heartbreaking," said Ayu Budi, a veterinarian who heads the orangutan health clinic at the International Animal Rescue centre in West Kalimantan province. "When you see them, it's really sad. They're supposed to be with their mothers in the wild, living happily, but they're here."

Situation 'desperate'

The 101 orangutans under Budi's care-including the 16 playful infants-are the lucky ones, rescued

near death and nurtured back to health with baby bottles in a tranche of protected forest outside the city of Ketapang. But hundreds of thousands of their kin have died in the past four decades across Borneo, slaughtered by hunters, burned in land-clearing fires or starved to death by habitat loss.

Rampant logging and the rapid expansion of commercial-scale paper and palm oil operations across the island has reduced the species' habitat by at least 55 percent in two decades, says environmental group WWF, driving them into ever-closer contact with humans. The result has been wild orangutan populations in freefall. In the mid 1970s, nearly 300,000 of these great apes roamed Borneo. Today, just a third of that number remain. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature-which changed the species's threat level to critical-estimates a mere 47,000 will be left in the wild by 2025. Those working at the coalface are under no illusions that efforts to arrest this decline have not succeeded, said Chris Wiggs, a conservation adviser at IAR's forest outpost in Ketapang. "I think people on the ground working in Borneo have known for a long time that the orangutan situation was pretty desperate," he told AFP, as a wheelbarrow of baby orangutans passed on its way to the nursery.

Fear of fire

The number of great apes at the centre has grown nearly tenfold since 2009 as ever-increasing amounts of forest is cleared by industry. Two of the school's newest pupils are Vijay and Moli who were found without their mothers near burned land.

They are the victims of fire, an annual scourge that's evolved into a major threat to the future of the species.

Every dry season across Indonesian Borneo-an island shared with Malaysia and Brunei-fires are illegally lit by land owners to quickly and cheaply clear forest for new plantations. The fires often get out of hand, tearing through forest and smoldering relentlessly on Borneo's compact, carbon-rich peatlands. Last year's blazes were among the worst on record. Fanned by a prolonged dry season, fires tore through 2.6 million hectares (10,000 square miles) of Indonesian forest, laying waste to prime orangutan habitat.

The smoke turned skies yellow in Indonesian Borneo and blanketed neighboring Singapore and Malaysia, forcing schools to shut and causing thousands to fall ill. Conservationists fear a repeat disaster of that scale would ring the death knell for the Bornean orangutan. "I think we're all pretty scared... whether the species can take another hit like that," Wiggs said.

'Restore, rehabilitate'

Under international pressure, Jakarta has promised action. This month an Indonesian company linked to the 2015 fires was slapped with a \$80 million fine-a record for slash and burn activities, a spokesman for the environment minister said. Indonesian President Joko Widodo in April proposed a halt on granting new land for palm oil plantations, urging producers of the edible oil to use better seeds to increase their yields. — AFP

EBOLA VIRUS LASTS IN SEMEN FOR UP TO 565 DAYS: STUDY

CHICAGO: The largest analysis yet has found Ebola virus particles present in semen as long as 565 days after recovery from an infection, highlighting the potential role of sex in sparking another outbreak, researchers reported on Tuesday. The study, published in the Lancet Global Health, involved 429 men seen between July 2015 and May 2016 who were part of the Liberian government's Men's Health Screening Program (MHSP), the first national semen testing program for Ebola virus.

Of the participants, 38 men tested positive during the study period. Within this group, 24 men, or nearly two thirds, had semen samples that tested positive for Ebola fragments a year after recovering from disease. Ebola tended to linger longer in men over age 40, the researchers said. In one case, Ebola was detected at least 565 days after a man recovered from his illness.

"Before this outbreak, scientists believed that Ebola virus could be found in semen for three months after recovery. With this study, we now know that virus may persist for a year or longer," said Dr. Moses Soka, coordinator of the Ebola Virus Disease Survivor Clinical Care at the Liberian Ministry of Health, who worked on the study. As part of Liberia's monitoring pro-

gram, male survivors aged 15 and older can enroll for monthly tests of their semen. Participants also get counseling on safe sex and condoms at each visit.

"This program provides important insights into how long Ebola remains in semen, a key component to preventing flare-ups of the disease and protecting survivors and their loved ones," Dr Thomas Frieden, director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which is collaborating with the ministry. Other partners include the World Health Organization, and the Academic Consortium Combating Ebola in Liberia.

Semen samples in the study were tested for genetic fragments known as the viral RNA, but the tests could not tell if the virus was capable of spreading disease. Sexual contact with an Ebola survivor in March 2015 resulted in the infection and eventual death of a woman from Monrovia, even after Liberia had been declared free of Ebola. Tests of the man's semen showed the presence of Ebola virus 199 days after he first became ill. The World Health Organization advises that all male Ebola survivors should be tested three months after the onset of symptoms and then monthly until they know they have no risk of passing on the virus. — Reuters

PEACEFUL SINGAPORE SUBURB BECOMES ZIKA BATTLEGROUNDS

SINGAPORE: Homemaker Sulaiha Ngatiman hunkered indoors as the scent of mosquito repellent lingered in her second-storey flat. The 30-year-old, who is seven months' pregnant with her fifth child, lives in Aljunied Crescent, a sleepy eastern suburb at the heart of Singapore's recent Zika outbreak and the scene of a war against the Aedes mosquito that carries the virus. Downstairs, fog-like smoke billowed as pest control crews armed with thermal machines fumigated drainage canals and other potential mosquito breeding spots.

"I'm very concerned because I've read that a lot of the symptoms can't be seen," Sulaiha told AFP from her living room, where mini bottles of mosquito repellent lined a table. The smell of citronella-a natural mosquito repellent-hung heavy in the air. "All a mother really wants is for your child to be healthy," added Sulaiha, who now limits her outdoor exposure. Zika, which has been detected in 58 countries including hardest-hit Brazil, causes only mild symptoms for most people, such as fever and a rash. But in pregnant women, it can cause microcephaly, a deformation in which babies are born with abnormally small brains and heads.

Insecticide and torch lights

As of Tuesday Singapore had confirmed 82 locally transmitted cases of Zika infection. The initial cases were reported at the weekend from the Aljunied area and since then, the neighborhood has been in the spotlight. Environment agency inspectors armed with cans of insecticide and torch lights, as well as pest control teams, have become a daily sight. On a visit by an AFP reporter Wednesday afternoon, the whine of thermal fumigators joined the roar of jets from a nearby military air base in puncturing the stillness.



SINGAPORE: Sulaiha Ngatiman is seen during an AFP interview at her home in the eastern suburb of Aljunied. — AFP

Local shopkeepers reported a surge in sales of mosquito repellent patches, sprays and devices. "I've sold out all my mosquito coil but people keep asking to buy patches and other things which I don't have," storekeeper Haranachia Mansoor, 30, told AFP. In spite of the increased infections, life was normal for a number of residents. "Most of us living here are old people so there are not many pregnant people anyway," said resident Chew Ah Gek, 72. "The government people come and check for mosquitoes all the time. There's no need to get worked up."

Leong Hoe Nam, an infectious diseases specialist at Singapore's Mount Elizabeth Novena Hospital, said people are not panicking because they trust the government's mosquito extermination efforts. — AFP

NOVARTIS OK FOR BIOSIMILAR VERSION OF AMGEN'S ENBREL

BASEL: US regulators on Tuesday approved the first lower-cost version of Enbrel, a blockbuster anti-inflammatory drug from Amgen that is among the top-selling drugs in the world. The Food and Drug Administration cleared the near-copy of the drug, dubbed Erelzi, developed by Swiss drug giant Novartis, which would not disclose the planned list price for the drug.

A month's supply of Enbrel costs roughly \$4,000 or more in the US, according to figures from GoodRx, a drug pricing website. Enbrel was the fourth best-selling prescription drug in the world for 2015, according to health data firm IMS Health. The FDA approved Novartis' drug for the same diseases listed on Enbrel's label, including rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis and other immune system disorders. The announcement marks the third FDA approval of a so-called biosimilar drug, the industry term for generic biotech medicines, used to indicate they are not exact copies of the original products. Already available in Europe, the drugs have the potential to generate billions in savings for insurers, doctors and patients. But savings from Enbrel could be delayed for years due to an ongoing legal dispute over the drug, according to analyst reports.

Under a court order dated Aug 11, Amgen Inc. and Sandoz, a unit of Novartis, agreed to a preliminary injunction blocking

the launch of Erelzi. Both companies refused to discuss how long that injunction will last. Morgan Stanley analyst Matthew Harrison said the agreement indicates that a trial would not begin until April 2018. Under that timeline, a near-term launch of lower-cost Enbrel "is off the table," he states in a recent note to investors. Erelzi is Novartis' second competitor to an Amgen drug. Last March Novartis won approval for a biosimilar version of Amgen's drug Neupogen - the first biosimilar approved in the US. Pfizer won approval to market a second biosimilar in April, a version of Johnson & Johnson's Remicade.

Enbrel was Amgen's top-selling drug last year with \$5.1 billion in US sales and \$5.4 billion worldwide. The injectable medicine was first approved in 1998, part of a class of multi-billion dollar drugs that reduce inflammation and help control the immune system. The class also includes Remicade and AbbVie's Humira, which is also facing potential competition from biologic versions in development. Biotech drugs are powerful, injected medicines produced in living cells that are typically much more expensive than traditional, chemical-based drugs. In 2015, six of the 10 top-selling medicines globally were biotech drugs, with more than \$56 billion in combined sales. — AP

US TO HOST WORLD'S LARGEST CONSERVATION CLIMATE MEET

MIAMI: Some 8,000 heads of state, policymakers and environmentalists convene in Hawaii this week for the world's largest gathering aimed at forging a path forward on the planet's toughest conservation problems. US President Barack Obama is expected to be among the world leaders in Honolulu as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) opens its World Conservation Congress, held every four years in a different location around the globe.

This year, the conference theme of "Planet at the Crossroads" is aimed at exposing the plight of island nations that are at risk of disappearing in the coming decades due to rising seas. It is the first major environmental meeting of global leaders since the Paris climate talks last year. The September 1-10 conference also marks the first time the IUCN World Conservation Congress has been held in the United States since the meeting was first convened in 1948.

Arguments are expected on hotly debated issues such as what to do about domestic ivory markets which lead to the killing of elephants for their tusks, and how to feed the world's growing population without exhausting its natural resources. "There should be a fair amount of fireworks," John Robinson, the head of the Wildlife Conservation Society's global conservation program told AFP.

Obama's visit-if it is not disrupted by Hurricane Madeline-comes on the heels of his move last week to expand the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National

Monument in the northwestern Hawaiian islands, making it the world's largest marine protected area. In Honolulu on Wednesday, Obama plans to address the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders and the IUCN World Conservation Congress, before departing for Midway Atoll the next day.

"The President will be discussing the role that remote islands play in the climate context, but also the importance of the intersection between con-

ervation and climate change as we face an increasingly severe threat of climate change in these parts of the world," said Brian Deese, Obama's senior advisor. Ben Rhodes, Obama's deputy national security advisor, described the event as "an important opportunity to bring together not just Pacific island leaders who have been a motivating factor around the urgency of action against climate change, but also conservation advocates from around the world." — AFP



NEVADA: This April 12, 2012 file photo shows the clarity of Lake Tahoe, Nevada. President Barack Obama plans to speak at the 20th annual environmental summit at Lake Tahoe. — AP

GREEN CLIMATE FUND NEEDS NEW IDEAS WITH LOW-CARBON

BARCELONA: The Green Climate Fund, which aims to channel billions of dollars to help poorer nations tackle global warming, is not yet backing the right kind of projects to bring about a sea change in low-carbon development, said its recently departed executive director. Hela Cheikhrouhou, who was appointed as Tunisia's minister for energy, mining and renewables in its new government on Friday, urged the \$10.3-billion fund to provide clearer guidelines on what it is seeking to finance in areas such as water, urban development, energy and transport.

"Now our rules are very broad... the net that exists is very wide, so anything goes," Cheikhrouhou told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview from Tunis. "We can't continue like that; we need to invest the money wisely to meet the mandate of the fund." The Green Climate Fund has a specific objective to promote a "paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways", and aims to use its money to achieve "transformational impact".

Since November 2015, the South Korea-based fund has approved investments of around \$424 million in 17 projects and has an "aspirational

goal" to commit \$2.5 billion this year - a goal observers say will be tough to reach. In the rush to get the first projects approved before the Paris climate talks in December last year, and to hit the 2016 goal, some proposals given the green light have been criticised as "business as usual".

They include a plan to develop solar energy in Chile and another to support World Bank climate action in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Cheikhrouhou, who left the fund after one three-year term, said the agencies eligible to request its cash "need to help us to respect our mandate, and should make a bigger effort to bring us things that are not just ready and have been lying around for a while". The fund, for its part, is working to produce technical notes to help its partners understand what kind of things it defines as "paradigm-shifting", she added.

For example, where a growing city is struggling to supply enough water to residents, simply piping in extra water could make things worse by attracting more people. Instead urban planning could be changed to spur development in regions with better water resources. Or, in a country that wants to boost the share of renewables in its energy mix, the Green Climate Fund could back efforts to change regulations or build institutions that

would attract investment into its chosen forms of clean energy on a large scale, Cheikhrouhou said.

Merely constructing a bigger wind farm or getting business involved in ongoing government efforts to reduce carbon emissions might not make the grade, she explained. "If (the fund) became all things to all people, we would have very limited impact in the greater scheme of things. So we need to find ways to signal clearly what is a project that would change the game," she said.

Paris building block

Despite this challenge, Cheikhrouhou said the fund had achieved a great deal in its first three years, and had been an important building block for the new global climate change deal sealed in Paris last year, giving developing countries "extra confidence" to sign up to that agreement. "It was one of those fast sprints where you have to jump over hurdles," she said. The main hurdles were hammering out the fund's business model, raising \$10 billion from governments, and approving the first projects in time for Paris, she added.

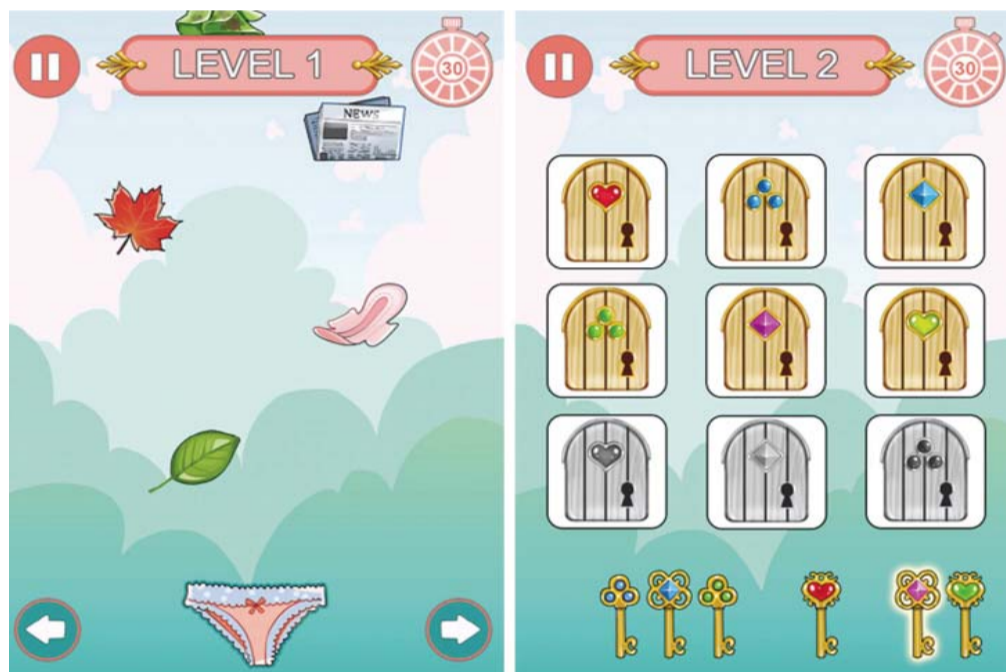
This year, she focused on boosting staff numbers at the fund's secretariat to cope with its

growing work load, and putting in place the right procedures and systems to enable the fund to run smoothly. Those efforts still need to be accelerated so that the fund has a firm foundation to expand its activities. "There has to be a lot of hard work," she said. The board plans to appoint a new executive director after interviewing candidates at its next meeting in October. Javier Manzanares, the fund's chief financial officer, is acting as interim head until the new leader takes over, which the board hopes will be by early next year.

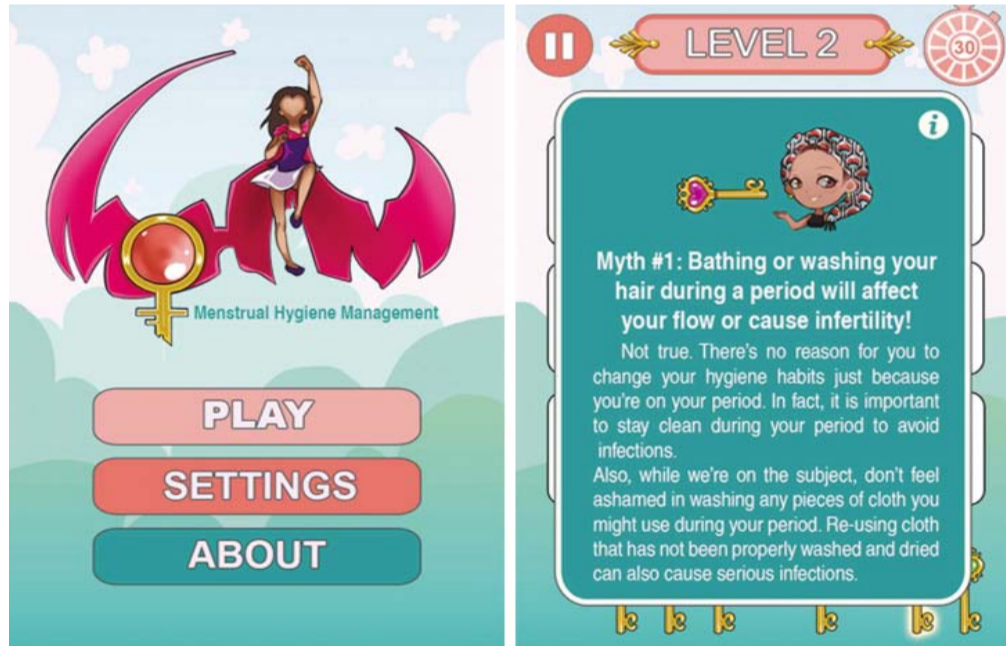
Cheikhrouhou, in her new role as Tunisia's energy minister, said she would seek to promote investment in the north African country's energy sector, with the aim of achieving "a cleaner and more efficient energy mix" over time. Renewable energy now accounts for only around 3 to 4 percent of electric power generation, she noted, even though Tunisia has significant wind and solar resources. "That is not where we want to be 10, 20 years from now," she said, adding that the country's democratic transition meant the time was ripe to start shifting that situation. Tunisia has set targets for raising the share of renewable energy in its electricity production to 14 percent in 2020 and 30 percent in 2030. — Reuters

PAKISTANI TEAM CREATES MENSTRUAL GAME APP TO BREAK GENDER TABOOS

BELIEF THAT PERIODS ARE 'EVIL' STILL PERSIST



This combo screenshot handout received from the social enterprise GRID on August 31, 2016, shows the game "MoHim" levels on their website, in Islamabad. — AFP



ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani entrepreneur has developed a mobile game app intended to break taboos surrounding menstruation in the developing world, including beliefs that periods are "evil" or make women impure. "MoHim", an acronym for Menstrual Health Management which also means "effort" in Urdu, arms players with a pair of panties which they use to catch sanitary pads while avoiding items unsuited to absorbing period flow such as leaves and newspapers.

As players complete levels they are awarded keys which unlock "myth-buster" doors that dispel deep-seated prejudices against menstruation in much of the developing world - such as the idea that women should not cook or bathe while having their periods. The app is the brainchild of Mariam Adil, a World Bank analyst in Washington, DC. She also heads a small Pakistan-based startup called GRID that aims to use games to promote social change.

'Shame'

Adil told AFP yesterday of the stigma she encountered around menstruation in Pakistan, such as "when girls skip school for a week every month out of 'shame' till they drop out from secondary school, and when women suffer from serious infections because they were told they can't bathe during their period". "Video games can target these social constructs and prompt individuals to challenge them in a fun way," she added.

Menstruation remains a taboo subject in Pakistan, with studies showing a widespread lack of education for women on menstrual hygiene. Marginalized girls in Pakistan also end up missing roughly two to four school days a month due to menstruation, according to UN-Habitat. A prototype version of MoHim was launched for iOS earlier this month, and GRID will be partnering with NGO Femme International to implement use of the app in slum communities in the Kenyan capital Nairobi. If successful, the team hopes to release it on the Android store, including in Pakistan - though Adil conceded they have faced resistance from policymakers. — AFP



In this May 27, 2016 photo made available by SpaceX, their Falcon rocket booster lands on a platform in the Atlantic Ocean after launching a satellite into orbit. The company says it can save considerable time and money by reusing the big, expensive parts. — AP

SPACEX GETS TAKER FOR 1ST FLIGHT OF RECYCLED ROCKET

CAPE CANAVERAL: SpaceX has a taker for the first flight of one of its recycled rockets. The Luxembourg-based company SES - a longtime SpaceX launch customer - said Tuesday it will send its next communications satellite up on a previously flown Falcon rocket. It will be the first true reuse of a rocket previously used for an orbital mission. The launch will take place sometime this fall from Cape Canaveral. "Thanks for the longstanding faith in SpaceX," SpaceX chief Elon Musk said via Twitter. "We very much look forward to doing this milestone flight with you."

The chief technology officer at SES, Martin Halliwell, said SpaceX's testing for the upcoming mission gives his company "full confidence." SES was the first commercial satellite operator to launch with SpaceX, back in 2013, he noted, and the satellite operator is excited to team up with SpaceX for another first. "We believe reusable rockets will open up a new era of spaceflight," Halliwell said in a news release. SpaceX said it can save considerable time and money by reusing the big, expensive

parts normally left to sink at sea. The first-stage, 15-story rocket - equipped with nine engines - is what launches everything to space. It separates 2 1/2 minutes after liftoff, and the second stage takes over to get the payload into the proper orbit. This second stage, for now anyway, is still discarded. Since December, SpaceX has recovered six boosters following liftoff, landing them upright on an ocean barge or back at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. It hopes to expand its Florida inventory this weekend, as it attempts to launch an Israeli communications satellite. SpaceX's single attempt to land a leftover booster launched from California, back in January, failed.

The first recovered booster now stands outside the company's Southern California headquarters. The one used in a space station supply run for NASA in April will be used in the fall SES flight. Another private space company, Blue Origin, has been re-flying a recovered rocket from Texas for months but these have been suborbital test flights. — AP

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MILLENNIUM HOTEL LAUNCHES EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAM FOR EID

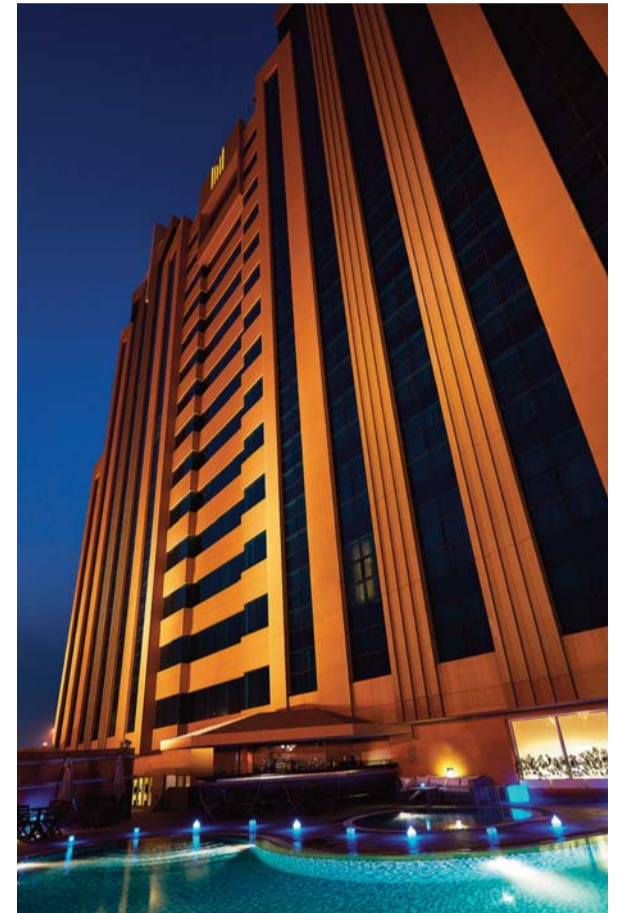


Millennium Hotel & Convention Centre Kuwait, one of the most modern and luxury hospitality venue in Kuwait, announced that it will launch a wide range of entertainment activities for its guests to celebrate Eid Al Adha. The hotel's program includes a number of top hospitality services that aim to provide comfort to all guests and to position the hotel as the ideal destination for the upcoming holiday. The hotel's program aims on drawing a smile to everyone's face by catering families' needs specially children as they will enjoy fun-filled games, face painting, gifts and balloons.

Moreover, for families wanting to spend memorable times and enjoy sumptuous meals across the hotels' outlets, LAMAR international restaurant offers a unique buffet selection with a wide range of platters from various cuisines around the world as well as exceptional delights that are in line with the overall theme of the Eid. For more privacy, LAMAR offers its guests to enjoy their meal at the restaurant's special hall which accommodates 25 people.

Individuals seeking quiet environments, are urged to experience the comfort and charming feeling of Library Café, which offers a relaxing ambience for the guests to enjoy their personal times as well as their cold and hot drinks with main dishes or light meals while reading their favorite book. Library Cafe is also offering a special sweet and drinks assortment to mark the upcoming Eid holiday including Arabian coffee, Moroccan Tea, as well as special cocktails to escape the summer heat.

Area General Manager of Millennium & Copthorne Kuwait, Dani Saleh said, "Eid is a special occasion that reflects festive celebrations and unique moments that families plan to spend together and as such, we are committed to provide the best possible services that allow our valued guests to celebrate those special moments in a unique setting which includes a joyful atmosphere, special food and family entertainment. Across, its exclusive offers, the hotel provides its services through a dedicated and qualified team that enjoys strong expertise in the hospitality sector."



IIS OBSERVES INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

India International School, Mangaf recently observed the 70th Independence Day of India with great patriotic fervor and excitement. The National flag was hoisted by the Vice Principals Saleem and Sophy John who addressed the gathering. Homage was paid for the great freedom fighters and soldiers who sacrificed their lives for making our nation's freedom possible. Patriotic songs were sung in honor of our great nation followed by the distribution of sweets.



DUBAI GEARS UP FOR 9TH 'EID IN DUBAI - EID AL ADHA' CELEBRATIONS



العيد في دبي
Eid in Dubai



The Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (DFRE), an agency of the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism), has unveiled the highlights of its annual 'Eid in Dubai' celebrations aimed at further enhancing Dubai's position as the holiday destination of choice for families and tourists from Kuwait during the joyous occasion of Eid Al Adha.

Held for ten days from 8 -17 September and featuring a diverse range of events and activities, the ninth edition of 'Eid in Dubai - Eid Al Adha' will bring together people from different communities and cultures from within and outside the emirate to showcase the true spirit of Dubai's multicultural environment under the theme, "United in Celebration".

Highlights of this year's 'Eid in Dubai - Eid Al Adha' celebrations include live concerts featuring some of the iconic Arab singers, Rabeh Saqer and

Shamma Hamdan on 13 September and Mohamed Abdo on 16 September; a performance by Pakistani singer and Sufi maestro Ustad Rahat Fateh Ali Khan; a Looney Tunes show featuring Daffy Duck and Bugs Bunny, spectacular fireworks shows and numerous events for families and children hosted by malls across Dubai. In addition to the entertainment offering, Eid shoppers can avail themselves of the opportunity to win prizes up to AED 1.5 million in the 'Shop, Spin & Win' promotion run by DFRE in collaboration with the Dubai Shopping Malls Group.

In addition to the 'Eid in Dubai' calendar, residents and visitors can also enjoy numerous other attractions that make Dubai a 'must-visit' year round destination, including the mega theme park, IMG Worlds of Adventure.

Commenting on the 'Eid in Dubai - Eid Al Adha' celebrations, Laila Mohammad Suhail, CEO of DFRE, said: "Eid in Dubai will add to the overall holiday



experience for visitors from Kuwait who will be in Dubai during this year's 'Eid Al Adha' celebrations. In each edition of "Eid in Dubai" we ensure that the celebrations reach out to the widest possible range of people, in every nook and corner of Dubai, as we want everyone to experience the joy of Eid irrespec-

tive of their cultural background. The festivities also offer a wonderful opportunity for visitors from Kuwait who are one of our most important target audiences to explore and discover Emirati customs, cuisine and culture through social, cultural and entertainment events."



FEATURES



This undated image provided by Bialetti shows an original Moka Express coffeemaker. — AP photos



This undated image provided by the Indianapolis Museum of Art shows a continental coffee service from the 1930s with a tall, sleek cylindrical pot, vertical lines decorating the top and horizontal lines at the bottom.



This undated photo provided by the Indianapolis Museum of Art shows a coffee pot designed by Aldo Rossi and is on display in the museum's contemporary design wing.



This April 19, 2016 photo shows a coffee pot on the left in a display from the contemporary design wing at the Indianapolis Museum of Art.

Flowery teapots in museums, sure, but how about a coffeepot?

It's not unusual to see teapots on display in museums, celebrated for their beauty and craftsmanship. Often they're centuries-old artifacts, with fussy floral designs or painted scenes on porcelain or china, or silver teapots with intricate engravings or metalwork. But what about coffeepots? They tend to be more utilitarian than decorative, the workhorses of our morning routines rather than the centerpieces of an afternoon ceremony. And unlike a pretty teapot that steeps and serves tea after a stovetop kettle has done the actual work of boiling the water, a coffeepot is more likely to do double duty, used for both making and serving coffee.

So it's a nice surprise - especially for those of us caught up in the current wave of coffee-mania - to find coffeepots in a museum. The contemporary design wing of the Indianapolis Museum of Art has several in its collection. One of the most striking is a 1980s three-piece steel-and-copper espresso mak-

er by Aldo Rossi called "La Conica." The museum's notes compare its sleek design to a building made of "simple geometric shapes (a sphere, a cone, and a cylinder). ... The design plays with the idea of architectural form, reducing it to its simplest elements."

Rossi's own comments about La Conica recall a youthful interest in coffeepot design: "As a child, I spent hours drawing coffee pots ... these fantastic geometric forms represented my idea of beauty. I saw in them domes, towers, minarets, and other buildings." "It's fascinating to think of how the culture of architecture can be incorporated into the design of a tiny household object," said Shelley Selim, associate curator of design and decorative arts at the Indianapolis museum.

Continental coffee service

The Rossi design was part of a series commissioned by

Alessi, a high-end Italian manufacturer. Another item on display at IMA is a continental coffee service from the 1930s with a tall, sleek cylindrical pot, with vertical lines decorating the top and horizontal lines at the bottom. Anyone who owns or has seen an ordinary, old-school stovetop espresso maker will be delighted to know that the iconic Bialetti Moka coffee maker, originally designed in the 1930s, is in the permanent collections of several museums, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The Moka, as coffee-lovers know, is a marvel of engineering as well as design: It makes coffee by forcing boiling water up from the bottom chamber through the grounds basket into a pot with a pouring spout. The simple aluminum machine with eight sides has three screw-together pieces and a hinged cover with black plastic handle and top knob.

The Indianapolis Museum of Art has a slightly more ele-

gant, less angular version of an espresso maker designed for Alessi by Alessandro Mendini in 2011. Selim says that contemporary coffeemakers are emblems of their time in the same way that a 17th century silver teapot represents the era of global sea trade that put tea and coffee within everyday reach of European consumers.

"What's really interesting about these designed objects is how they embody material cultural trends from the time they were made," said Selim. "Objects that are contemporary now will have a totally different meaning in a museum ... as part of a long historical thread as we move into the future." — AP



This file photo shows an advertising banner in front of the heritage-protected Prora Complex that is being turned into luxury apartments in Prora, near Binz, north-eastern Germany. — AFP photos



An aerial view of the recently created luxury apartments at the site of the heritage-protected Prora Complex in Prora.



A construction site of luxury apartments as part of transformation of the heritage-protected Prora Complex.



Katja Lucke, chief historian of the heritage-protected Prora Complex.



A construction site of luxury apartments as part of transformation of the heritage-protected Prora Complex.

Nazi beach resort ruin transforms into luxury playground

One of the biggest relics left behind by the Nazis is undergoing a radical transformation on a German island, harnessing a property boom to become a luxury tourist destination. Developers are now bringing to life the hulking grey ruin at Prora where Adolf Hitler failed to realize his dream of a giant beachfront indoctrination camp. The planned resort has once again entangled economic interests with historical memory in Germany, where the past looms large at evocative sites across the country and a generation of survivors is dying off. The original complex was intended for up to 20,000 Germans as part of the Third Reich's so-called Strength Through Joy propaganda program, whose other

lasting achievement was the Volkswagen Beetle "people's car". Recreation and hearty exercise would have been coupled with on-site ideological teaching to build loyalty to the Nazis and strong racial identity among the "Aryan" working class. Building started in 1936 but halted with the onset of World War II in 1939, leaving a concrete skeleton known as the Colossus of Prora stretching 4.5 kilometers (2.8 miles) down one of Germany's most stunning beaches. Under East Germany's communist state, the camp served as military barracks so secretive that they did not appear on travel maps.

Eerie relic

"This is a site that quintessentially stands for both the Nazi and the communist eras, where you can gain a more complete picture of how both systems worked," the director of one of two Prora museums, Susanna Misgajski, said. "Military conscripts, prisoners of war, forced laborers, refugees—they were all in Prora at various points." Since the regime's collapse in 1989, the complex continued to crumble. After years of false starts, four of the eight original uniform six-storey blocks are being developed. A fifth went to the cash-strapped regional government, which allowed a youth hostel to open in 2011 and now aims to sell it off entirely. Blocks six and seven belong to a shadowy company from Liechtenstein. The Soviets blew up block eight.

The Prora Solitaire complex opened this summer complete with a cream-coloured facade, glass-fronted balconies, swish apartments and an on-site spa. The new look is targeted at moneyed urbanites, with a ramshackle art gallery and the down-at-the-heel "Miami" nightclub now gradually giving way to a hipster burger joint and a bakery serving latte macchiato.

"On the one hand there's an interest in maintaining it as a memorial," said sales representative Werner Jung of Irisgerd real estate, which is building the neighbouring 270-flat Neues Prora (New Prora).

"And on the other there are the interests of the investors who have put a lot of money into this and want to see something for it. I think it's a pretty good compromise." The company bought its block for 2.75 million euros (\$3.1 million) in 2012 and put about 88 million euros into the renovation. Ninety-five percent of the apartments have been sold, thanks to tax breaks afforded to investors in listed buildings, a healthy economy and record low interest rates.

"This is a place where 20,000 people were to be groomed to work and wage war," she said. Misgajski added that witness accounts indicate that between 500 and 600 forced laborers worked on the complex under the Nazis. The two museums hope to merge in a permanent space to ensure that Prora's history is not whitewashed or forgotten. But the plan will depend in part on the outcome of an election on September 4 in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania state, Chancellor Angela Merkel's home district, as to whether they can count on government support. The right-wing populist Alternative for Germany (AfD) is polling at around 20 percent with an anti-migrant platform within strik-



An aerial view of the recently created luxury apartments.

Prices range between 350,000 euros for a 100-square-metre (1,000 square foot) ground-floor flat and 650,000 euros for a penthouse with a spectacular sea view. "It is basically the last new complex in Germany where you have direct access to such a gorgeous beach," Jung said.

Enduring awe

But opinions are divided about the dramatic changes, which are expected to be completed by 2022. "We have enough memorials in Germany," said Karsten Rarrasch, 50, a postman from nearby Stralsund who was building a sandcastle with his grandson. "So many years have passed, it's time to make something beautiful out of Prora." However Katja Lucke, chief historian at another private museum on site, said that while developers have rescued the building from disintegration, they should do more to own up to its murky origins.

ing distance of Merkel's conservatives. "Of course it isn't a Nazi party but the AfD has grown strong because the refugee problem has scared people, particularly those without much contact with foreigners," Misgajski said, noting that Prora's youth hostel was used to house asylum seekers last winter.

She said the resurgence of extremism was yet another reason why Prora needed to be preserved to bear witness. The complex belongs to a small group of mammoth Nazi relics including the Nuremberg party rallying grounds and Berlin's grandiose semi-circular Tempelhof airport terminal. Lucke noted that the Nazis' architectural ambition was intended to inspire awe, an effect that endures to this day and demands sensitivity of developers. "Of course people see this gigantic complex and are fascinated by it. But you cannot afford to make it banal. You have to put it in context." — AFP



(Third left) US actress Emma Stone poses with US director Damien Chazelle (second left) during the photocall of the movie 'La La Land' presented in competition at the 73rd Venice Film Festival, yesterday at Venice Lido. — AFP



The jury of the 73rd Venice Film Festival (from left) Italian writer Giancarlo De Cataldo, French actress Chiara Mastroianni, US artist Laurie Anderson, Venezuela's director Lorenzo Vigas, German actress Nina Hoss, director and president of the jury Sam Mendes, Chinese actress Zhao Wei, British actress Gemma Arterton and US director Joshua Oppenheimer, pose with Venezia International Film Festival director Alberto Barbera (right) during a photocall, yesterday at Venice Lido.

'La La Land' musical masterpiece dazzles Venice film fest

A bewitching musical starring Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone whipped up a frenzy on the opening day of the Venice film festival yesterday as it kicked off the race for the Golden Lion. Damien Chazelle's "La La Land", a tribute to the Golden Age of American musicals, reunites the stars, who appeared together in the 2011 romcom "Crazy, Stupid, Love" but with oodles of singing this time. The world's top film critics, gathered on the glamorous Lido di Venezia for the 10-day fest, cheered loudly as Chazelle and Stone met the press following the screening of the joyful, quirky film which won hearts from the opening shot.

This world premiere of the tale of a struggling jazz pianist and his actress girlfriend in Los Angeles is the first of 20 films in competition at the 73rd edition of the world's oldest film festival. "Now more than ever we need hope and romance on the big screen," said the American director, 31, a former jazz musician whose second feature film "Whiplash" (2014) received five Academy Award nominations. "There's something about musicals, they are movies as a dreamland, expressing a world in which you break into song, in which you can violate the rules of reality," he said.

'Brand new start'
The film pays homage to classic musicals, with nods to scenes from "Singing in the Rain" (1952) and "Grease" (1978) as well as old-timers "Bringing Up Baby" (1938) and "Top Hat" (1935). Stone plays Mia, a wide-eyed romantic who goes from audition to failed audition in her quest to make it big, while Gosling is Sebastian, a jazz pianist with a mission to save the medium, but who struggles to pay his bills. The pair meet in one of LA's famous traffic jams and then at a bawdy celebrity party-before wooing each other in tap- and ballroom-dancing sequences reminiscent of American icons Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. "We talked a lot about how to justify doing a musical today. We went back to the old traditions and tried to make it as simple as that.

No-one breaks into song unless it's emotionally justified," Chazelle said. In an auspicious start for the Golden Lion bid, the festival's artistic director Alberto Barbera described "La La Land" as a movie "that does not merely reinvent the musical genre, it gives it a brand new start". The picture bursts with enthusiasm and happiness from the opening scene: a big dance number on a freeway with men and women dressed in

sun-kissed yellows and rich reds and blues dancing on their cars. Chazelle said he had brought the love story into the modern day by setting it in LA, a metropolis he has lived in for almost a decade and which called "a city of loneliness when you first live there, not a city that offers itself up".

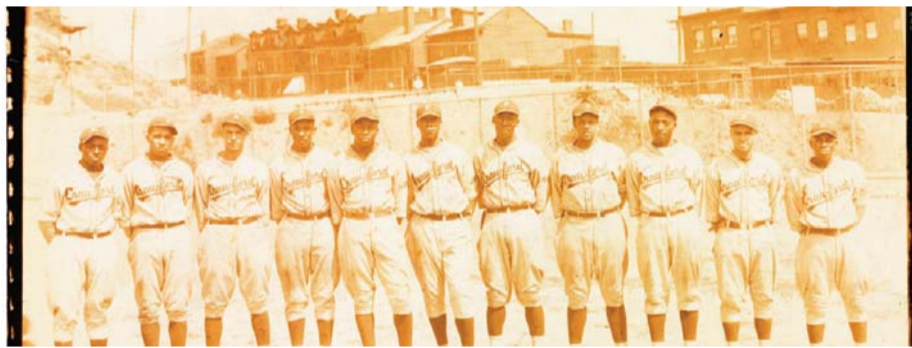
'Absolutely loved it'
"The idea was to build from all the cliches we make fun of; the traffic, the terrible parties, the celebrity culture, the shallowness. But then see what was beautiful beneath the surface, and reconcile the two," he said. "It had to feel like a dream, but one that took place in a real place," he added, explaining that to get the light right, filming only took place between 6pm and 7pm each day, "much to the frustration of the producers".

Stone said she "absolutely loved" the experience. "I went to see Les Miserables when I was eight. Bursting into song has always been a dream of mine," she said. Although the actress from "The Amazing Spider-Man" and "Birdman" recognized her own early experiences in some of Mia's disastrous auditions, she said "I don't feel like I was ever quite as brave as she is". Despite the rave reception, it is early days to cry victory: the

musical will be competing with an array of dystopian love stories, period dramas, adventure epics, revised Westerns and sci-fi thrillers at the festival.

The beachside extravaganza has restored its reputation as an awards-season platform by premiering the last two Best Picture Oscars: "Spotlight" (2015) and "Birdman" (2014), in a challenge to the mammoth Toronto film festival. All eyes will be on the jury, led by British film director Sam Mendes, for hints about the next Academy Awards. Mendes told journalists Wednesday he had no pre-conceived ideas but would "know excellence when I see it".

"One of the most difficult things is to cut yourself off from the white noise on social media, commentaries, and meet a movie with as little knowledge as possible." The man behind "American Beauty" (1999) and "Road to Perdition" (2002) said directing was a lonely experience. "You're at the top of the pyramid, but you don't speak with many about what you love. I'm looking forward to talking to others, I'm here to learn, I'm relishing the opportunity to be a student again." — AFP



This 1928 photo provided by Christie's from their upcoming baseball memorabilia auction shows legendary Negro Leagues slugger Josh Gibson, fifth from the left, when he was a 16-year-old player with the Pittsburgh Crawfords semi-pro baseball team. — AP photos



This undated photo shows legendary Negro Leagues slugger Josh Gibson.



This undated photo shows a Hillerich & Bradsby bat with the signature name upon the barrel of Jackie Robinson, who played for the Brooklyn Dodgers from 1947-1956, coinciding with the labeling period of the offered bat.



This undated photo shows 'Shoelless' Joe Jackson's game bat.

Trove of baseball memorabilia, photographs to be auctioned

Nearly 500 baseball artifacts including a "Shoelless" Joe Jackson game bat and material from the Negro Leagues will be auctioned off by Christie's this fall in New York. The items come from the National Pastime Museum, an online museum based on a private collection of baseball artifacts, photographs and memorabilia. Shoelless Joe's "Black Betsy" bat is one of only two known to survive from his career, and the only one with his full signature in script, according to Christie's. It is signed on the barrel and has the scars of game use, including ball and cleat marks and a handle crack. Christie's experts think it might sell for \$500,000 to \$700,000.

Jackson was accused with other Chicago White Sox teammates of accepting payments for throwing the 1919 World Series. The Major League great was acquitted but

banned from the sport. "He's a legendary figure and to have an actual object that he touched and used in a game, it's a very special piece," said Simeon Lipman, Christie's pop culture specialist. The auction record for a game-used baseball bat is a 1923 Babe Ruth bat that sold for \$1.2 million in 2004.

The sale also has a game bat used by Negro Leagues slugger Josh Gibson when he played for the Pittsburgh Crawfords from 1932 to 1936 and a Jackie Robinson bat that could sell for \$300,000 to \$400,000. Robinson, who played for the Brooklyn Dodgers from 1947 to 1956, gave the bat to a collector and signed it for him at a 1955 game at Philadelphia's Connie Mack Stadium. Steve Costello, a baseball historian and former executive vice president of Steiner Sports collectibles, said "collecting of vintage items

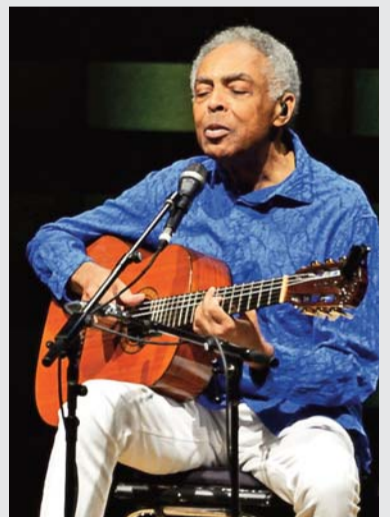
is at an all-time high," because there's a scarcity of items and an increase in the number of collectors.

The Christie's sale also includes other items and photography related to the Negro Leagues, including a 1907 book that chronicles the history of black baseball from 1885 through 1907. The "History of Colored Base Ball" was written by Sol White, captain of the Philadelphia Giants and future Hall of Famer. The auction house thinks it might sell for between \$15,000 and \$20,000. Christie's says the total value of the auction items could top \$5 million. The sale is scheduled for Oct 19 and 20. The museum selling the items did not return an email request for comment. — AP

Brazilian musician Gil hospitalized again

Brazilian music star Gilberto Gil was hospitalized Tuesday in Sao Paulo to be treated for a kidney problem, a medical source said. It was the latest in a series of hospital visits this year for the 74-year-old singer and former culture minister. A source at the Syrian Lebanese Hospital told AFP that Gil was admitted there on Tuesday.

Brazilian media citing sources close to Gil said he was in hospital for tests and ongoing treatment. Three days ago, he cancelled a concert in Rio de Janeiro due to his illness. His representatives said then that he would "soon be back on stage." Gil was discharged from hospital in July in time to perform at the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in Rio on August 5. Gil is one of the seminal figures of Brazilian music. He fused traditional samba with jazz and rock to help create the unique tropicália sound during the 1960s. He served as Brazil's culture minister from 2003 to 2008. — AFP



Gilberto Gil



The picture shows a general view of Tsukiji market in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP photos

Tokyo puts Tsukiji fish market move on ice

Plans to move Tokyo's Tsukiji fish market—the world's largest—were put on ice yesterday over fears about toxic contamination at the new facility, as the cost of the move soars. The megacity's new governor, Yuriko Koike, said she would postpone the move set for November until at least early next year, as she awaits final groundwater testing results at the new site, a former gas plant. Plans to uproot the more than 80-year-old market, a popular tourist attraction, have been in the works for years, with advocates citing the need for upgraded technology.

But Koike, a former TV anchorwoman elected last month as the Japanese capital's first female governor, had pledged to reconsider the plan. "Needless to say, it is a market that handles fresh food," Koike told a press conference as she announced the delay. "The Tokyo metropolitan

government, which chiefly runs the market, is responsible for telling the world: 'It's safe.'" Critics of the move cite contaminated soil found at the former gas production site. The local government paid a whopping 86 billion yen (\$833 million) in cleanup



Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike answers questions during a press conference in Tokyo yesterday.

costs but Koike said she wants to wait for the results of water testing in January.

Koike would not say if she would consider scrapping the relocation altogether if the test results are bad. "I want to wait for the examinations being done by the project team," she said. Koike also questioned the 588 billion yen in relocation costs, 36 percent higher than earlier estimates. These costs include relocating the market to a less-central location several kilometers away and building a modern facility about 40 percent larger with state-of-the-art refrigeration.

Japanese media have reported that postponing Tsukiji's move would cost about seven million yen a day, and could delay construction of a highway connecting the current site with an athletes' village being built for the city's 2020 Olympics. — AFP

SINGER CHRIS BROWN RELEASED FROM JAIL ON \$250,000 BAIL



Chris Brown

Los Angeles police have released singer Chris Brown from custody after arresting him on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon, jail records show. He was arrested on Tuesday following an hours-long standoff after a woman alleged he pointed a gun at her, and freed on \$250,000 bail at 11:19 pm local time according to Los Angeles County jail records. Prosecutors have not formally charged him. "Chris is out and well," Brown's attorney Mark Geragos tweeted yesterday. "The allegations against him are demonstrably false," he added.

The Los Angeles Police Department earlier said that officers from the homicide and robbery division, which deals with celebrity cases, headed to Brown's palatial home after the woman called for help at 3:11 am.

Brown, 27, took to social media to deny any wrongdoing, daring police to get a search warrant to enter his home in a series of videos posted on Instagram. After the lengthy standoff, police by early afternoon had obtained a search warrant and entered the singer's home. Baylee Curran, who was crowned Miss California

Regional in a beauty pageant this year, identified herself as the caller as she also took to Instagram. She also spoke to the Los Angeles Times, saying she and a friend went into a hot tub at Brown's house and that the singer became angry when she admired the jewelry of a member of his entourage.

She said she fled in fear, then refused to sign a nondisclosure agreement before she escaped from Brown's house. The gossip website TMZ reported that Brown had thrown a duffel bag out of a window and that police had recovered

gun as well as drugs. Police have not confirmed the report. The R&B singer, who topped the US singles chart with "Run It!" and "Kiss Kiss," has had years of run-ins with the law. Most notoriously, he was convicted of beating then-girlfriend Rihanna before the 2009 Grammy Awards, forcing the pop singer to miss the music industry's annual gala. He is set to be arraigned in court on September 20. — AFP

Gomez takes a break from music due to Lupus side effects

After travelling the world for her Revival tour, Selena Gomez is taking a break from music to focus on her health. A year after she revealed her Lupus diagnosis, Gomez on Tuesday released a statement that she's taking some time off due to complications of the autoimmune disease. She cites "anxiety, panic attacks and depression" as side effects. "As many of you know, around a year ago I revealed that I have lupus, an illness that can affect people in different ways," she said in a statement to People. "I've discovered that anxiety, panic attacks and depression can be side effects of lupus, which can present their own challenges."

Related Selena Gomez Does 'Carpool Karaoke' With James Corden "I want to be proactive and focus on maintaining my health and happiness and have decided that the best way forward is to take some time off," the statement goes on. "Thank you to all my fans for your sup-

port. You know how special you are to me, but I need to face this head on to ensure I am doing everything possible to be my best. I know I am not alone in sharing this, I hope others will be encouraged to address their own issues."

In a 2015 interview with Billboard, Gomez revealed that she had undergone chemotherapy for Lupus in 2013, during a break in her Stars Dance tour. She cancelled the Asian and Australian legs of the tour in late 2013 and early 2014. During the break, rumors emerged of substance abuse. "I wanted so badly to say, 'you guys have no idea. I'm in chemotherapy. You're a-holes,'" she said in 2015. "I locked myself away until I was confident and comfortable again." A source told People that Gomez's current break is "absolutely not related to alcohol or substance abuse," and that she "hadn't felt like herself" in the past couple of months. — Reuters



In this April 7, 2016, file photo, Selena Gomez arrives at WE Day California at the Forum in Inglewood, Calif. — AP



Chris Perez, from left, Suzette Quintanilla and AB Quintanilla attend the unveiling of a wax figure of Selena Quintanilla at Madame Tussauds Hollywood on Tuesday in Los Angeles. — AP

Wax figure of late Selena Quintanilla unveiled

Madame Tussauds Hollywood unveiled its latest wax figure double on Tuesday - a statue of late pop star Selena Quintanilla. Dozens of fans watched the unveiling of the life-size figure alongside the singer's relatives, which marked the 21st anniversary of "Dreaming Of You", Selena's

final studio album. The Mexican-American singer died aged 23 after she was shot and killed by the president of her fan club, Yolanda Saldívar, at a Texas motel on March 31, 1995. — Reuters

Frankenstein 2.0: Hollywood's obsession with 'playing God'

Ridley Scott's son Luke steps out of his father's shadow this week with his directorial debut "Morgan," a modern take on the "mad scientist" trope that has preoccupied Hollywood for more than a century. Ever since inventor Thomas Edison's company made the first Frankenstein motion picture in 1910, filmmakers have been telling cautionary tales about the folly of mankind "playing God" to create life. Setting aside more than 70 movies featuring Mary Shelley's monster himself, numerous other films have tackled the ethics of bio-engineering, from "Metropolis" in 1927 to last year's "Jurassic World."

"I think the appeal of 'Man playing God'-themed films endures largely because of human nature," Shawn Robbins, a senior analyst at movie data website Boxoffice.com, told AFP. "Cinema, and fiction at large, are escapist art forms, but characters believing they can achieve the impossible through the ultimate power of creation can inspire thought-provoking stories that stick with you after leaving the theater."

Modern retellings of the Frankenstein story-known in academic circles as "synthetic biology" (SB) movies-are big business. Researchers in Vienna looked at 48 SB movies from 1920 to 2010 for a study entitled "Frankenstein 2.0: Identifying and characterizing synthetic biology engineers in science fiction films." They counted a combined inflation-adjusted worldwide box office of around \$14 billion for the films.

Paranoia

The genre arguably had its golden age in the 1990s with such films as "Species," "The Island of Dr Moreau" and "Alien Resurrection" reflecting American fears about cloning. "Jurassic Park" broke opening weekend records from Mexico to Britain and markets across the Far East, going on to take \$914 million worldwide, with Steven Spielberg reportedly pocketing more than \$250 million personally. "Since the 1990s, a number of pioneering research outcomes such as the cloning of a sheep in 1996 and the completion of the Human Genome Project in 1999 have been generating an increase in public interest in bio-technologies in general," the Vienna study said.

"Morgan"-the latest iteration of Shelley's "modern Prometheus" myth-hits theaters on Friday with a stellar cast fronted by Kate Mara, best known as reporter Zoe Barnes in the Netflix political drama "House of Cards." She plays a corporate troubleshooter sent to a top-secret location to investigate a violent incident involving "Morgan," a bioengineered being with synthetic DNA. Director Luke Scott, whose highest profile work so far has been as a second unit director on his father's films "The Martian" (2015) and "Exodus: Gods and Kings" (2014), says he was intrigued by the big themes raised in Seth Owen's script. He knew he had his "Frankenstein's monster" when he stumbled across 20-year-old Argentine-British actress Anya Taylor-Joy, whose performance in her debut feature "The Witch" earlier this year dazzled critics.

'Familiar tale'

"I got a preview copy and I saw 'The Witch' and I was blown away by that movie anyway," Scott told AFP. "But then there's this kid in it called Anya Taylor-Joy and I was like 'she's amazing.'" Setting out as an intriguing morality tale, "Morgan" kicks into high-octane action as the bodies pile up and Mara and Taylor-Joy lock horns in a series of increasingly tense and violent set-pieces. "We laughed a lot, just out of relief of getting through certain takes, which are really brutal and challenging, mentally and physically," Mara said.

The strong support cast includes Toby Jones ("Harry Potter," "Frost/Nixon," "The Hunger Games"), Jennifer Jason Leigh ("The Hateful Eight," "Single White Female") and a delicious cameo by the prolific Paul Giamatti ("12 Years A Slave," "Straight Outta Compton"). Big names and an enduring theme don't always translate into commercial success, however, and some industry insiders have been pessimistic about the film's chances of finding an audience.

"Morgan" will very under-perform at the box office," one told AFP. Early reviews have been mixed, with critics agreeing that what starts out as a smart, if derivative, thriller begins to lose its edge as suspense gives way to generic action. "This is a familiar tale: man creates monster, monster runs amuck, man regrets playing God," the online news portal The Verge concluded. "It's just never remotely clear what Scott and Owen found so compelling about this story that they wanted to tell it again, without meaningful variations, and in the immediate wake of better, smarter, more thrilling versions." — AFP



A priest blesses the statue depicting Mexican songwriter and singer Juan Gabriel.



Mourners gather around a statue depicting Mexican songwriter and singer Juan Gabriel during a mass in Mexico City's Garibaldi plaza, Tuesday. — AP/AFP photos

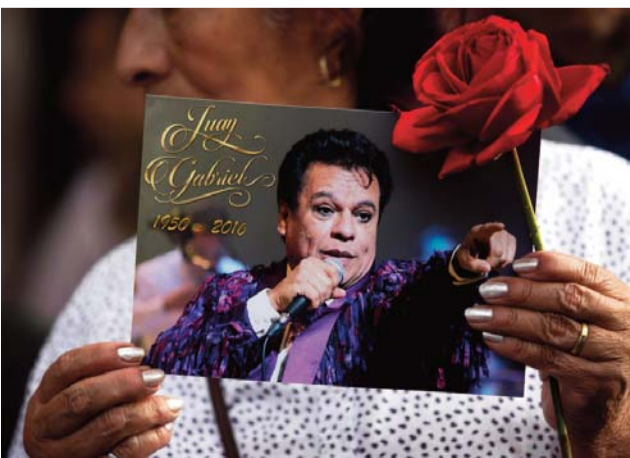
Mexico to pay tribute to singer Juan Gabriel

Mexico will hold a tribute to the legendary singer and composer Juan Gabriel in the capital city next week, officials said on Tuesday. The singer known as the "Divo of Juarez," who touched millions with wrenching ballads of love and loneliness, died of a heart attack Sunday at his home in Santa Monica, California during a break in his latest tour. He was 66.

"Tribute to Juan Gabriel will be held next Monday in Fine Arts," the culture minister Rafael Tovar y de Teresa tweeted, referring to the Palace of Fine Arts, Mexico City's premier cultural center. It's not clear whether President Enrique Peña Nieto will attend. He is set to travel to China Friday to participate in a G20 summit from Sunday to Monday. Gabriel's family

issued a statement saying a memorial service would be held over the weekend in his home city Ciudad Juarez in northern Mexico followed by "a public celebration of the life of our father and his musical career."

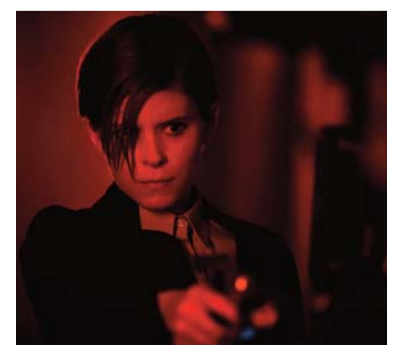
The singer's remains were cremated in the United States and will arrive over the weekend in Ciudad Juarez, officials said. An old-school idol some liken to Mexico's Elvis Presley, Gabriel wrote hit songs, sold tens of millions of records, received six Grammy nominations, and had a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in a barrier-busting career that won him admirers around the world. His hits included "No Tengo Dinero" ("I Have No Money"), "Hasta Que Te Conoci" ("Until I Met You") and "Amor Eterno" (Eternal Love). — AFP



A woman holds a picture of Mexican songwriter and singer Juan Gabriel.



A woman holds a poster of Mexican songwriter and singer Juan Gabriel.



This image released by Twentieth Century Fox shows Kate Mara in a scene from "Morgan." — AP



PERSIAN CARPETS' WEAVING.. AN ANCIENT ART, CRAFT

Weaving carpets is an old art and craft which dates back to the dawn of human civilization. Persian carpets, known worldwide for their value, beauty, and durability, are one of the most prestigious items produced by Iran. Carpets are an essential part of any Iranian household and some pieces are so expensive that people would usually present them as valuable gifts during weddings and other joyous occasions. — KUNA

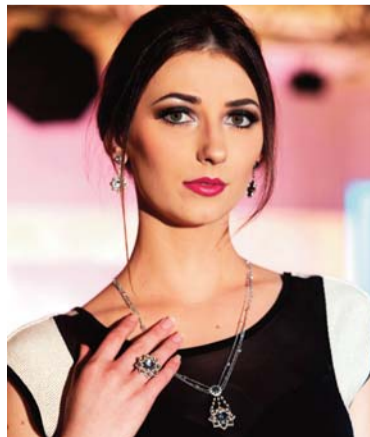


Photos shows Persian carpets in Iran.

Omani Women's Fashion Trends event



Models display dresses created by Brazilian designer Lucas Anderi during the Omani Women's Fashion Trends event, in the Omani capital Muscat, yesterday. — AFP photos



Models display jewelry designed by Oman's Deema brand.

Models display dresses created by Omani designer Sahar Al-Aufi.

FEATURES

Tips and tricks to get thicker eyebrows

We all look back at our photos and realize how horrible our eyebrows were, and how we ever thought over plucking to that point was ever okay or even considered as cute. There comes a point where you've done so

much damage that your hair won't grow back out as it used to and the shape you used to hate is now nearly impossible to achieve again. The thing is, thicker and fuller eyebrows will always be a classic, and myself, I'm as guilty as most of the girls for over plucking my eyebrows! It took me years to have them grow back, and I've tried so many ways to have all that hair back!

I always look up for ways to help me grow back my eyebrows and even my own hair and I've come to realize that there's no other way than to use natural ingredients and oils for your body. Here are a few tips and tricks on how to do so!

The most common and effective way is to shave your eyebrows ONLY in the areas that you feel that you want your hair to grow thicker, and if you're worried that you'll have bad looking brows, you can always fix them up using make up.

Castor Oil

Castor oil is one of the most effective remedies to boost the growth of your eyebrows. It contains protein, vitamins, fatty acids and antioxidants that nourish the hair follicles and help with hair growth. Plus, it is helpful in resisting any microorganisms that hamper eyebrow hair growth.

Soak a cotton ball with castor oil, and apply it on to your eyebrows and massage it on the area for a couple of minutes. For the best result keep it overnight and repeat daily for a month.

Coconut Oil

For thicker and fuller brows use organic coconut oil for its Vitamin E and iron. It'll help you achieve that full brow look. Apply a few drops to your eyebrows and massage it in every night and keep overnight. Repeat daily for a month or two depending on how full you'd like to go.

Onion Juice

If you're willing to go this extreme and don't mind getting your stink on, then onion juice will be your new best friend!

Extract the juice from one small onion and apply/massage it on your eyebrows till it dries up. Do this daily for a few weeks till you notice a difference as it won't be harmful, unless it gets into your eyes!

Egg Yolk

Your eyebrow hair is made out of Keratin protein and eggs are the perfect source for protein. All you have to do is separate the yolk from the

white part and beat the yolk till you get a thick creamy consistency. Apply it on your brows for about 15-20 minutes then wash off using cold water. Repeat this once or twice a week.

Always make sure you stop using any ingredient if the area turns red or starts to become irritated.

Keep in mind that every time you pluck/shave/thread your eyebrows your most likely not going to have your hair grow back the same way it used to be. The full eyebrow look has always been a classic and I think it will continue to be a classic as having thinner brows with age can make you look even older, and if you had fuller brows it's known to make you look younger. Other than that, in the fashion industry having strategically fuller brows are always a plus for any model, even in the makeup world! Play it safe and have your brows as natural as you can, unless you naturally don't have thick or full eyebrows, then these tips and tricks are perfect for you!



A plus-size challenge to S Korea's beauty 'norm'

In a country with beauty ideals that pre-makeover Barbie would struggle to meet, South Korean plus-size model Vivian Geeyang Kim is facing down online trolls in her defiant campaign to persuade curvy women they have nothing to be ashamed of. Kim has modeled for US firms, but at 165 centimeters (5.4 ft) tall and weighing 70 kilograms, she was described as "too skinny" for some full-figure fashion show work in America. But in her looks-obsessed homeland, she is constantly mocked and ridiculed on social networks as "flat-out fat" or "disgusting."

"In South Korea, the ideal weight for women is 50 kilograms, and many women who weigh more than that think they are fat," the 30-year-old said. "That is a ridiculous, impossible standard that cripples many South Korean women's self-esteem. And that has to change," she told AFP after a recent photo shoot. Kim, who is a US size 10, runs an online clothing shop and publishes a fashion magazine specifically for plus-size women in South Korea—a first in a country where beauty is defined by rail-thin teenage K-pop stars and TV actresses whose diets are strictly controlled by their management.

Radical surgery

The pressure to conform is such that many turn to the country's \$4.6-billion plastic surgery industry which offers everything from a nose-job to radical double-jaw surgery. In a 2013 study by Samyook University in Seoul that surveyed 154 female university students in the normal weight range—a body mass index between 18-23 — almost 95 percent said they were unhappy with their bodies. More than 60 percent felt they needed to lose weight. The sort of weight-loss advert that was banned earlier this year in Britain for its image of a bikini-clad woman and the slogan "Are You Beach Body Ready?" would barely raise an eyebrow in South Korea.

Similar products are promoted on posters pasted on subway walls and women's toilet stalls, showing models mocking "lazy girls" or asking questions like: "How long are you going to roll around like that?" It is precisely this type of widespread, casual body-shaming that Kim is seeking to tackle head-on.

"People hate it when a 'fat girl' like me parades her body without looking ashamed ... they say I should not be seen in public or on the media," Kim said.

Her public stance has triggered an online backlash that has included death threats and vicious abuse that, in some cases, she has responded to with lawsuits. "Despite all this, I love my job," she said. "I wanted to send this message to girls like me out there that they are not alone and they are beautiful no matter what."

No opportunity

After a failed bid to compete in a local modeling TV reality show, she left for the United States in 2010, where she eventually worked a number of full-figured shows. On her return, she searched for similar opportunities in the South Korean fashion scene only to realize that there were none.

According to Lee Chung Chung, a prominent Seoul fashion designer, using models of varying

sizes in magazines or fashion catalogues is still a foreign concept in South Korea. "The beauty ideal among many of our customers is being thin ... and we have to cater to that demand to sustain sales," Lee said. Gong Ji-Woo, head of Seoul-based New Face Model agency, said demand for plus-size models was "non-existent"—with the exception of some TV shopping channels where they are shown eating food products or trying exercise machines. "I do feel the need for more development in plus-size model runways and programs," Gong said. "But in order for this to happen, Korean clothing companies and the fashion industry must change to accept them... rather than for a one time event or our amusement," he added.

Going it alone

Shut out of the mainstream, Kim set up—and models for—her own quarterly magazine which offers fashion and styling tips for plus-size women and well as advice on how to deal with bullying. "I hear heartbreaking stories from so-called 'fat girls' all the time—being constantly abused and mocked by their own families, bosses, friends and strangers on the street or on the Internet," she said. "Honestly, some of them are not even that fat. But here, the standard of 'thin' is just way too cutthroat and only women as slim as K-pop band members can satisfy that norm," she added. Among her many fans and clients is Baek Soo-Jung, 31, who said Kim had created a sorely-needed safe refuge.

Also a US size 10, Baek said she had been mocked by her own mother, who once refused to take the same bus with her because of the shame of being called "mom" in public by a chubby daughter. Baek said Kim's store was the first to produce pretty, well-fitting clothes, instead of the "dull, baggy, ill-fitting sacks local brands call plus-size clothes." "Regardless of my size, I am a human and a woman who wants to feel pretty and to love myself...and Kim is the person who started this conversation in this country," the 31-year-old said. "She took a big, brave step for all women like me." — AFP



South Korean plus-size model Vivian Geeyang Kim posing for a photo shoot in order to update her online clothing shop at a studio in Seoul.



A peek inside the world of color forecasting

Earlier this year, in a Manhattan conference room littered with half-eaten lunches, water bottles, laptops and easels, a group of color forecasters from PPG Brands was wrapping up a week of work. They came up with recommendations that will influence the colors and finishes we're likely to see in 2017 on a wide variety of products, including appliances, cars, phones, airplanes, paints, beverage cans, even holiday ornaments. They also picked a color of the year.

PPG Brands - which makes paint, coatings and materials for industries ranging from architecture and aerospace to automotive and consumer products - is just one of many companies that produce color forecasts. At this Manhattan meeting,

the forecasters were deep-diving into color decks, field research reports, magazines, books and each other's heads. The easels were covered with inspiration swatches, photos and descriptive phrases. One "mood board" listed the words "timeless," "memories," "diamond patterns" and "ticking stripes" under the header "Nostalgia."

Small groups sprawled on the carpet with card-filled recipe boxes. They brainstormed, laying out arrays of coordinating colors that looked like mosaics, or game boards. Cards were edited in and out, until the palettes came together and there was a universal nod of satisfaction. "We start really loose and abstract, then we take those organic concepts and make them

more concrete," said Allison Heape, a color team leader from Long Beach, California. At the end of the session, the group prepared an extensive file of themes, colors and finishes from which designers and manufacturers can draw.

Dee Schlotter, senior color marketing manager for PPG's paint brands, in Pittsburgh, oversaw the forecast session. "We draw inspiration from global influences," she said. "The team considers what's happening in society, fashion, nature and elsewhere, and delves into things that resonate with consumers." "For example, did a significant event take place this year, and are there colors that connect with it that capture the feelings it may have created?"

For instance, she said, "After 9/11, soft pink, a compassionate color, and chocolate brown, a grounding color, bubbled to the surface in home decor because they resonated with how people were feeling at the time." A few years later, grays became popular and dominated the neutrals category, she said, "because with the state of the economy and of the world, the hue felt right." The forecasters also consider lifestyle and demographics. A Texas Baby Boomer may want different paint colors than a Millennial in Oregon does, for example. The team also develops palettes around popular hues. — AP



This undated photo provided by PPG Paints shows their Violet Verbena color on the wall, which the company chose as their 2017 color of the year.



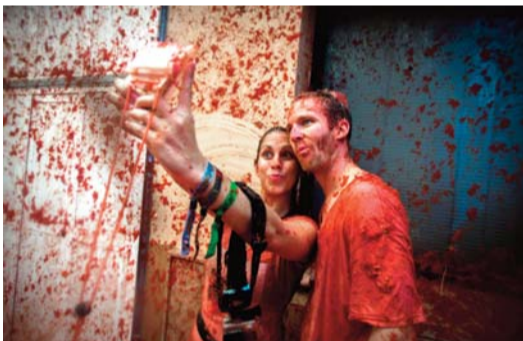
A color forecaster of PPG meeting in New York, while brainstorming with a mood board for the 2017 PPG color palette for paint, coatings and materials for the architecture, automotive, aerospace and consumer products industries.



This undated photo provided by PPG Paints shows color forecasters Daniella Nicoletti, left, Jane Harrington, Meredith Mullins, Dee Schlotter and Anke Bodack of PPG meeting in New York, while brainstorming with mood boards for the 2017 PPG color palette for paint, coatings and materials for the architecture, automotive, aerospace and consumer products industries.—AP photos



Spanish towns seek to repeat success of **Tomatina festival**



Spain's Tomatina festival, dubbed "the world's biggest food fight", has given the small town of Bunol a huge economic boost-and now other Spanish towns with quirky fiestas are seeking to mimic its success. At the annual Tomatina fiesta yesterday 160 tons of ripe tomatoes were offloaded from trucks into a crowd of over 22,000 half-naked revelers who packed the streets of Bunol for an hour-long battle. Locals and visitors pelted each other with tomatoes, leaving the streets of the eastern town which is home to just 10,000 people awash with red pulp.

The Tomatina started in 1945 when local youths brawling in the street seized tomatoes and other produce from a greengrocer's stall and let loose. Cash-strapped local authorities in 2013 began charging an entry fee and hired a private company to sell tickets. The colorful event has been featured in several movies, such as the 2014 British romantic comedy "Walking on Sunshine" and the 2011 Indian road movie "Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara", as well as in television ads for global brands. "It's an honor but also a great responsibility because everyone has their eyes fixed on us," said Bunol mayor Rafael Perez.

Export product

Bunol registered the festival as a brand in 2002. As a result the village collects rights from firms that have used the Tomatina for its adverts, such as South Korean tech giant Samsung and Australian travel insurance provider Cover Moore. Each film shooting generates around 300,000 euros (\$335,000) for the town from the rights, as well as from providing housing and food for the visiting film crews, according to the official web page of the Tomatina.

Bunol city hall cooperates with other cities which want to hold its own version of the Tomatina for free because it provides publicity for the town and its festival, said Perez. "At the end of the day what everyone wants is to go to the original version, which is ours, so it is to our advantage," he added. Versions of the Tomatina have been held annually or as one-off events in Colombia, Chile, Cuba, India, South Korea and the United States. "We always try to cooperate with anyone who wants, so that the image of the Tomatina is reinforced abroad," said Perez.



Giant ball

Other Spanish towns with unusual festivals are seeking to copy Bunol's success. The tiny town of Mataelpino near Madrid registered its annual fiesta, dubbed the "Boloencierro", which involves pitting daredevils against a giant 200-kilo (440-pound) polystyrene ball as it gathers steam heading downhill towards the village bullring. The ball - three meters (nine feet) in diameter-has since 2010 replaced bulls used in a traditional bull run in which daredevils raced ahead of a pack of half-ton fighting bulls along a similar route. The risk is real the ball has injured several participants.

The switch was motivated by Spain's economic downturn which forced towns like Mataelpino to cut costs on its annual festivals and it has proven popular.

The town holds the "Boloencierro", a combination of the Spanish words for "ball" and "bull run", every August. Mirroring the example of Bunol, Mataelpino is helping six other Spanish towns to hold their own versions of the Boloencierro this year. The goal is to draw more visitors to its own event.

"The municipality is trying to use this festival as a tourist draw," said Mataelpino mayor Javier de los Nietos. The town of Haro in the northern La Rioja wine-making region began the process this year to have its annual "wine fight" declared a "Festival of International Interest." The event sees thousands of locals and tourists celebrate St Peter's day in June by throwing thousands of liters of wine at each other, with buckets, wineskins or water pistols. — AFP



Revelers covered in tomato pulp participate in the annual "Tomatina" festivities in the village of Bunol, near Valencia yesterday. Yesterday at the annual Tomatina fiesta 160 tons of ripe tomatoes were offloaded from trucks into a crowd of 22,000 half-naked revelers who packed the streets of Bunol for an hour-long battle. — AFP photos