



**Kuwait releases rare birds in line with int'l convention**



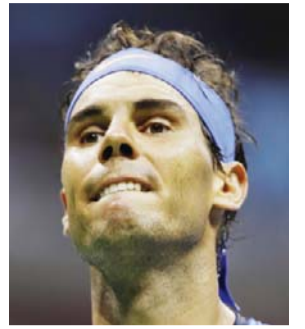
**G20 warns against slide into protectionism**



**Poor Hungary town eyes riches of Suleiman the Magnificent**



**Pouille stuns Nadal to lead French charge into US Open**



## GOVT TO LAUNCH SEPARATE HOSPITALS FOR EXPATRIATES

LIMIT ON RESIDENCY PERIOD MULLED TO CURB EXPAT NUMBERS



Min 34°  
Max 45°  
High Tide 02:27 & 14:48  
Low Tide 08:53 & 21:01



150 FILLS  
NO: 16985  
40 PAGES

## MOI SEIZES 3 MILLION CAPTAGON PILLS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior announced yesterday the confiscation of about three million pills of the illegal Captagon drug hidden inside air compressors. The Drugs Control General Department (DCGD) received information that indicated an incoming cargo container had narcotics hidden inside. The container was placed under surveillance until it reached the country and the delivery was made before the raid was carried out.

Kuwaiti security authorities have recently foiled a wave of bids to smuggle narcotics into the country, which has drawn alarm from concerned authorities. In July, the Interior Ministry foiled a major attempt to bring 10 million Captagon pills worth KD 25 million into the country. Captagon, a brand name for the synthetic stimulant fenethylline, was developed in the 1960s to treat hyperactivity and narcolepsy.

It was banned in the 1980s because of its potential for abuse, but knockoff versions continue to be illegally manufactured in small-scale labs in some countries. Some militant groups in the region reportedly use it to increase their strength and prowess in battle.



KUWAIT: Packets of Captagon pills and a suspect are seen after the shipment of the drug was busted yesterday. (Inset) Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah examines a packet of pills hidden inside an air compressor. — MoI

By B Izzak and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Health Minister Ali Al-Obaidi said yesterday that the government's legal agency - the fatwa and legislative department - has given its approval for setting up an independent healthcare system for expatriates under a new medical insurance scheme. The fatwa department approved a draft contract the ministry plans to sign with the Health Insurance Hospitals Company to offer healthcare services to expatriates, the minister said.

The contract is in accordance with the government's program of action and the state development plan to develop a national healthcare strategy, Obaidi said. The Health Insurance Hospitals Co, a public shareholding firm for health insurance established in accordance with a decision by the Cabinet, will provide medical care for expatriates through a number of hospitals and primary medical centers based on the health insurance law of 1999, the minister said.

The ministry is currently engaged in completing the necessary approvals for the draft contract from the state's supervisory agencies, said Obaidi, adding that the project has been sent to the state Audit Bureau for examination, he said. Pending approval of the bureau, the ministry will start implementing the scheme by providing healthcare to expatriates at hospitals and medical centers specialized



Ali Al-Obaidi

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This combination image taken yesterday shows (left) US President Barack Obama speaking during a press conference following the conclusion of the G20 summit in Hangzhou, China, and (right) Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte speaking during a press conference in Davao City in the Philippines prior to his departure for Laos to attend the ASEAN summit. — AFP

## RUSSIA, SAUDIS TO STABILIZE OIL OUTPUT

KUWAIT WELCOMES COOPERATION • OIL RALLIES

LONDON: Oil rallied by up to five percent yesterday as top global producers Russia and Saudi Arabia vowed to stabilize the market after meeting at the G20 in China. Saudi Energy Minister Khaled Al-Falih and his Russian counterpart Alexander Novak agreed to "act together" to steady the market, on the sidelines of the G20 summit in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou. In reaction, Brent North Sea crude leapt as high as \$49.40 per barrel, and US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) soared to \$46.53.

Prices later pulled back however as Saudi Arabia ruled out the need to trim back production, while traders questioned whether the pair would curb global oversupply. The two nations "noted the particular importance of constructive dialogue and close cooperation between the largest oil-producing countries

with the goal of supporting the stability of the oil market", the ministers said in a joint statement. "To this end the ministers agreed to act together or in cooperation with other oil producers," it read, adding they had agreed to set up a "joint monitoring group" to offer recommendations to prevent price fluctuations.

Novak described the announcement as marking a "new era" in cooperation between Russia and Saudi Arabia and insisted that it would have a "critical significance". However, there were no details on any deal to freeze oil output around current levels, just weeks before Moscow and the 13-nation Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) crude cartel meet in Algeria to discuss a global supply glut. Thus far, major oil producers have been unable to strike an accord on freezing output, owing mainly to a

dispute between Saudi Arabia and Iran over Tehran's desire to raise production levels after the lifting of sanctions.

After meeting Novak, Falih told Al-Arabiya television channel there was "currently no need to freeze production". "A freeze is one of the preferred options but it is not needed for the moment." OPEC members Kuwait, Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates all welcomed the Saudi-Russian pledge. Kuwait "backs the outcome of these consultations for the sake of achieving a balance in the markets", acting oil minister and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh said. "The consultations come in the framework of cooperation among major OPEC and non-OPEC producers... to regulate and stabilize markets," said the minister of OPEC's fifth largest producer.

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## DUTERTE SPEWS VULGAR TIRADE AGAINST OBAMA

DAVAO: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte crudely insulted Barack Obama yesterday as he vowed not to be lectured by the US leader on human rights when they meet in Laos. The acid-tongued Duterte bristled at warnings he would face questioning by the US president over a war against drugs in the Philippines that has claimed more than 2,400 lives in just over two months. "You must be respectful. Do not just throw away questions and statements. (Expletive) I will curse you in that forum," Duterte told a news conference shortly before flying to Laos to attend a summit. "We will be wallowing in the mud like pigs if you do that to me."

Duterte was due to hold a bilateral meeting with Obama today afternoon on the sidelines of a gathering of global leaders hosted by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Vientiane, the Lao capital. But shortly after Duterte spoke, Obama appeared to cast doubt on whether such a meeting could take place. Calling Duterte "a colorful guy", the US president said was asking his staff to find out whether a meeting would be useful. "I always want to make sure if I'm having a meeting that it's actually productive and we're getting something done," he told reporters.

Duterte, 71, was elected in May after a promise to wage an unprecedented war on illegal drugs that would see tens of thousands of suspects killed. Official figures released Sunday show that, since he took office on June 30, over 2,400 people have been killed in police anti-drug operations and by suspected vigilantes. Speaking on the sidelines of the G20 sum-

mit in the Chinese city of Hangzhou, Obama said Washington recognized that drugs were a significant problem for the Philippines. But he insisted that he would not shy away from raising concerns about the way the issue was being handled under the new administration. "The issue of how we approach fighting crime and drug trafficking is a serious one for all of us. We've got to do it the right way," he said. "Undoubtedly, if and when we have a meeting, this is something that's going to be brought up. And my expectation, my hope is that it could be dealt with constructively."

Asked after arriving in the Laos capital of Vientiane whether the meeting would go ahead, Duterte replied: "Maybe, if I feel good. I don't want to quarrel with him. He's the most powerful president ... on the planet." Duterte added that he did not believe the subject of extrajudicial killings should be raised at such a summit. "It is rude."

Duterte has angrily rejected criticism from the Catholic Church, human rights groups, legislators and the United Nations. And he vowed yesterday the bloodbath would continue as he pursued his goal of eradicating illegal narcotics in the Philippines.

"More people will be killed, plenty will be killed until the last pusher is out of the streets. Until the (last) drug manufacturer is killed, we will continue and I will continue," he said. Duterte insisted he would not take orders from the United States, a former colonial ruler of the Philippines, and did not care about how he was perceived. "I don't give a s\*\*\* about anybody observing my behavior," he said. — AFP

## SAUDIS TIGHTEN BELTS FOR EID IN AGE OF AUSTERITY

RIYADH/KHOBAR: A cartoon widely circulated in Saudi Arabia on Twitter last month showed three old men in traditional robes, named Unemployment, Prices and Poverty, looking down at a young boy with torn clothes named Salary. "When will you grow bigger like us?!" the men ask the boy. The annual Eid Al-Adha holiday period is traditionally a time for ordinary Saudis to splurge on new clothes, accessories and travel. But this year's Eid holidays, which fall on Sept 12-15, are set to be the most austere in well over a decade.

Low oil prices are forcing the government of the world's top oil exporter into spending cuts to curb a budget deficit that totalled a record \$98 billion last year. Those cuts, which began late in 2015, are now rippling through almost every area of the Saudi economy, reducing consumers' disposable income and weighing on the living standards of ordinary Saudis. "Looking at individual consumption, you will find a significant shift in consumer habits, and the size of purchases has gone down significantly compared to last year," said Saudi economist Fadl Albainain. "Although corporations are the main reason behind declining consumer demand, the impact of individuals' spending cannot be overlooked."

The consumer spending slump has become a significant drag on the economy as a whole. Saudi Arabia's non-oil sector shrank 0.7 percent from a year ago in the first quarter of 2016, its worst performance in at least five years. Second-quarter data has not been released yet but London-based Capital Economics estimates the sector shrank 4.5 percent in June.

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## DOZENS KILLED IN STRING OF DEADLY SYRIA BLASTS

DAMASCUS: A string of bombings claimed by the Islamic State group killed dozens across Syria yesterday, as Washington and Moscow failed to agree on a deal to stem the country's violence. The blasts in mostly government-held territory killed at least 48 people and wounded dozens more, a day after the jihadist group lost the last stretch of the Syria-Turkey border under its control. In China, where world powers were gathered for the G20 meeting, US President

Barack Obama and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin touted "productive" talks and "some alignment" on Syria.

But the two powers failed to produce an expected deal to ease the violence in Syria, where more than 290,000 people have been killed and more than half the population displaced since March 2011. The latest carnage came in a series of blasts, the deadliest of which was a double bombing

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TARTOUS: Syrians and security forces gather at the site of a blast targeting the Arzuna Bridge in a government-held area outside this Syrian city yesterday. — AFP



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with a host of Kuwait's newly-appointed envoys overseas, in the presence of First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



**His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Kuwait's envoys overseas.**

# AMIR RECEIVES KUWAIT'S OVERSEAS ENVOYS



**His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Kuwait's envoys overseas.**

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled introduced to His Highness the Amir a host of Kuwait's newly-appointed envoys overseas.

The new envoys included Kuwait's new ambassador to Pakistan, Nassar Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi; ambassador to the Philippines Musaed Saleh Al-Thuwaijk; Consul General in Los Angeles (US), Faisal Ibrahim Al-Holy; ambassador to Ukraine Rashid Hammad Al-Adwani; Council General in Vietnam's Ho Chi

Minh City Khalid Falah Al-Mutairi and finally Consul General in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) Wael Yusuf Al-Enzi.

The envoys were sworn in before His Highness the Amir who offered them directives on serving the interests of their dear nation's, and working hard to promote bilateral ties and cooperation with the countries where they are going to serve.

His Highness the Amir also urged the envoys to be as good representatives as ever of Kuwait on the regional and international arenas in line with the country's interests and foreign policy, which is based on understand-

ing, dialogue, cooperation and reinforcing concepts of the international peace and security. Meanwhile, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled voiced gratitude to His Highness the Amir for his noble directives. The ceremony was attended by Amiri Diwan Advisor Lieutenant General Khaled Abdullah Boodai, Director of His Highness the Amir's Office Ahmad Fahd Al-Ahmad, Head of the Amiri Protocol Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah and Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocol Affairs Ambassador Dhari Al-Ajran.

Later, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled introduced the new ambassadors to His Highness the



**His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Sudanese Federal Minister of Health Bahar Idris Abu Garda.**

Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

**Sudanese minister**

Separately, His Highness the Amir received at Bayan Palace yesterday Sudanese Federal Minister of Health Bahar Idris Abu Garda, who handed His Highness a letter from Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir regarding bilateral ties.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Oil Anas Khaled Al-Saleh. He also received Minister of Justice

and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane and Chief of the National Security Apparatus Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. Moreover, His Highness the Crown Prince also received the country's Ambassador to Iraq Salem Al-Zamanan.

In other news, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences yesterday to UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, conveying his deepest sympathies over the demise of an Emirati soldier in Yemen. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister sent similar cables of condolences to the UAE President. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** KUNA's Acting General Director Abdulhamid Malak meets with a delegation of Arab and foreign media personnel. — KUNA

## MEDIA PERSONNEL HAIL AMIR'S INT'L HONORING

**KUWAIT:** A delegation of Arab and foreign media personnel, currently visiting the country, affirmed yesterday that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has earned the UN designation, the Humanitarian Leader, due to his unrelenting support for humanitarian works.

This came during a meeting between KUNA's

Acting General Director, Abdulhamid Malak, with the visiting delegation, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the UN honoring of His Highness the Amir, coupled with proclaiming the State of Kuwait as the Humanitarian Center.

The guests, during the meeting attended by KUNA's Deputy Chairman for the Editorial

Department, Saad Al-Ali, lauded Kuwait for its rapid reactions for relieving the impoverished and nations stricken with catastrophes worldwide. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, at a grand ceremony at the UN headquarters in New York on September 9, 2014, granted the honorary titles for His Highness and his country. — KUNA

## INDIAN MINISTER ARRIVES TODAY

By Sajeev K Peter

**KUWAIT:** India's Minister of State for External Affairs Gen V K Singh (Retd) will arrive in Kuwait today on a two-day visit. During the visit, the minister will meet with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and other top Kuwaiti dignitaries and discuss a wide range of issues of mutual interest.



**India's Minister of State for External Affairs Gen V K Singh**

The visiting minister will unveil life-size bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi tomorrow at 7:00 am on the embassy premises. The embassy has organized a community interaction with the minister tomorrow at 6:30 pm at the Indian embassy auditorium. The embassy has invited representatives of all registered Indian associations in Kuwait, representatives of Indian schools, Indian private sector companies, public sector undertakings and media representatives to attend the community meeting.



**KUWAIT:** Amiri Diwan's Advisor Khaled Boodai visited the Uzbek embassy conveying condolences of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as well as His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the demise of President Islam Karimov. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah leaves for Rio de Janeiro yesterday. — KUNA

## SHEIKH SALMAN HEADS TO BRAZIL TO ATTEND PARALYMPICS

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah headed to the Brazilian capital Rio de Janeiro yesterday to attend the 2016 Paralympic games for the Disabled.

Accompanying Sheikh Salman are Honorary President of the Kuwaiti Disabled Sports Club (KDSC) Sheikhha Sheikhha Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Deputy Chairman of Kuwait's Olympic Committee Duaij Al-Otaibi, Head of the Minister of State for Youth Affairs Office Haitham Al-Salem and

other officials. Moreover, the Rio Paralympic Games for the Disabled kicks off on Wednesday, as the competition goes on until September 18 with participation of roughly 1,000 disabled athletes, including competitors from the KDSC.

Formed in 1977, under the umbrella of the Public Authority for Youth and Sports (PAYS), KDSC aims to assimilate disabled persons into society through numerous sports and cultural activities, as the club made its Paralympic debut in 1980 in the Netherlands. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met yesterday with Kuwait's Ambassador to Iran Majdi Al-Thufairi, as well as the family of Kuwaiti citizen Mohammad Taher Al-Baghli who went missing in Romania.



News

in Brief

KPC refutes KD 7 m package reports

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Managing Director for Public Relations at Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Basem Al-Essa denied yesterday that seven senior officials in the oil sector were rewarded a package worth up to KD 7 million. KPC's Board stopped the 'package' reward in accordance with the state's expenditure rationalization, Essa said. He stressed that the value and the method of calculating the package circulated in the news is not true and does not reflect reality.

Visa required for Slovakia

**KUWAIT:** It is necessary for Kuwaitis willing to visit Slovakia to obtain a visa from the country's embassy in Kuwait in order to avoid legal violations, the Consular Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said yesterday. The Slovak Aliens Police decided on August 8 to deport seven Kuwaitis for not having Schengen visas from the Slovak embassy in Kuwait, the department added in a statement. It was later discovered that the seven had tourist visas for family visits issued by the French embassy in Kuwait. They came to Slovakia for a sports training camp, and did not visit France. According to the deportation decision, and the laws in the Schengen countries, the seven Kuwaitis obviously violated the nature of the visas granted to them. — KUNA

KRCS chief lauds charities

**KUWAIT:** Chairman of Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) Dr Hilal Al-Sayer yesterday lauded the national authorities and philanthropists for aiding nations stricken with catastrophes or man-made calamities. In a statement the International Day of Charity, which fell yesterday, Dr Sayer re-affirmed the State of Kuwait's unwavering support for global humanitarian causes and offering help to those in need without discrimination. — KUNA

Kuwaiti divers in Red Sea

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Dive Team (KDT), affiliated with Kuwait Science Club (KSC), has embarked on an adventure in the Red Sea exploring sunken ships there. Ali Jumaa, the assistant secretary general at the club, said in a statement yesterday that the divers, during the week-long adventure involving the resort Ghardaa, examined wreckage sites of the ill-fated ships, coral reefs and various fish species, namely the dreaded sharks. The exploration expedition is the 18th of its kind. — KUNA

Indicators incentive for growth

**KUWAIT:** Fundamental indicators can be relied upon as incentive for further progress and development in all realms, Assistant Secretary of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) Talal Al-Shammeri said yesterday. SCPD strives to propel Kuwait to the upper echelons of developed nations, Shammeri said in a speech he gave to open a training program organized by SCPD. Employees were shown how to extract crucial information using these internationally-recognized indicators, which provide an inkling on the rate of development. She also added that these signals consist of 21 guides and 87 different indicators. — KUNA



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

# CABINET DEPLORES SUICIDE ATTACKS

MINISTERS EXAMINE SMALL, MEDIUM ENTERPRISE FUND'S REPORT

**KUWAIT:** The Cabinet discussed current regional and international developments during its weekly session yesterday, as it deplored a spate of suicide attacks in a number of nations, including Iraq, Yemen and Somalia. These attacks claimed numerous lives and injured scores of others as the Cabinet asserted its opposition to all manifestations of terrorism that contravene all religious and humanitarian values.

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chaired the regular Cabinet meeting at Bayan Palace, with the ministers examining messages addressed from foreign dignitaries to His Highness the Amir and works in the development sector.

Eid greetings

Following the session, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah stated the session got started with the ministers expressing congratulations to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince, the people of Kuwait and Islamic nations on forthcoming advent of the blessed Eid Al-Adha.

The ministers reviewed a message addressed to His Highness the Amir from the president of Equatorial Guinea, inviting Sheikh Sabah to attend the Arab-African Summit, due in Malabo in November 2016.

They reviewed a message to His Highness from the president of Mauritius, sent within framework of the good bilateral ties. Then, they listened to a briefing by the First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on his participation in the GCC ministerial meeting with the foreign affairs secretaries of the US and

the UK, recently hosted by Riyadh.

The allied nations' officials at the Riyadh gathering discussed cooperation in various sectors, coordination against regional challenges in addition to various regional and international affairs, namely efforts for restoring peace to Yemen according to UN resolution 2216, the GCC peace initiative and results of the Yemeni national dialogue.

Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled informed the ministers about the outcome of his recent official visit to Switzerland, where he took part in the grand ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the Kuwaiti-Swiss relations and the talks he had held with the Swiss president, dealing with means of cementing bilateral ties. The visit was crowned with a MoU for development cooperation.

Small and medium enterprise

The ministers examined the second annual report by the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development submitted to the Supreme Consultancy Council, in light of a presentation by the Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr Yousef Al-Ali, outlining achievements that faced the fund during the 2015-2016 fiscal year and the priorities for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Moreover, the report included the second annual assessment of the higher council, main recommendations namely working out a plan for the enterprises, in addition to the financial report, the budget for the main activities and examining the local training companies as an avenue for partnership with the local market, as well as the financial solutions that conform with the fundamentals of the Islamic funding, as part of the services provided for the small and medium enterprises. — KUNA

Letters to Muna

Dear Muna,

I am a regular reader of Kuwait Times. With regards to your article about end of the oil era on Sunday, we all know that the current drop in oil prices is one of the main crises around the world today, so this article is quite appreciable. This is a serious concern to all of us (even a little more than the authorities and public) who are working in oilfields, because this may lead to our unemployment.

As an oil producing country, certainly this is a serious issue for Kuwait. The major share of income comes from oil. We cannot dream a world which does not depend on petroleum in the present circumstances, and I can say that for the next 50 years too, petroleum will be the main fuel. The science and technology is progressing day by day, but still petroleum is our main fuel source.

As you said, this is not the first decline in oil prices - the world has seen several declines, and I believe that this is only because of political issues and unwanted competition between countries. Anyway, the article is really appreciable. Most of the public does not know much about the reasons behind oil prices so expecting a detailed article regarding this.

Reader

Dear Muna,

With regards to your article about rent cheaters, we were residing there two years ago. Unfortunately, it was a bad memory in our life and a good lesson too. When I signed the contract, the amount was not mentioned on the contract. After they filled up the contract, I didn't want to accept, but the counter staff told me not to be afraid as we will take care of you and you only pay KD 200 and nothing else. Slowly, they start torturing us via the haris (thug), knocking the door asking KD 10 for cleaning money at 1 am, same as in your article, threatening to cut electricity if rent was delayed even for a day, water cuts and more. After some time I decided to get out from there, and I spent a lot of money to get clearance from them. I'm writing to make people aware not to get involved with these guys.

KUL

Dear Muna,

Since the last 2-3 years, we the expatriates have been bombarded with bad news. Whether it is about driving licenses, visit visas, deportation for traffic violations, dependent visas, segregation of hospitals and what not. The current fuel price rise is an added bonus to our salaries.

What bothers me no end is that not one MP or Cabinet minister or undersecretary ever speaks for expats? As if we do not exist! Everywhere in the world, prices do rise, but not at such high percentage. Kuwait, Alhamdulillah, is a rich country. Very rich indeed. No, we are not asking for freebies, just a little consideration that we exist. There is talk of taxing remittances to our home countries. We have to do this because ultimately we have to leave this country, willingly or unwillingly, because citizenship is ruled out. I believe a majority of expats have immense responsibilities back home. They are managing families, orphans, helping people in debt and financing education for economically weaker sections. All because we earn without paying taxes.

In fact, reading the statements of various assistant undersecretaries is quite humiliating many a times. Just be in your shoes and feel for yourself. The only people who do speak for us are few - you and Ms Badiya Darwish are among them - so one feels sad about the society we live in. Yes, someone may say - if you can't stand the heat, get out. True. But that's not the way world runs and survives.

Khalid



## KFSD DELEGATION INSPECTS HAJJ PREMISES

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Fire Service Department's (KFS) delegation to hajj began its work by inspecting premises of Kuwaiti hajj campaigns to make sure they meet conditions of security and safety, according to the head of the delegation Col

Yousuf Al-Sufak. He said the KFS delegation operates in cooperation with the Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ministry inspectors to secure campaign premises in Makkah. The delegation also includes Lt Col Yasser Al-Thuwaini, Lt Col Humoud Al-Qahtani, Lt Col Abdullah Jamal, Lt Col Yacoub Karam and 1st Lt Bader Al-Mutairi.



## KUWAIT RELEASES RARE BIRDS IN LINE WITH INT'L CONVENTION

**KUWAIT:** The Environment Public Authority released yesterday 100 Houbara Bustards into the Kuwaiti wilderness as part of a plan to conserve this unique species. Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, the EPA chairman, said that these freed birds had been seized by the customs and coast guards' authorities for being brought to the country illegally.

The birds' release is in line with CITES, the Convention on International Trade in

Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Houbara Bustards are considered as part of the Arab peninsula heritage and enlisted by CITES. EPA has also seized and confiscated 14 falcons imported illegally. They were handed over to the Scientific Center for rehabilitation and planned release in to the wild. The species of these falcons, "Al-Shahin", is also enlisted by CITES. Kuwait signed CITES in 1973. It was effective concerning Kuwait in November 2002. — KUNA

## PUBLIC HOUSES EXEMPTED FROM ENERGY FEES' HIKE

AUTHORITY 'NOT RESPONSIBLE' FOR SHEEP PRICES' INCREASE

By Meshal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Ministry of Electricity and Water's (MEW) Undersecretary Mohammad Boshehri stressed that according to law number 20/2016, all private residence areas including public housing units (traditional Arab-style houses) in Sulaibiya and Taima would be exempted from the new electricity and water tariffs. "The increase will apply for all sectors except residential areas," he stressed, referring to areas where houses are built. Apartment buildings are located in areas officially classified as commercial residence areas, and those will be affected by the energy fees' hike, along with shops, markets and industrial areas. Boshehri also expressed amazement at campaigns launched on social media networks circulating inaccurate information that the government intends lifting subsidies on electricity and water for citizens. "This is absolutely untrue," he emphasized, adding that law number 20/2016 was published in the official gazette Al-Kuwait Al-Yaum on May 22 and will be effective and imposed one year later only on the commercial sector. He added that the new prices would be imposed on the investment sector on May 22, 2017.

Sheep prices

The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) is not responsible for the increase in sheep prices in local markets, deputy director for livestock resources Yousif Al-Najem stressed. He also highlighted that it was the responsibility of the ministry of commerce and industry and the municipality to control prices. "Many people are blaming PAAAFR for price increases before Eid Al-Adha, which is not true, because we have been fully supporting herders all year long," he underlined. Najem said that the authority is open for all companies and individuals wishing to import sheep from any country provided that country is free of epidemics and contagious diseases.



Mohammad Boshehri

Staff training

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Undersecretary Mutar Al-Mutairi announced launching the ministry's annual employees training season that aims at developing the ministry's human resources, as part of a strategy to automate the ministry's various sectors. Speaking on the sidelines of opening the first training course organized by the human resources development department under the title of 'Drafting and Offering Tenders and Construction Works', Mutairi said that the training would include all specialized technical, administrative and leading position courses. He also noted that these courses does not cost the state budget anything because all lecturers are ministry staff members.

Health insurance

The Ministry of Health (MoH) named 39 clinics through which retirees would get their health insurance cards after the Eid Al-Adha break, said informed sources, noting that the ministry coordinated with the Gulf Insurance Company which is responsible for the project on that regard. Nine clinics in Jahra, nine in Ahmadi, seven in Farwaniya, eight in the capital and six in Hawalli would distribute the cards, the sources added.

## INTERIOR MINISTRY STRESSES HUMAN RIGHTS' PROTECTION

**KUWAIT:** Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt Gen Suleiman Al-Fahd said the security establishment is keen on implementing laws and legislations that call for respecting human rights and not degrade human dignity, while guaranteeing protection to all those who live in Kuwait regardless of gender, religion or belief. Fahd was speaking during the reception of UN commissioner on fighting human trafficking Maria Garcia. Fahd stressed the rights of laborers and its gains, adding that

these rights are protected at all levels. He said the establishment took decisive and tangible steps in this regard.

Meanwhile, Interior Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for the Reform Establishment and Sentences Enforcement Maj Gen Khalid Al-Dayeen welcomed Garcia and said the interior ministry has taken important and unprecedented steps in the field of human rights and fighting human trafficking in order to preserve human dignity. A detailed explanation

was given about the most important and the number of human trafficking cases in Kuwait and the measures taken by the Interior Ministry. Victims are welcomed and informed about their rights and duties and the extent of their wish to cooperate with security authorities - then they will be given the choice, either to work again in Kuwait or return to their countries, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration and expat labor shelters.



## TWO ARRESTED FOR RESELLING SUBSIDIZED FOOD

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Two men, Bangladeshi and Nepalese, were caught storing subsidized food material in Jleeb Al-Shuyukh, where they change the packing and resell it. A security source said tips were received by Brig Saleh Matter Al-Enezi about a store for subsidized food, so the store was raided and the two were arrested. They had 42 large bags of sugar, 50 kg of milk, 678 milk cans, 480 bottles of oil, 32 bags (50 kg each) of rice, in addition to sewing machines to change the bags before reselling them.

Suspects caught

Capital police arrested a citizen wanted for KD 14,500. They also arrested a Yemeni and Kuwaiti in an abnormal condition with drugs. In Ahmadi, a citizen was arrested for a KD 12,900 debt, while an Asian was arrested to serve a nine-month jail sentence.

## KUWAIT EAGER TO RESOLVE WOMEN'S ISSUES: OFFICIAL

**CAIRO:** Kuwait is always cooperating with the UN to resolve international issues and exerting great efforts to support the role of women everywhere, said Advisor of Kuwaiti Cabinet's Women Affairs Committee Dr Suaad Abdulwahab. The statement was made yesterday during a conference entitled 'Women and Achieving Peace and Security', co-organized by the Arab League and the United Nations, held in Cairo.

Kuwait highly appreciates the joint League-UN efforts to bring peace to the Arab World, despite the extreme challenges facing the process, Abdulwahab, head of the Kuwaiti delegation and representative of the committee's Chairperson Sheikhha Latifa Al-Fahad Al-Salem Al-Sabah noted. The advisor meanwhile, called on the international community to join efforts in fighting terrorism, noting in this matter the impact of terrorism on the future of Arab women.

In 2014, Kuwait presented an initiative to ease the suffering of Arab women in war-torn areas. The initiative includes sending special teams to assess the conditions of these women and find solutions for their problems, she said. Moreover, she hoped that both regional and international organizations would respond to the Kuwaiti initiative and make it a reality. Abdulwahab also stressed the importance of enabling women to play their role in developing societies by improving their leadership and decision-making skills. — KUNA

## REGISTRATION FOR 2ND KIPCO TMKEEN AWARD FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS BEGINS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO) and the Youth Empowerment Organization (Tmkeen) have announced the beginning of registration for the KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs 2016. This is the second year that the award takes place, and this year's focus will be on entrepreneurial businesses in the retail and services industry.

The start of registration was announced at a joint press conference. Young entrepreneurs aged 18-33 with existing retail and service businesses established for no longer than five years and licensed in Kuwait are invited to visit the Tmkeen website ([www.tmkeenkw.com](http://www.tmkeenkw.com)) to apply for the award. Registration is open until September 29.

### Mentorship

Speaking at the press conference, Eman Al-Awadhi, KIPCO's Group Communications Director, said: "Last year, KIPCO and the Youth Empowerment Organization partnered to launch the first ever KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs. The first edition of the award shed light on young entrepreneurs with media and technology businesses, who worked hard to argue their cases before an expert judging panel. Over the past year, KIPCO and its Group companies have been providing business mentorship and services to the winner of the 2015 award, Ajar Online, to help the business develop and grow. Today, we are delighted to say that not only the winner, but also our other finalist, have gone on to achieve greater business success."

She added: "KIPCO Group is delighted to be partnering with Tmkeen again this year. We hope that the award will continue to serve as a platform for showcasing Kuwait's young entrepreneurial talent and encourage the next generation of business people to follow their passion and turn their ideas



**KUWAIT:** KIPCO's Group Communications Director, Eman Al-Awadhi (right), with Tmkeen CEO, Ali Al-Ibrahim, speaking at the press conference.

expertise and services to the prize. United Real Estate, Qurain Petrochemical Industries, United Networks and United Education are also supporting the award.

### Ideas

Meanwhile, Ali Al-Ibrahim, CEO of Youth Empowerment Organization, said: "When we launched the KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs in 2015, our aim was to encourage young people to establish their own small and medium enterprises and to offer them a variety of support services to ensure their success. We are pleased to say that with the expertise and support provided by KIPCO and its Group companies, we have been able to offer such services to Kuwait's rising business community."

He added: "Many young Kuwaiti people have innovative business ideas, and we believe in their ability to act upon them. Our efforts, both through the annual Tmkeen Symposium and the award, is to encourage young people to put their creativity to good use and establish their own small and medium enterprises, thereby contributing to the development of our society."

Eligible applicants for the award will be asked to submit detailed information about their business's operational and financial performance. The first judging round will be held on October 15, where applicants will give a 5-7 minute presentation to a panel of business professionals from the KIPCO Group. Based on defined business criteria, the five applicants with the highest scores will be eligible to give a final presentation of 7-10 minutes at the KIPCO Tmkeen Award Startup Battle on October 26, and the official judging panel will select the winner. The winner of the grand prize will be announced during the Youth Empowerment Symposium on October 26.

into profitable businesses. Again this year, KIPCO and its Group companies will be offering their support to entrepreneurs in the form of a grand prize worth \$ 100,000 in services."

At \$100,000, the KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs offers the largest entrepreneurship prize in terms of value in Kuwait. The grand prize services include a wide range of financial, strategic and operational consultancy sessions, market studies, insurance coverage and advertising services. Burgan Bank, OSN, Gulf Insurance Group, KAMCO Investment Company and Marina FM are contributing their



**KUWAIT:** Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah attends in a ceremony honoring volunteers in Kuwait Scientific Center. — KUNA

## YOUTH OFFICIAL UNDERLINES IMPORTANCE OF CHARITIES, VOLUNTARY WORK TO YOUTHS



**KUWAIT:** Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah speaks during the ceremony.

**KUWAIT:** Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah underlined Sunday on the importance of encouraging acts of charities and voluntary work in youths' spirits as a mean to strengthen societies.

Sheikhha Al-Zain made her remarks in a ceremony honoring volunteers in Kuwait Scientific Center, on behalf of the Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs. She added that volunteering plays a decisive role in developing society and boosting the concept of humanity and nationality.

Sheikhha Al-Zain noted that volunteering invests tremendously the energies of young people in a useful and influential way in community service and develop the respect and trust needed to polish their skills and creativity, which in turn benefit their homeland positively.

She added the Scientific Center and through its voluntary sessions instills these values and strives to make volunteerism a way of life, recalling efforts exerted by the late Engineer Mejbil Al-Mutawa, the CEO of the center.

Meanwhile, the center's Chairman of the Board Sami Al-Rushaid said the center has been hosting the program since 2001, due to the vision of the late former president Mutawa in the importance of volunteer work and fulfilling leisure time of our youth in a beneficial way. — KUNA

## PAKISTANI DELEGATION DISCUSSES COOPERATION WITH KCCI



**Gujranwala city Chamber of Industry and Commerce's Chairman Same'o-Allah Nae'em**



**KCCI's Board member Khaled Al-Khaled**

**KUWAIT:** A visiting delegation of Pakistani businessmen held talks yesterday with Kuwaiti officials at headquarters of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) on boosting commercial exchanges between the two countries.

Khaled Al-Khaled, member of the KCCI's Board, affirmed during reception of the guests, headed by the Chairman of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in the city of Gujranwala, that the bilateral ties between the countries have been solid in various sectors, namely the economic and trade realms. He lauded such a visit for contribution to boosting the ties and cooperation.

The delegation included representatives of Pakistani companies specialized in imports-experts, manufacturing kitchen utensils, ceramics, pipes, agricultural equipment and clothes. Gujranwala, located in the northeastern province of Punjab, is an industrial city populated by three million people. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Members of a Pakistani businessmen delegation hold talks with Kuwaiti officials at headquarters of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** PAY's chief Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi attends a meeting with a number of representatives of youth-related bodies. — KUNA

## PAY SEEKS GOVERNMENT, CIVIC COLLABORATION TO REALIZE ITS GOALS

**KUWAIT:** In order to realize the visions of the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) to achieve comprehensive development for Kuwaiti youth, government and civic authorities should collaborate to meet this end, PAY chief pointed out yesterday.

This goal can be established through rehabilitating and protecting the youth socially and intellectually, PAY's chief Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi told the press after a meeting with a number of representatives of youth-related bodies.

Youth's abilities and their capabilities to give back to their society should be also nurtured through the adoption

of a number of programs, he said. He added that setting up a central database is another pull to make Government and civic collaboration easier to support the youth.

PAY has been striving to support younger generations in their endeavors in all walks of life to make a name of their country locally, regionally and internationally. It also tries to engage them, as vital individuals, in social and economic processes. Yesterday's meeting was attended by officials from the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, social services and tourism sector at the Ministry of Information. — KUNA

## 1ST GROUP OF KUWAIT'S PILGRIMS TO ARRIVE IN SAUDI ARABIA

**MAKKAH:** The first batch of Kuwaitis to perform Hajj (pilgrimage) this year is due in Saudi Arabia yesterday, head of the Kuwaiti hajj mission Khelaif Methyeb Al-Uthainah has said. Uthainah, who is Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs for Coordination, Technical Support, and Foreign Relations, said

that Kuwait's pilgrims this year hit 6,400. Inspecting the Kuwaiti pilgrims' tents at Mina and Arafat, Uthainah said the mission is fully ready to receive the pilgrims and offer them due services around the clock to help them perform the rituals as smoothly as ever.

In a press statement after the tour, he noted that

they had made sure all arrangements have been fully made as planned, thanking the members of the Kuwaiti Hajj mission for their hard work and sincere efforts to serve the pilgrims. Meanwhile, Uthainah urged the Kuwaiti pilgrims to abide by the instructions issued by the Saudi government during their stay in the Kingdom. — KUNA



**MAKKAH:** Head of the Kuwaiti hajj mission Khelaif Methyeb Al-Uthainah inspects the Kuwaiti pilgrims' tents at Mina and Arafat. — KUNA

A nighttime cityscape featuring a prominent skyscraper with a spire, illuminated buildings, and streetlights. In the foreground, there are colorful light trails from traffic, creating a sense of motion. A large red circle is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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### AHMADI'S RECKLESS DRIVER ARRESTED

**KUWAIT:** Policemen in Ahmadi put an end to the activity of a reckless driver known as "Masmouh". Video clips on social media showed a young man showing off in many areas of Ahmadi without regard to others' safety. Policemen sent patrols in the area and spotted "Masmouh", who had blocked the road to display his dangerous skills in front of his fans. He was surrounded and detained at the police station for further action.

Liquor possession

A fight between two Bangladeshis in Mangaf revealed 120 homebrewed liquor bottles in their possession, so they were arrested and sent to the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD). Policemen who received a call about the fight went to scene, but the two escaped on foot, leaving their car behind. They were chased and caught. When their car was searched, the liquor was discovered, so the men and the liquor were sent to DCGD.

Domestic violence

An Egyptian woman who woke up late at night and found her husband speaking on the phone, so she asked whom he was speaking with. The man did not like his wife's jealousy, so he beat her severely, leaving marks on her face and hands. The woman went to Mubarak Hospital, then to the police station and lodged a complaint against her husband. The husband was detained at the station for questioning.

Drunk driver caught

A drunk citizen was arrested when she attempted to avoid police and drove her car on the pavement in Salmiya, and was found wanted on a financial case. A security source said policemen on patrol were alerted by woman who drove on the pavement, then when they approached her, she was found in an abnormal condition. They found a liquor bottle in the car, so she was arrested. She was charged with public drunkenness and was sent to the civil sentences enforcement department.

Missing girl found

A girl was noticed by workers at a cafe sleeping after spending hours there, so they called police, as they were afraid to come close to her. A police patrol woke up the girl. She is a citizen in her 20s, and said the shisha caused her to go to sleep. She was also found reported missing by her family. Policemen took her to Salmiya police station for further action. —Al-Rai



Al-Anbaa

### A LETTER

By Nermin Al-Houti

Letters of the past are totally different from the ones we read today. The letter in the past used to be an art of composition. Arabs knew for ages and they were very creative in it just like other literary arts, until it became an art of its own that has its features that distinguish it from other arts. Statements contradict each other about the origin of the letter and its start, as some are certain that it appeared after Islam, while others prove the letter has been present since the start of civilizations.

And from here and there we find the letter - despite differing civilizations and contradicting statements about the start of this literary writing art - had an aim, attribute and a literal shape in the past, making history immortalize some of them, be it wills, personal or administrative letters.

But today the art of the letter has become loose without a character or a literal shape in writing it and no knowledge in how to select words to write the letter. Everybody wants to write a letter, and everyone wants to be first in writing, while he does not know what are the merits of his letter and how to start. And where to end. This is not limited to SMS texts and other social media communications - rather we find the discomfiture had has befallen the majority of government departments, and

many now do not know the artistry and craftsmanship of composing an administrative letter which is considered one type of writing. And the result is that what is being written in our era is mere reading of not timely but transient moments. Then it is either put aside or many of its mistakes are corrected, then history will not remember or immortalize it - rather it will be forgotten.

The art of writing a letter in the past relied on reading and the amount of information the individual and society had at the time, and when he thought about writing, there must be an aim for writing and this is what is lacking in our era: Reading, information and goal, which made the majority when they write, do it to fill spare time without knowledge of the literal composition art.

In conclusion: Among the personal letters that were immortalized by history books are many that we are now not using or applying them. I asked my grandfather one day: How do I keep a person I love? He told me: Be careful not to hurt him, and with lies do not trick him. Do not deprive him of love, with frankness deal with him, and from your soul do not distance him. Do not think one day to hurt him, and always make your goal making him happy.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

News

in brief

Patients won't return before treatment ends

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah reassured that the government will not allow the return of any patient sent for treatment abroad before his or her treatment is finished, Acting Parliament Speaker Mubarak Al-Khuraimej said. "The Kuwaiti government will not abandoned its people who were sent for treatment" according to the state-sponsored treatment overseas program, Khuraimej added. He further indicated that patients will not be asked to pay any expenses during their treatment period in hospitals. —Al-Rai

Dual citizenship

**KUWAIT:** A number of people handed over their US, Dutch, Iranian, Yemeni, Saudi, Egyptian and Jordanian passports to the General Department of Citizenship and Passports after they received the Kuwaiti citizenship as per a recent Amiri grant, the department's director Brigadier Yousuf Al-Seneen said. This step came after the newly naturalized citizens were informed that Kuwait's law bans dual citizenship, he explained, adding that the passports will be handed over to their respective embassies after all new citizens are handed over their new citizenships. —Al-Anbaa

Flying gravel

**KUWAIT:** Roads are expected to be damaged by rain this coming winter because of a deficit in the Ministry of Public Works' budget that prevented it from carrying out necessary road maintenance projects, Undersecretary Awatef Al-Ghunaim said. The issue emerged in the past couple of years when drivers complained that their vehicles were damaged by gravel that broke down from roads after heavy rains. Ministry officials have vowed the last two years to end the problem, which was commonly dubbed as the 'flying gravel' issue, but to no avail. —Al-Jarida

Financial distress

**KUWAIT:** Around 125,000 Kuwaitis are living or are prone to live in financial distress that makes them relatively unable to bear extra burdens resulting from reducing subsidies, increasing fees or hiking prices, according to a recent study. The study, carried out by economist Mohammad Ramadan who says that it was based on Public Authority for Civil Aviation statistics, indicates that those citizens include married men with low academic qualifications, widowed and divorced women with a large number of children, divorced men who remarried and have children from different marriages in addition to alimonies, widowed men with children, men married to non-working women and who struggle due to living in large houses or because of rent, as well as citizens who are repaying loans taken for current and consumer expenditure purposes, or for losing investments. —Al-Qabas

Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: An aerial view showing the Scientific Center and other landmarks of Salmiya. —KUNA



**Anti-China politicians win in Hong Kong poll**

**JAPAN, ISRAEL UPGRADE TIES AS ARAB OIL INFLUENCE WANES**



**MANILA: Policemen investigate at a crime scene where a body lies dead on the ground after the police received a message from a concerned citizen of the existence of a drug den in the area. Two were captured alive, one died. —AFP**

**BODIES PILE UP IN PHILIPPINES AMID DRUG WAR**  
**RICH, POOR ARE ALL TARGETS IN DRUG WAR: TOP COP**

**MANILA:** his casket, placed there in keeping with a local tradition to symbolically peck at the conscience of his killers. Cellphone video footage circulating on social media purports to capture the moment Sison was killed last month when, according to local officials, police were looking for drug pushers in the Pasay township of the Philippines' capital. A voice on the video, recorded by a neighbor according to newspaper reports, can be heard shouting "Don't do it, I'll surrender!". Then there is the sound of gunfire.

A poster near the coffin, which lies beside a stinking canal cut between ramshackle homes, demands "Justice for Eric Quintinita Sison". A handpainted sign reads: "OVERKILL - JUSTICE 4 ERIC." These are rare tokens of protest against a surge of killings unleashed since Rodrigo Duterte became president of the Philippines just over two months ago and pledged to wage war on drug dealers and crush widespread addiction to methamphetamine.

Very little stands in the way of his campaign. Last week, the number of people killed since July 1 reached 2,400: about 900 died in police operations, and the rest are "deaths under investigation", a term human rights activists say is a euphemism for vigilante and extrajudicial killings. Duterte's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment for this story. But he told a news conference yesterday that "plenty will be killed" in his campaign. "Until the (last) drug manufacturer is killed we will continue," Duterte told reporters before leaving for a regional summit in Laos, where he is due to meet US President Barack Obama on Tuesday.

**Opponents assailed**

Reuters interviews reveal that the police's Internal Affairs Service (IAS) and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) are so overwhelmed by the killings that they can investigate only a fraction, and there is scant hope of establishing many as unlawful because witnesses are too terrified to come forward. Meanwhile, the immense popularity of Duterte's crusade and a climate of fear it has engendered have severely restrained dissent from civil society. Hardly anyone turned up at candlelight vigils in Manila recently to protest against extrajudicial killings. Even as the death toll rose, a July poll by Pulse Asia put Duterte's approval rating at 91 percent.

Anxious reminders by the Catholic Church of the commandment 'thou shalt not kill' make few

headlines in the predominantly Catholic country, with newspapers preferring to carry breathless accounts of the latest slayings. Duterte has delivered withering attacks on his chief critic, Senator Leila de Lima, accusing her of dealing in drugs herself and having an affair with her driver. "It's only the president who can stop this," de Lima told Reuters last week, deploring what she described as the "madness" that led in one case to a five-year-old girl being shot in the head.

"How many more of these cases of collateral damage are we willing to bear before we can really start screaming about it?" she asked. As for critics abroad, Duterte pours scorn on them in language larded with curses. He lambasted the United Nations after it criticized the surge in killings and he turned down a meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at a summit in Laos this week. Duterte has also made it clear he will take no lecture on human rights from Obama, when in the United States he alleged "black people are being shot even if they are already lying down".

**Everyone is afraid**

Duterte may intensify the crackdown after 14 people were killed on Friday in a bomb attack at a market in his hometown, Davao. Police blamed the Abu Sayyaf, an Islamic State-linked group Duterte has vowed to destroy, but his war on the drug trade is making enemies elsewhere and the attack quickened rumors of a plot to kill him. Duterte has declared a nationwide "state of lawlessness" after the blast that authorises troops to reinforce the police with checkpoints and patrols.

He has managed with remarkable speed to nationalize a model for fighting crime that he pioneered as mayor of Davao for 22 years. Rights groups documented hundreds of suspicious murders in Davao on Duterte's watch and say death squads operated with impunity there. "The Punisher", as some call him, denies ordering extrajudicial killings but he does not condemn them. Across the country now, lists of suspected drug pushers are being provided to police by neighborhood chiefs, adding to a sense of fear and distrust across communities. Politicians of all hues have gone quiet, and a Senate enquiry led by de Lima only has the power to propose legislation.

**Investigators swamped**

Chief Superintendent Leo Angelo Leuterio, who heads the IAS, says it is his office's responsibility to investigate every discharge of firearms

involving police. But with only about 170 investigators nationwide, the IAS is able to deal with just 30 percent of the roughly 30 cases coming in every day. "Our resources are breaking at the seams," said Leuterio. The IAS chief is supposed to be a civilian to ensure its independence but Leuterio is a policeman who spent 13 years of his career in Duterte's hometown, Davao. He says he is unbiased and has a track record of dismissing hundreds of officers for misconduct.

The CHR, for its part, is looking at just 259 of the 2,000-plus killings since July 1. Its forensics team of 14 is swamped and in their cramped office investigators probing possible extrajudicial killings are handling just 12 dossiers. The commission says its biggest obstacle is that witnesses are hard to find. One person who did come forward is Harrah Kazuo, whose husband and father-in-law were severely beaten and shot dead in a police station, according to a CHR report. She told Reuters that when the police entered their home without a warrant they even removed her toddler's underwear to search for drugs.

Police have declined comment on what happened in the home, but two officers have been arrested and charged with murder in connection with the case. Kazuo has been taken into witness protection by the CHR. She is a rare protesting voice in an environment where many are fearful. On Aug 29, police told reporters they had opened fire that night on a drug suspect in Tondo, a dirt-poor and densely populated district of Manila. A Reuters reporter looked into the suspect's one-room home and saw a mattress splattered with blood. He asked a neighbor how many shots had been fired, but the man replied: "Sorry, my friend. I didn't hear a single shot," and walked away.

**Rich, poor are all targets**

Meanwhile, the Philippines police chief warned yesterday that his officers were prepared to kill anyone, even rich and influential politicians, as they wage President Rodrigo Duterte's deadly war on drugs. Since Duterte took office just over two months ago, the government said more than 2,400 people have been killed in his anti-crime crusade, an increasingly controversial campaign that has drawn UN condemnation. Police said they themselves killed 1,011 drug suspects with 1,391 others listed as "deaths under investigation". "If they fight back... they will die. Rest assured, we do not discrimi-

nate," national police chief Ronald De la Rosa told a news conference. "All of them, the rich, the poor, police, civilians... even if you are a politician, you will die if you are into drugs and you fight back," he warned.

The dominant Catholic church, human rights groups and even UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon have criticized Duterte for his apparent support of extrajudicial killings. Critics have also charged that

the police are mainly killing poor people in the slums while wealthy and influential suspects have been spared. Duterte was elected by a landslide in May after vowing to end crime in six months by killing tens of thousands of criminals. De la Rosa, who has been Duterte's main enforcer in the campaign, stressed that police would be more merciless towards corrupt policemen involved in illegal drugs. —Agencies

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## IN SOUTH SUDAN, DREAMS OF FREEDOM END IN RAPE AND MURDER

**WAU:** "We women, we dare not go out at night because we risk being raped by soldiers," says Catherine Atanasyo. "For men, it's no better: Death awaits them." Like 25,000 other South Sudanese people in and around the northwestern town of Wau, Atanasyo took refuge in a UN camp two months ago when violence tore through this part of the country, in yet another spasm of tribal violence driven by the desire for power and property. "My house is close by, but it's safer here because of the UN soldiers," she says. Around her are countless makeshift shelters made from bamboo canes and dust-reddened white tarpaulins. "You can go out in the day, it's possible—that's how I know my house was looted—but the night is out of the question, there is too much danger."

Among the alleys of this squalid camp stories like Atanasyo's are everywhere. There is the 13-year-old girl raped on her way to school, the brothers killed in the fighting, the child born without a father. South Sudan won its independence in 2011 after decades of war with Sudan, to the north. But two years later a new war

started, pitting the president, who is from the Dinka ethnic group, against his former deputy, who is from the rival Nuer, and splitting the new nation along roughly tribal lines in a conflict characterized by massacres, rape, attacks on civilians and the use of child soldiers. Tens of thousands have been killed since December 2013 and 2.5 million have fled their homes. Twice that number rely on food handouts to survive, with the UN calling the levels of food insecurity "unprecedented."

### Toxic tribal politics

"Independence was a bad idea," says Atanasyo, who blames South Sudan's toxic tribal politics for the mess her country is in. "Only one tribe benefited, the Dinka." The core conflict is between President Salva Kiir's largely Dinka soldiers and Riek Machar's mostly Nuer rebels, but the fight has stoked other ethnic tensions across the country. Around Wau, people from the Fertit tribe accuse the Dinka of marginalizing them. Tensions began in 2012, skirmishes followed last year then the town exploded into violence in late June.



**JUBA:** A group of children at the UN protection of Civilians site in Juba, South Sudan, play with a makeshift gun. —AP

As so often in South Sudan's battles, no one knows the number killed, but at the UN camp, there are many who say they lost people close to them. "The sol-

diers came on June 24. They killed my brother who was a police officer and looted everything, my motorbike, our cooking pots, our beds," says 32-year-old

Adam Umong. He lives with his remaining brother, George, who was shot in the leg during the attack. He has not spoken since "because of the shock," Umong says.

### 'I want to kill them'

"This is not the independence we dreamt of," he said. "The current leaders must go: They led the country to ruin. Salva Kiir is not our president and Machar is no better." Some hope the proposed deployment of 4,000 additional UN peacekeepers might improve security for civilians, allowing them to return to their homes. "We do not choose to live here," says another camp resident, 27-year-old Christine Elia. Sickly-looking dogs wander between the nearby tents, while clothes dry on the camp's barbed wire fence. Barefoot children play in the dirt, shooting each other with homemade toy rifles fashioned from folded grass and rubber strips. "It is the Dinka have done this to us, who forced us to leave our homes," says a soft-spoken 10-year-old called Martin, who fiddles with his faded and torn t-shirt. "I want to kill them." —AFP

## UK, IRAN ANNOUNCE FIRST AMBASSADORS IN 5 YEARS

### BAEIDINEJAD NAMED AS TEHRAN'S ENVOY TO LONDON

**TEHRAN:** Iran and Britain appointed new ambassadors to each other's countries yesterday for the first time since a mob ransacked the British embassy in Tehran in 2011. Hamid Baeidinejad, 53, was named as Tehran's envoy to London, ISNA state news agency reported. He played a crucial role in the negotiations with world powers that led to last year's nuclear accord and the lifting of international sanctions. Britain appointed Nicholas Hopton—the current charge d'affaires in Tehran as its first ambassador to Iran since relations were severed following the storming of the embassy by students in five years ago.

"The upgrade in diplomatic relations gives us the opportunity to develop our discussions on a range of issues, including our consular cases about which I am deeply concerned," British

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said in a statement, referring to the ongoing detention of dual nationals in Iran. "I hope this will mark the start of more productive cooperation between our countries, enabling us to discuss more directly issues such as human rights and Iran's role in the region, as well as ongoing implementation of the nuclear deal and the expansion of the trading relationship between both our countries," said Johnson.

The 2011 attack on the embassy saw a mob rampage for hours through the compound, tearing down the British flag, ripping up pictures of Queen Elizabeth II and trashing offices. The incident followed a vote by lawmakers to expel Britain's ambassador and reduce trade relations in retaliation for nuclear-related sanctions, but the violence was later condemned by Iran's

supreme leader and other politicians. The British embassy was reopened in August 2015, a month after the signing of the nuclear accord, during a visit by Johnson's predecessor Philip Hammond.

Baeidinejad worked as an expert on disarmament and represented Iran in several roles at the United Nations, including as ambassador between 2008 and 2011. Iran maintains a deep historical distrust of Britain, dating back to the early 20th century when London meddled frequently in Iranian politics in order to secure cheap access to oil for the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (which later became BP). Britain played a key role in prodding the Central Intelligence Agency into carrying out a coup in 1953, toppling the hugely popular prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh who had called for Iran's oil to be nationalized. —AFP



**Theo Padnos poses at the family's house in remote Reading, Vt. — AP**

## JOURNALIST RECOUNTS YEARS AS A PRISONER

**BOSTON:** In 2012, freelance journalist Theo Padnos slipped into Syria to cover its unfolding civil war and was promptly kidnapped by members of an Al-Qaeda branch. Convinced he was a CIA agent because he spoke Arabic, the group held the Massachusetts native for nearly two years before releasing him in August 2014. Now, Padnos is retracing his journey in "Theo Who Lived," a documentary being screened Sept 30 in Cambridge. Its theatrical premiere is in New York City on Oct. 7, followed by a wider release.

Padnos, 47, who has been living in Paris and Vermont, tells the Associated Press he's grateful to have survived.

The ordeal not only changed his outlook on life but also gave him perspective on the Syrian conflict that he feels is important to share. Padnos is working on a non-fiction book, a play and a novel drawing on his experience. He wrote about his captivity for the New York Times Magazine shortly after his release and is trying to continue writing about the region as a journalist.

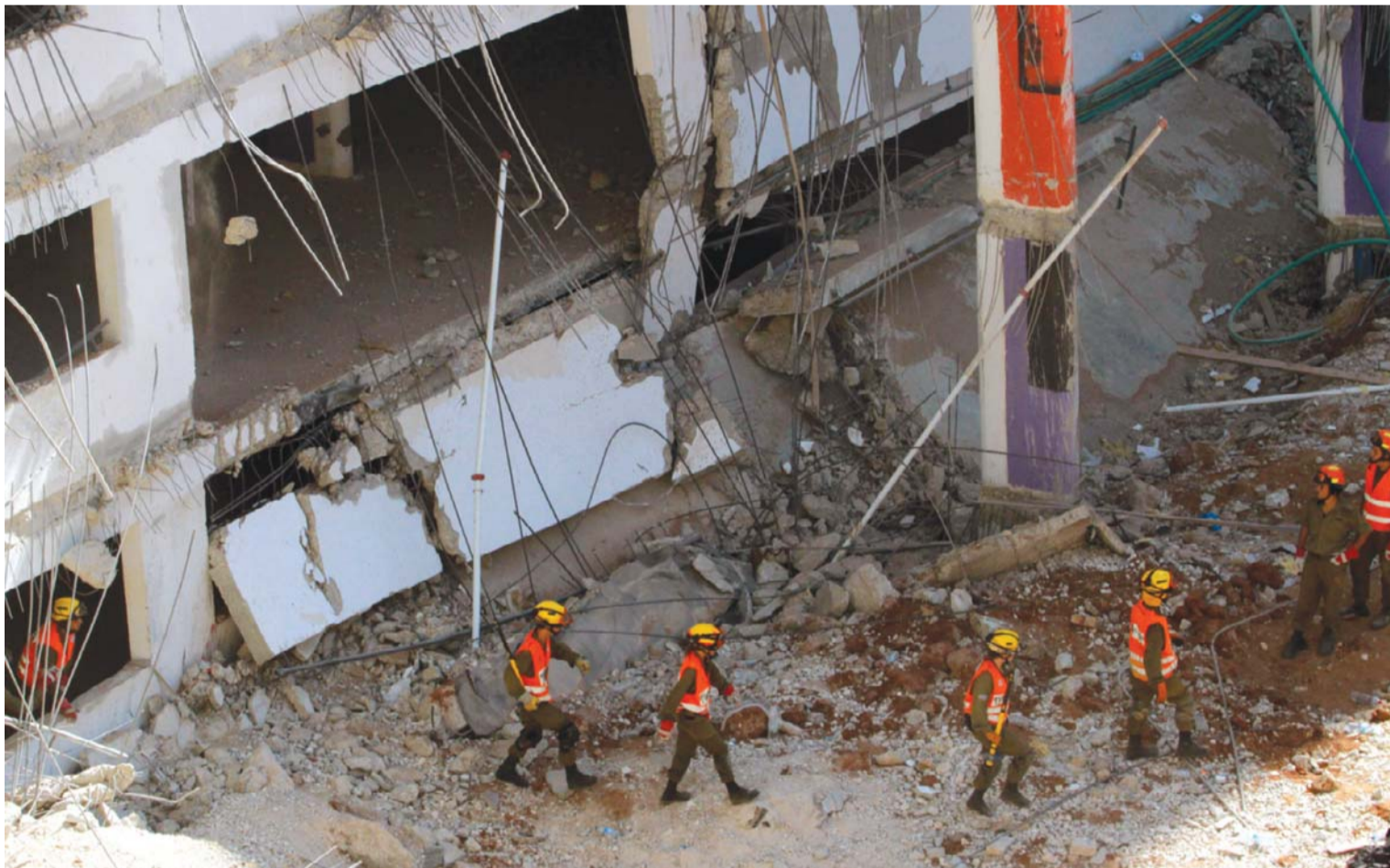
"I had a real spiritual voyage, which was terrifying for me and my family at the time," Padnos said from his family's vacation home in Vermont. "But looking back, this is what life gave me and I'd like to take what I learned and turn it into some positive benefit." The film follows Padnos as he returns to places in Turkey and Israel that figured prominently in his 22-month capture. The film crew never set foot in Syria. Padnos reflects on his captivity on sets emulating his tiny prison cell and the room he was subjected to torture and beatings.

Along the Turkey-Syria border, he recalls the moment when his travelling companions instruct him to dash across the field and hop the razor wire fence separating them from Syria. It's a moment Padnos says he'd replay in his mind for months after. The trio of men had claimed they were providing supplies to the Free Syrian Army and offered to take him across the border with them. But they were actually affiliated with Al-Qaeda.

### A fake interview

They staged a fake interview, beat him and took him hostage shortly after crossing the border. "This is where I threw my life away. It's like a precipice that I walked up to and I actually jumped," Padnos says in the film. "Now I'm back in a safe place and I'm thinking why did I ever jump?" Padnos also details a series of failed escapes, including one in which cellmate and American photojournalist Matthew Schrier managed to sneak out through a narrow prison window but Padnos could not.

Padnos' mother, Nancy Curtis, who is interviewed in the documentary, says she still has mixed emotions about her son's release. During the ordeal, she became close to the parents of other Americans kidnapped by extremists overseas. Many of them were not as fortunate as her family, she says. Curtis and other family members, working with the US and Qatari governments, successfully arranged for Padnos' release just days after the Islamic State beheaded New Hampshire journalist James Foley in a video. The family maintains that no ransom was paid. "I always clung to the hope that he'd come home," Curtis said. "But I also don't feel great joy and happiness. Probably anyone who has had a soldier in the war who came home but knows others that didn't have similar emotions." Director David Schisgall says Padnos' story is a rare eyewitness account of life inside a jihadi group by an outsider with a deep understanding of the region's language and culture. Having spent years prior studying Arabic and Islam in Yemen and Syria, Padnos was able to build trust and friendships with some of his captors. Near the end of his captivity, he was given greater freedoms and even travelled personally with the then-high commander of al-Nusra Front, an Al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria. "The real intimacy he developed with his captors was remarkable," Schisgall said. "It's a very important message for Americans to see these people fighting as complicated individuals who are both very dangerous but also very human." —AP



**TEL AVIV:** Israeli rescue workers walk at the site where a building collapse yesterday in the Ramat Hahayal neighborhood in the coastal city of Tel Aviv. — AFP

## TEL AVIV BUILDING COLLAPSE KILLS TWO, SEVERAL TRAPPED

**TEL AVIV:** A building collapse in Israel's commercial capital Tel Aviv killed at least two people and injured around 20 others yesterday, officials said, as rescuers tried to reach several people believed trapped in rubble. Police earlier said at least seven people were trapped in the collapse at an underground car park at a construction site, but it was unclear if some had since been rescued. Police confirmed two people were killed and medics reported four or five people believed trapped at the site of the multi-floor car park, filled with twisted metal, dirt and rubble. Surveillance video at the time of the collapse showed the area quickly enveloped by thick clouds of dust and rubble. Medics could be seen walking across rubble as they carried a wounded person away on a stretcher. Other medics with stretchers as well as ambulances waited nearby on standby. Search-and-rescue dogs were also at the scene.

While contact had been made with some of those trapped, leading to their rescue, the seven earlier reported missing by police had not been contacted. The army said it sent search and rescue forces to "extract civilians." "It is about four to

five stories down under the surface," Avi Marcus, a medic with United Hatzalah rescue service who arrived on the scene shortly after the collapse said. "It was only construction workers. There weren't any other people. I provided medical care to some of the injured people ... They say some movement shook the building," he said.

### Cause not yet clear

United Hatzalah said "firefighters and rescue teams are working to extricate" those believed missing. "It appeared to me that the roof of a parking garage had collapsed in the building site," United Hatzalah quoted another of its medics as saying. "While members of our ambulance unit who arrived first on scene were treating the injured, reports came in of other people who were unaccounted for and likely still trapped inside." The collapse occurred in Tel Aviv's Ramat Hahayal neighborhood at the construction site that appeared to be around half-finished. Ramat Hahayal, an upmarket neighborhood on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, is home to a number of high-tech offices in Israel's booming technology industry, based around the city

of more than 400,000 people.

The cause of the collapse was not yet clear. Israel has seen an unusually high number of construction accidents in comparison to the developed world. Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported in May that 480 people were killed in construction accidents between 2000 and 2015. The survey placed Israel third from

the bottom in a list that included the United States and 20 European nations, ahead of Cyprus and Portugal, Haaretz said, citing a report from the economy ministry and National Insurance Institute. The economy ministry said in response that it would focus on enforcing construction industry regulations. —AFP

## JAPAN, ISRAEL UPGRADE TIES; ARAB OIL INFLUENCE WANES

**TEL AVIV:** Japanese executives say they are increasingly drawn to investments in Israel as the price of oil falls and, with it, the influence Arab oil suppliers have on Japan's decision-making. Over the past two years, Japan and Israel have strengthened business ties, signing a series of economic agreements on the back of a visit by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to Israel in 2015 and Benjamin Netanyahu's trip to Tokyo in 2014. "Abe had a good impression; he liked Netanyahu's mentality," Yoshimitsu Kobayashi, chairman of Mitsubishi Chemical Holdings, told Reuters when he led a delegation from Keizai Doiyukai, the Japanese business lobby, to Israel in May.

For years, trade between the two was minimal - Japan was reluctant to upset its oil suppliers, many of whom belong to the Arab League, which has long backed a boycott of Israel. "Geopolitics is changing in the Middle East and as oil prices come down, strategically it's not as important," said Kobayashi. "Japan is

changing its mind." Israel's prowess in Internet, biotech, and automotive technologies is particularly attractive, Kobayashi said. This is not to say Japan has given up on the Arab world. Isamu Nakashima, chief researcher at the Middle East Institute of Japan, said Japan's need for oil will always trump its need for anything Israel can offer, though past worries that trade with Israel could annoy Arab nations have mostly faded. "But for things to really improve a lot, there needs to be a peace settlement (between Israel and the Palestinians)," Nakashima said. Bilateral trade in goods in the first seven months of 2016 rose to \$1.4 billion from \$1.1 billion, making Japan Israel's fourth-largest market in Asia. It is part of a growing shift in focus as Asia overtakes the United States to become Israel's largest trading partner after Europe.

### Building from a low base

The deal that put Israel on Japan's business map

was the \$900 million acquisition of chat app Viber by Japanese e-commerce giant Rakuten Inc in 2014. Viber has a big user base in Asia and was approached by Rakuten while doing business there, said Michael Shmilov, Viber's chief operating officer. "There are strong cultural differences but at the same time, Rakuten is a global company where English is the official language and we are working closely to reduce the impact of these differences," he said. The biggest obstacle, he said, is the lack of direct airline flights, something Israel wants to change. The Viber acquisition was followed by several others, including the \$212 million purchase of Israel's Altair Semiconductor by Sony Corp this year. Net investment by Japanese firms in Israel, after subtracting Israeli investment in Japan, nearly doubled in 2015 to 5.2 billion yen (\$50 million), according to the Japan External Trade Organization, citing Bank of Japan data. — Reuters



## ARIZONA COULD BE A SPOILER ON THE ROAD TO 270

**PHOENIX:** If Hillary Clinton carries Arizona in November, there's a good chance it won't be because Democrats on their own have flipped a reliable GOP state they hope to win consistently someday. Instead, Clinton and Democrats may have Gary Johnson to thank. The Libertarian Party nominee's best chance to influence the presidential race may come in Arizona, where the former New Mexico governor appeals to a group of finicky conservatives who make up part of the GOP base.

"It could happen," said GOP Sen Jeff Flake. "Donald Trump has managed to make this an interesting state in terms of presidential politics, and not in the way that Republicans have wanted." Johnson "is an easy out for some people in our party," Flake said. About a dozen of the most contested states will help determine which candidate gets the 270 electoral votes to win the presidency. In Arizona, where the Republican nominee has carried the state in 11 of the past 12 presidential elections, Johnson could

play the spoiler, potentially putting 11 electoral votes in Clinton's column.

The GOP's recent struggle with independent-minded, small-government Libertarians was clear before Trump's speech Wednesday in Phoenix, when he reaffirmed a hard line on immigration. And his stance could alienate the roughly one-quarter of Hispanic voters in the state who usually align with Republicans. "I think that right now we're at a tipping point, where at any moment we are going to begin to see an outpouring of support," said Latino GOP strategist Juan Hernandez, who works for Johnson in Arizona. Sensing an opportunity herself, Clinton began airing television advertisements in the state Friday, and has reserved \$500,000 in ad time through mid-September.

### Multimillion-dollar question

Democratic strategist Andy Barr said Hispanic turnout was "the multimillion-dollar question." About one-third of the state's population identifies as Latino,

but their share of the vote ranges between 12 percent and 16 percent, according to public and private polling. "This closer it gets to 20 percent, the more our chances of winning go up," Barr said. Johnson will appear on the ballot in every state this fall, while Green Party nominee Jill Stein is on track to make it in at least half. Neither is remotely within reach of carrying a state. Neither seems in a position to tip any state toward Trump.

But Johnson could move a close race toward Clinton, in much the same way that Ralph Nader pulled enough votes away from Democrat Al Gore in 2000 to hand Florida to Republican George W. Bush. Four years ago, Libertarian candidates in Arizona drew enough votes away from Republicans that Democrats Ann Kirkpatrick and Kyrsten Sinema won election to the US House. Flake, who had endeared himself to many Libertarians while serving in the House, won his Senate race that year, too. "It's a really sore spot for the party," Arizona

Republican Party spokesman Tim Sifert said of those 2012 results. "You could see people frustrated, throwing away their vote and going with a third-party candidate."

The views of most Libertarians, focused on personal liberty and small government, overlap more with Republicans than Democrats. Johnson's call for dramatically lower business taxes and regulation to unburden entrepreneurs resonates with Matthew Sherman of Phoenix, who describes himself as more a conservative than a Republican. "I'm for whoever has the best plan on startup companies," said the 31-year-old who's working on a business networking app. "So far, that's Gary." Republican Dave Richins, a councilman in Mesa City, said Johnson is conservative on spending, but tolerant on social issues, which he calls "a pragmatic combination."

"For me, a lifelong Republican, I don't agree with everything Johnson proposes," said Richins, a Johnson organizer. "But I find his pragmatism refreshing."

That's how we get things done." Johnson's hands-off approach to government also includes decriminalizing marijuana, and he could benefit from a November ballot proposal in Arizona on that question. "That's another reason for Libertarians to vote in higher numbers," said Barr, who is running the decriminalization campaign. "We're inclined to believe that could increase Johnson's performance."

At the beginning of August, Johnson's campaign had \$1.2 million after raising \$1.6 million in July, according to Federal Election Commission reports. Since Aug 1, he's raised more than \$3 million, according to his campaign. That's a paltry sum compared with Trump and Clinton, whose campaign said it raised a total of \$143 million last month. Johnson is spending in a few competitive campaign states, including Colorado, Iowa, New Hampshire and Wisconsin, and less competitive ones such as Oregon, New Mexico and Utah. — AP



**INDIANA:** A group of boys watch as a man rides his bike at the West Calumet Housing Complex in East Chicago, Indiana. The soil at the complex has been found to contain high levels of lead and arsenic putting all residents in danger if exposed to the elements. Over 1,000 residents are being asked by the East Chicago Housing Authority to relocate, after plans were decided to demolish the housing complex. — AFP

## LAX TERMINAL EVACUATED AFTER TRAFFIC STOP TRIGGERS CONCERNS

**LOS ANGELES:** A terminal at Los Angeles International Airport was temporarily evacuated and 18 flights were delayed after an arrest led to a security breach Sunday morning. Some travelers moved past a security area without being screened when officers asked them to move inside Terminal 3 as they pulled over a driver in a stolen vehicle outside the terminal, airport police Officer Rob Pedregon said. He said about 15 people went through an emergency exit and onto the tarmac. Police quickly moved those people back into the airport, and the terminal was evacuated as a precaution, Pedregon said.

Police searched the terminal with bomb-sniffing dogs and, once the area was cleared, as many as 2,000 travelers had to be rescreened, authorities said. Nine arriving and nine departing flights were delayed. A 35-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of possessing a stolen car and narcotics. He was identified as Larry McKenney of Humboldt, Texas. Four others who were in or near the car were questioned and released, police said. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said in a statement that recent events around the world "have caused travelers everywhere to have



**LOS ANGELES:** Airplanes are grounded on the tarmac at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) after reports of gunfire in the airport terminal. —AFP

a heightened level of concern for their safety."

"The millions of people whose journeys begin, end, or pass through LAX should know that it has the finest, most prepared airport police force and federal security personnel in the nation - and that their safety and protection will always be our number-

one priority," he said. The evacuation came a week after 911 calls falsely reporting gunshots at LAX sent panicked travelers running onto streets and the tarmac. A search uncovered no evidence of a gunman or shots fired. Officials said loud noises spurred the 911 calls, and police were still investigating their source. — AP

## DEMOCRATS EYING SENATE TAKEOVER

### US POLITICIANS COUNTING ON INDIANA

**INDIANAPOLIS:** Republican Senate candidates around the country, from Wisconsin to Florida, are bracing for Donald Trump to lose their states, and they're looking for ways to win in spite of him. In Indiana, GOP Senate nominee Todd Young is facing a completely different, but arguably even more frustrating challenge. His opponent, former Democratic Sen Evan Bayh, shocked Young and pretty much everyone else when he got into the race less than two months ago at the urging of Senate Democratic leaders.

Bayh announced he'd changed his mind after retiring from Congress in a well-publicized burst of frustration six years ago, and wanted his old job back. Since then, Bayh has barely talked about Trump, who's expected to win Indiana. But then Bayh barely talks about Young either, or really much about politics at all. Instead Bayh, a youthful 60, is trying to cruise to victory on the strength of his own popularity from his years as Indiana's governor in the 1990s, and his family's long history in the state, where his father, Birch Bayh, also was a senator.

Evan Bayh avoids much contact with the media and instead pops up around the state almost unannounced to regale appreciative voters with anecdotes. About the time as a kid when Harry Truman walked him to the bathroom. About the white socks his father wore with a suit. About his 20-year-old twin sons' enormous appetites. About how he went to the new Jason Bourne movie ("which I'm

not sure I'd advise"), only to be given, to his dismay, a senior ticket.

He started the campaign with a massive lead in fundraising and polls, and his strategy is plainly to run out the clock on the election before either advantage disappears. The strategy exasperates Republicans, who have reams of opposition research about Bayh, much of it focused on the fact that he spent the past six years of his life living in multimillion-dollar residences not in Indiana. But the GOP may not have enough time to turn voters' views before the Nov 8 election. "He's running a campaign based on his dad's name, which is pretty sad," said Young, 44, a hard-working third-term congressman and former Marine who's not well-known outside his southern Indiana district. "Evan Bayh represents the old way of politics, the old way of doing things, and this is a change election. And I represent change." Young was the easy favorite to win the seat after beating a tea party opponent in the May primary, but that was before Bayh got into the race. Since then, Republicans argue that they've given Bayh a tougher contest than he bargained for after not being on the ballot in 12 years.

Bayh acknowledges the campaigning seems rougher than before, but insists he doesn't regret getting back in. "It's a lot nastier than I remember," Bayh said recently outside an Indianapolis senior center where many residents had personal stories to share about him. One remembered Bayh

being born; another said Bayh officiated at her daughter's wedding. "I'm doing this because I want to make a difference to the people of my state," Bayh said. "If I've got to put up with some of the nasty politics, well, then so be it." Putting Indiana in their likely win column would be a major coup for Democrats in this year's costly fight for Senate control. Republicans command a slim 54-46 majority, and Democrats need to pick up four seats to take back power if they hang onto the White House. The electoral map greatly favors Democrats this year, and Republicans are on defense on unfavorable terrain in a half-dozen states, including Illinois and Wisconsin, where Democrats lead in the polls. The Wisconsin race also features a former senator trying to make a comeback, although Democrat Russ Feingold lost to the man he is now trying to replace, GOP Sen Ron Johnson.

Intense struggles are underway in Nevada, where Minority Leader Harry Reid's retirement gave Republicans their one pickup opportunity, and in New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Florida, where incumbent GOP Sen. Marco Rubio is seen as having an edge over Democratic Rep. Patrick Murphy. Democratic hopes have faded in Ohio, where Sen Rob Portman has run a strong campaign against former Democratic Gov Ted Strickland. But Democrats are holding out hope for North Carolina, Missouri and Arizona, where GOP Sen. John McCain is seeking a sixth term. — AP

## CALIFORNIA JAIL REVIEWS SECURITY AFTER UNARMED OFFICERS SHOT

**FRESNO:** A central California jail was examining security measures after an ex-convict shot and wounded two unarmed officers in the lobby, but officials said Sunday that they did not plan any immediate changes. After reviewing Saturday's shooting that left correctional Officers Juanita Davila and Toamalama Scanlan in critical condition, authorities will decide whether to alter procedures in the public area of the Fresno County jail, sheriff's spokesman Tony Botti said. Unarmed officers guard the facility and visitors go through metal detectors leading to secure areas, Botti said. Visiting hours resumed Sunday evening when the jail lobby reopened.

Thong Vang, 37, is accused of shooting the officers in the head and neck areas during a struggle and has been booked into jail on suspicion of attempted murder, possessing a handgun as a felon and bringing drugs into a jail. He was placed on a parole hold, Botti said. Vang was released from prison in 2014 after serving 16 years for raping three girls aged 14 and under, Sheriff Margaret

Mims said. He had no criminal violations since his release. Botti said he didn't know if Vang had an attorney who could comment on his behalf.

Scanlan, who has 10 years of experience, and Davila, an 18-year veteran, approached Vang after he tried to cut to the front of the visitors' line and began pacing near a secure area of the jail. The officers were trying to get him to sit down when shots rang out. About 15 people, including small children, ran to safety. Officers inside the jail ran to the lobby, where a lieutenant shot at Vang, who returned fire, Botti said. No one was hit. Officers tried to subdue Vang with a stun gun, but he would not give up and ran to the hallway of the jail records area, authorities said.

When confronted by sheriff's deputies and a Fresno police officer, Vang dropped his weapon and told authorities he wanted to be arrested, Botti said. The injured officers were dragged out of the lobby and taken to the hospital to undergo surgery. —AP

# HCA

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## UK PM REJECTS POINTS-BASED IMMIGRATION CONTROLS SOUGHT BY BREXIT CAMPAIGNERS

**HANGZHOU:** British Prime Minister Theresa May rejected a "points-based" system to screen immigrants, setting up a potential conflict with Brexit campaigners in her government who promised to bring in Australian-style controls over EU migrants. May, who favored staying in the European Union but has promised to deliver on the June 23 referendum vote by steering Britain out of the bloc, said such systems were difficult to manage and there was no "silver bullet" on immigration.

May has made clear that there will have to be tougher controls over immigration but has yet to say how the rules will work - a crucial issue for employers and for negotiations with the EU over future British access to the European market. "There is no single silver bullet that is the answer in terms of dealing with immigration," she told reporters on her way to a G20 summit in China, citing her experience as Britain's longest-serving interior minister in over 50 years.

"One of the issues is whether or not points-

based systems do work," May said. A spokeswoman for May later told reporters that Britain would control immigration but that a points-based system "will not work and is not an option." The spokeswoman said the way controls would work had yet to be determined. Australia vets immigrants according to their occupation, qualifications and other factors. A source close to May's thinking said she objects to points-based systems because they are hard for the government to control and she would prefer something that can be more directly influenced.

The comments offer the first glimpse into May's stance on the hardest question thrown up by the referendum: how to tighten border controls with the EU without losing access to its single market. Britain's 27 partners are so far adamant that it cannot enjoy full trade benefits unless it continues to let in EU nationals as before. In a sign of the extent of international concern over the impact of Brexit, Japan published a 15-page report setting out dozens of its

requests of Britain and the EU including maintaining access to workers from the EU and UK.

**Brexit light?**

The prime minister risks upsetting key members of the team she assembled in July to deliver an EU exit that protects Britain's global standing and carves out a new role for the country at the vanguard of global free trade. Foreign minister Boris Johnson and trade minister Liam Fox were part of the 'Brexit' camp that argued that voting to leave the European Union would free Britain from the duty to admit all EU nationals who want to live and work here, enabling it to cut immigration.

Speaking in June before he was appointed as foreign minister, Johnson - figurehead of the Leave campaign and May's one-time rival for the prime minister's job - said a points-based system could bring back democratic control and better meet businesses' needs. May's words will fuel fears among voters and Eurosceptic lawmakers that hav-

ing a pro-Remain prime minister in charge will result in a watered-down version of Brexit that does not represent what people voted for. "I'm worried," Nigel Farage, one of the most prominent Brexit campaigners and former head of the UK Independence Party, told BBC radio when asked about May's comments.

Farage said British voters had endorsed the idea of points based system of immigration that would ensure Britain took well-vetted EU immigrants. British lawmakers will debate a public petition calling for a re-run of the EU referendum. While four million people signed the petition, May has said the referendum result was clear and that "Brexit means Brexit". Asked whether immigration controls precluded access to the EU single market, May said she was optimistic about what sort of deal Britain could negotiate. "I want to be ambitious with what we can achieve, I don't take anything for granted, I'm going out there to get the best possible deal." — Reuters

FRANCE'S PROSECUTORS  
SEEK TRIAL FOR SARKOZY

## A POTENTIALLY MAJOR BLOW TO SARKOZY'S RE-ELECTION BID

**PARIS:** Prosecutors have recommended that French ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy stand trial over alleged illegal campaign financing, legal sources said yesterday, in a potentially major blow to his bid for re-election next year. The 61-year-old Sarkozy, who was president from 2007-2012, had seen his poll ratings rise recently after taking a headline on Islam and immigration following a truck massacre in Nice in July which saw 86 people killed.

The campaign financing case, one of several investigations which have dogged Sarkozy since leaving office, involves allegedly false accounting used in 2012 to conceal campaign overspending by his office. Sarkozy's lawyer Thierry Herzog, reacting to news the prosecution had recommended a trial, dismissed the development as a "shoddy new political manoeuvre" that would not withstand scrutiny. "Two years of investigation have shown (Sarkozy's) total lack of involvement" in the affair, Herzog said in a statement.

**Bad timing for Sarkozy**

An investigating magistrate must now decide whether to order a trial, with a decision possible as early as the end of this month-just as the right-wing Republicans party is preparing to choose its presidential candidate. Sarkozy's chief rival in the Republican primaries, set for November 20 and 27, is 71-year-old former premier and Bordeaux mayor Alain Juppe, who is seen as a moderate. The outcome of France's election in April and May next year is seen as difficult to forecast.

Socialist President Francois Hollande, suffering historically low ratings due to high

unemployment and a string of terror attacks, is yet to say if he will seek re-election. Both the Socialists and the Republicans, France's traditional parties, have seen support steadily eroded by the far-right National Front and they might also face challenges from independents, such as former economy minister Emmanuel Macron. Sarkozy has positioned himself on the right of the Republican party and has waded into a recent heated national debate over the burkini, speaking out in favour of a short-lived ban on the Muslim body-concealing swimsuit.

**PR company in spotlight**

The campaign financing case hinges on the activity of public relations firm Bygmalion, which organized some of Sarkozy's campaign appearances in 2012 in his doomed bid for a second term. Bygmalion allegedly charged 18.5 million euros (\$20.7 million) to Sarkozy's party-then called the UMP, but since renamed The Republicans-instead of billing the president's re-election campaign. As a result, the campaign was able to greatly exceed a spending limit of 22.5 million euros, according to the prosecution.

There are 13 other potential defendants in the case including campaign officials and Bygmalion employees. Bygmalion executives have acknowledged the existence of fraud and false billing, but no one has been directly accused of Sarkozy of having been aware or taken decisions about it. However, the former president's campaign director, Guillaume Lambert, has told police he warned Sarkozy of the risk of breaching financing limits. Questioned by police in



**LA BAULE:** Former French president and candidate for the right-wing 'Les Republicains' (LR) party primary ahead of the 2017 presidential election Nicolas Sarkozy (4th right) shakes hands with supporters after delivering a speech during the LR political party summer camp in La Baule, western France. — AFP

September 2015, Sarkozy said he did not remember the warning, and described the controversy as a "farce", putting the responsibility squarely on Bygmalion and the UMP. While the campaign financing case is currently the most pressing, Sarkozy has been fighting legal problems on several fronts. He still faces accusations of conspiring with his lawyer to bribe a magistrate in exchange for inside information on a separate corruption probe. In the most sensational case against him, Sarkozy was cleared in October

2013 of accepting campaign donations in 2007 from France's richest woman, L'Oreal heiress Liliane Bettencourt, when she was too frail to know what she was doing. The son of a Hungarian immigrant father, Sarkozy was nicknamed the "bling-bling" president for his flashy displays of wealth. After his humiliating 2012 defeat by Hollande, Sarkozy famously promised that "you won't hear about me anymore" before he embarked the international conference circuit. — AFP

MERKEL UNDER FIRE AFTER POLL  
DEFEAT TO ANTI-MIGRANT PARTY

**BERLIN:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel came under fresh fire over her open-door refugee policy yesterday after her party suffered a humiliating defeat against an upstart anti-migrant populist party in her home state. The right-wing populist Alternative for Germany (AfD) party clinched almost 21 percent in its first bid for seats in the regional parliament of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania on Sunday. With her eyes on national elections next year, AfD co-chief Beatrix von Storch hailed the shock outcome as "the beginning of the end of the Merkel era", while Bild daily labelled the result another "slap across the face" for the chancellor.

The AfD's rise mirrors success enjoyed by other anti-immigration parties across Europe, with France's Front National (FN) riding high in the polls and a far-right populist eyeing the presidency in Austria in elections on October 2. Merkel's conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) won just 19 percent in its worst ever score in the ex-communist northeastern state, while the Social Democrats maintained top place with over 30 percent.

The state vote was held exactly one year after Merkel opened German borders to a mass influx of Syrian refugees and other migrants that would swell arrivals in Europe's top economy to one million asy-

lum seekers in 2015. While her welcoming stance initially won much praise, the mood has since considerably darkened as popular worries have grown about how to integrate the newcomers. The AfD has capitalized on such fears, especially since a spate of sexual assaults blamed on North African men on New Year's Eve, and a series of bloody attacks this summer, some claimed by the Islamic State group. With its latest win, the Islamophobic AfD, founded just over three years ago, is now represented in nine out of Germany's 16 regional parliaments, and hoping for more gains when the capital Berlin goes to the polls in two weeks.

**'Protest storm'**

The state election in the sprawling farming and coastal state is the latest to serve as a bellwether ahead of national elections in late 2017. Merkel, in power for 11 years, has not yet said whether she will run for a fourth term but is widely expected to do so. Although Sunday's election was held in Germany's poorest and least populous state, the outcome was significant in part because it is home to Merkel's constituency, the port city of Stralsund. "This was more than a small state election, it was a vote on Merkel," said news site Spiegel Online, pointing at the "protest storm" in "Merkel's living room." — AFP



**SCHWERIN:** AfD (Alternative for Germany) party chairwoman, Frauke Petry, speaks with journalists after first exit polls for the state elections in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, in Schwerin, Germany. — AP



**LIBREVILLE:** A burned vehicle sits outside a government building after an election protest in Libreville, Gabon. — AP

INTERNET BACK IN GABON BUT  
POST-ELECTION TENSIONS RIFE

**LIBREVILLE:** Internet services in Gabon partially resumed yesterday after a five-day blackout following days of violence and chaos sparked by President Ali Bongo's disputed re-election. Post-election unrest has claimed at least seven lives in the oil-rich central African nation, ruled by the Bongo family since 1967. Ali Bongo's rival Jean Ping, a veteran diplomat who has held a top African Union job and served as foreign minister, has already vowed to challenge the result. Bongo was declared victorious by a razor-thin margin of just under 6,000 votes, but Ping has insisted the vote was rigged and on Friday claimed victory for himself. He is calling for a recount-something the Gabonese authorities have so far refused to do. Yesterday, the internet was accessible but social media networks remained blocked, according to AFP journalists in the capital Libreville. Banks and shops reopened in the seaside city and taxis returned to the streets. But many shops offered only limited provisions as the unrest stalled deliveries.

The violence after the announcement of the results on Wednesday has sparked international concern with top diplomats calling for restraint as rights groups raised alarm over the use of excessive force. At least seven people have died, according to an AFP count, and some 800 people have been arrested in the capital UN chief Ban Ki-moon

spoke to both Bongo and Ping on Sunday and "deplored the loss of life", a UN statement said. "He expressed concern about the continuing inflammatory messages being disseminated and called for an immediate end to all acts of violence in the country," it said.

**'Things will start heating up'**

Tensions remained high in the economic capital Port-Gentil and Total workers turned up for the first since Tuesday, a management source in the French oil giant said. A Total worker said there had been gunshots heard in the city overnight. "The refinery remains closed. The teams working round-the-clock are only there to ensure security," said an official at Sogara, Gabon's sole refinery jointly owned by the government and a clutch of major international firms. The troubles have also caused prices to rocket. "Four chillies now cost 1,000 CFA francs (1.5 euros, \$1.6) against 200 to 300 CFA francs earlier," said Andre, a resident from Lalala-a-gauche, a working class area in Libreville. "Things will really start heating up," he said, echoing a widespread fear in the capital. The country had previously enjoyed relative political stability, mainly because former colonial power France helped Omar Bongo rule for 41 years. After he died in June 2009, his son Ali won an election but opposition media claimed he had essentially been installed by France. — AFP

## News

In brief

**Iran shuts 800 shops for selling 'unconventional' women coats**

**TEHRAN:** Iranian police said they had closed more than 800 clothes shops to stop them selling "unconventional" women's coats, state media reported yesterday. A further 3,000 shops have been sent warnings, the IRNA news agency reported. A new fashion for women's coats-known as "manteaux" in Iran-with English phrases printed on the back had attracted the attention of the authorities, who passed new regulations in July. The coats in question tend to have nonsensical phrases such as "Keep Calm I'm the Queen" written on them, but they also have short arms and no buttons in the front. Under Iranian law, women must wear a manteau, or similar item, that loosely covers the whole body from the neck down to the knee.

**Over 1,000 flee wildfire on Spain's Costa Blanca**

**MADRID:** More than 1,000 people have been evacuated after a wildfire fuelled by intense heat roared through brush surrounding a popular tourist resort on Spain's Costa Blanca, officials said yesterday. Some 300 firefighters backed 20 water-dropping aircraft were battling the blaze which broke out Sunday near the Mediterranean resort of Javea, a local emergency services official said. Officials suspect the fire was started deliberately. Officials evacuated over 1,000 people late on Sunday from Javea and the resort of Benitatxell near Benidorm, popular with British and German tourists, due to the threat from the flames. They were put up in schools. Residents of Javea also offered to put up evacuees for the night and gave them food and water, Javea city councillor Maria del Pilar Zamora told private television Antena 3. Photos and videos posted on social media showed flames raging near built up areas. Several homes were completely destroyed by the fire, according to Antena 3.

**Teenager jailed in Australia over foiled beheading plot**

**MELBOURNE:** A teenager who plotted to run down and behead a police officer in an Anzac Day terrorist attack in Australia after being "corrupted by lunatic clerics" was Monday sentenced yesterday to 10 years in jail. Sevdet Besim, 19, pleaded guilty to "doing an act in preparation, or planning for, a terrorist act" over the 2015 plan to attack commemorations in Melbourne honoring soldiers who fought and died for Australia. The Victorian Supreme Court had previously heard that Besim discussed the plot in encrypted messages with a British boy, who was 14 at the time. The boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, masterminded the foiled plot from his bedroom in Lancashire, northern England and was jailed for five years last October. Justice Michael Croucher said Besim's proposed "putrid act" was aimed at advancing violent jihad, intimidating the government and striking fear into the wider community.

**Secret service arrests kingpin behind kidnap of Australians**

**LAGOS:** Nigeria's secret service said it had arrested a man allegedly behind the abduction of seven contractors in the restive oil-rich south following a spate of hostage-for-ransom crimes. Three Australian contractors working for Lafarge Cement Company near the southern city of Calabar were kidnapped in June along with two Nigerians, a New Zealander and a South African. Their Nigerian driver was killed in the attack and a fourth Australian escaped. The kidnapped men were later released with Nigerian police saying at the time that no ransom was paid. "On 22nd August, 2016, one Samuel Asuquo, a kidnap kingpin was arrested by the Service at Nasarawa Bakoko village in Cross River State," the Department of State Service said in a statement late Sunday. "Asuquo was the mastermind of the kidnap of three Australian staff of Lafarge Cement Company, for which his gang received ransom of 150 million naira (\$476,000/426,000 euros)."

**The Italian navy recovers bodies of dead migrants**

**ROME:** The Italian navy announced yesterday it had recovered the bodies of six migrants in search and rescue operations which saved nearly 500 people. Two patrol boats "recovered nearly 500 people during six rescue operations, including one involving an inflatable boat which was only just about floating, and from which some migrants had fallen into the sea," it said in a statement. "Six bodies were recovered so far. Search and rescue operations for survivors are continuing," added the navy, which has deployed significant resources off the Libyan coast. A huge wave of migrants arrived in Italy at the end of August, when some 14,000 people were rescued in the space of five days. According to UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) figures 117,590 migrants arrived in Italy between the start of 2015 and September 1, around the same level as last year.

**Zambia court throws out election result challenge**

**LUSAKA:** Zambia's constitutional court yesterday threw out an attempt by the defeated presidential candidate to annul August's election results, clearing the way for President Edgar Lungu's inauguration. Hakainde Hichilema, who lost the election by 100,000 votes, had alleged that the result was rigged and launched a legal bid to stop Lungu retaining power. Zambia is known for its relative stability, but the run-up to the vote was marked by clashes between supporters of Lungu's Patriotic Front (PF) and Hichilema's United Party for National Development (UPND).



**CALAIS:** Farmers drive from Loon Plage to Calais during a joint "go-slow" protest with truck drivers on the A16 highway calling for the dismantling of the so-called "Jungle" migrant camp in the French northern port city of Calais. —AFP

## FRENCH FARMERS, TRUCKERS BLOCK ROADS IN MIGRANT CAMP PROTEST

**CALAIS:** French farmers and truckers blocked the main routes in and out of the port of Calais yesterday to call for the closure of the sprawling "Jungle" migrant camp. Around 70 trucks mounted a "go-slow" on the A16 motorway—the main artery for freight and passengers heading for Britain either via the Channel Tunnel or on board ferries from the port. Under a light drizzle, the trucks were joined by a line of farmers on their tractors, bringing to a near-standstill the route used by trucks from all over Europe to reach Calais. Despite the large tailbacks, many motorists passing the other way sounded their horns in support.

"We've had no answers, so we're blocking things up," said Frederic Van Gansbeke, who represents businesses and shop-owners in Calais. The Jungle, a squalid camp of makeshift tents and shelters, is home to some 7,000 migrants but charities say the number might be as high as 10,000 after an influx this summer. Migrants from the camp often use tree branches to create road blocks to slow trucks heading for Britain, their destination of choice. When the trucks slow down, migrants try to clamber into the trailers to stow away aboard.

Angry drivers say migrants have attacked their vehicles with metal bars and that the overstretched police are unable to protect them. Nicolas Lotin, who runs a logistics company in nearby Boulogne-sur-Mer, said: "Every day, we have to wonder whether our working day will be ruined, whether a migrant will sneak under the truck's canvas. If the goods are damaged, they have to be immediately transported back to the home

depot," he said. "This demonstration is to shout loud and clear about how fed up road hauliers are," said David Sagnard, head of the local branch of the National Federation of Road Hauliers.

"What we're calling for today are security measures so we can drive completely safely on the A16 motorway and on the port road," he added. Calais mayor Natacha Bouchart, who has frequently clashed with the government over the Jungle, joined the protest wearing an "I love Calais" T-shirt. The mayor claims the camp may soon contain as many as 15,000 migrants if authorities take several months to dismantle it. Organizers said they hoped that up to 500 people would join a "human chain" protest in the town's stadium later Monday.

### 'As soon as possible'

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve promised during a visit to the Jungle on Friday to close the camp down "as quickly as possible" but said it would be done in stages. Disgruntled Calais residents want the authorities to set a date for the entire camp to be cleared. Bars and restaurants in Calais—which is also the main gateway to France for millions of British holidaymakers—say their trade has been severely hit by the presence of the Jungle. Business owners want compensation from the state for lost income. France has made repeated efforts to close the Jungle. Earlier this year, authorities cleared shelters in parts of the site in a bid to persuade migrants to move into more permanent accommodation or camps elsewhere on France's northern coast. —AFP

# A RARE FOCUS ON LITTLE-KNOWN LAOS AS IT HOSTS MAJOR SUMMIT

## SOMBATH'S DISAPPEARANCE - A TEST CASE FOR OBAMA

**VIENTIANE:** The light was fading over Vientiane on a cool December evening when a Jeep was stopped at a traffic light. CCTV video later showed the occupant of the car being pulled out and taken away in a pickup truck, never to be seen again. The disappearance of Sombath Somphone nearly four years ago is a reminder of the dismal human rights record of the authoritarian government of Laos, which prepares to host President Barack Obama and Asian leaders at a regional summit starting today.

Authorities say they are investigating but have provided no leads into Sombath's whereabouts, and no arrests have been made, leading critics of Laos' communist government to believe that his disappearance was state-orchestrated. "It's a test case for Obama. If he mentions it publicly it would make it much more difficult for Laos to sweep it under the carpet. The fact that the most powerful man on the planet cares about Sombath will count for something," said Phil Robertson, the deputy Asia director of Human Rights Watch.

The three-day summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations shines a rare spotlight on the landlocked nation of Laos, which usually stays under the radar. Along with Brunei, it is the most under-reported and under-scrutinized country in the 10-nation ASEAN. Unlike fellow communist country Vietnam, the country of 6.2 million people is no economic beehive of activity. Nor does it have a democracy icon like Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar.

Tourism, which has made Thailand a household name around the world, remains nascent; and it is not a US ally like the Philippines, Singapore or Malaysia. Nor is it the world's biggest Muslim nation by population like Indonesia to give it prominence. Little wonder then that what goes on in Laos, largely stays in Laos. But by virtue of taking on the rotating chairmanship of ASEAN this year, it has suddenly sprung into limelight. Also, it's the first time a US president will visit Laos.

Sombath's disappearance on Dec 15, 2012, was captured on a traffic CCTV video, in which he is seen being stopped at a police outpost and asked to step out of his Jeep, according to Amnesty International. Within a few minutes a man on a motorcycle arrives, drives away Sombath's vehicle and a pickup truck takes Sombath away with armed people riding a motorcycle leading the way. The passenger on the motorcycle fires a gunshot into the air, said Amnesty.

"More than three years have passed since Sombath Somphone was last seen. We have no alternative but to conclude that the authorities are either directly responsible for his disappearance, or have failed miserably to take all necessary measures to get to the bottom of what happened," said Rafendi Djamin, Amnesty International's director for Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

Sombath's wife, Shui Meng Ng, was driving her car ahead of Sombath. She thought she had lost him in the traffic and didn't see the drama unfolding

behind her. "I am sorry to say I have no new information to share, except that the Lao Government has continued to stonewall any queries to his whereabouts. The government continues to maintain that 'the state is not involved and the police are still investigating,'" said Ng, a Singaporean and a former UN official. If Sombath was taken away by the government he was an unlikely target. The US-educated activist mostly worked in rural development, showing farmers creative ways to raise fish and make handicrafts.

### Disappearances

But he was also vocal about land deals that had left thousands of villagers homeless without compensation, sparking rare political protests. And he had international connections. Sombath is not the only one to be a possible victim of a government crackdown. In 2015, an ethnic Lao who is a Polish citizen disappeared while visiting Laos, according to his Polish wife, allegedly for posting critical comments on Facebook. He was subsequently charged in court and sentenced to prison for 4 years and 9 months.

In March this year, three young Lao migrant work-

ers who returned to Laos to renew their passports vanished, and reappeared on state TV in prison uniform to "confess" to using the internet to "defame the government." They have not been charged and their parents have not been allowed to visit them. Another dissident, Ka Yang, who had fled to Thailand was deported to Laos in 2011 and was imprisoned. Most Laotians are unaware of such events because of the government's watertight control over the media, the security forces and the judiciary. Those who know are too fearful to talk about it.

"Laos has now become one of the most rights-repressing countries in ASEAN: leaders in the region and from around the world must stop looking the other way, and demand Vientiane end its asphyxiation of independent civil society," said Walden Bello, a former member of the Philippines Congress and vice chair of ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights. Most of Laos' top leaders are from the first generation of revolutionary fighters, and even those who have retired retain influence over the Communist Party and the government. But the leadership is passing on to a younger generation slowly, evident in the party congress held this year. —AP

## INDIA TO REPLACE SOME PELLET GUNS WITH CHILLI-FILLED SHELLS IN KASHMIR

**SRINAGAR:** Indian security forces will use shells full of a chilli compound as an alternative to shotgun pellets, to control crowds in Kashmir, the interior minister said yesterday, after widespread use of the weapons wounded thousands and inflamed public anger. More than 3,800 people have been wounded and one killed by shotgun pellets since protests against Indian rule erupted in the disputed territory in early July, with more than 100 left partially or fully blinded, official figures show.

Doctors say most cases go unreported, and critics want the government to use less harmful ammunition. "The committee has given its suggestions and the alternative of the non-lethal weapon has been suggested as PAVA shells," Home Minister Rajnath Singh told reporters as he led an all-party delegation to Srinagar, the summer capital of India's north-eastern state of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said security forces would begin using the shells, made of a compound found naturally in chilli powder, after a panel of experts decided they were sometimes a better alternative to pellet guns. The chilli compound, when fired, is thought to cause severe irritation and temporarily immobilize the target. "I think that won't result in the death of anyone. Since yes-

terday, 1,000 shells have already arrived here," said Singh, a senior figure in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's nationalist ruling party.

Although pellet guns are designed as a non-lethal weapon, police officers have told Reuters that security forces are often forced to use them at close range to protect themselves from mob attacks. India is struggling to contain the worst unrest in Muslim-majority Kashmir since 2010, and Singh's trip to Srinagar appeared to make little headway in resolving a crisis that has left 73 people dead, 71 of them civilians. On Sunday, separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani turned delegation members away at the door of his home, where he is under house arrest.

Singh said India was "pained" by the unrest in Kashmir, but lashed out at separatists for refusing to talk. Protests erupted in Kashmir after security forces killed a popular separatist leader on July 8, catching New Delhi off guard. Thousands of stone-pelting locals take to the streets almost every day in the protests, led largely by young people without an obvious leader, complicating Indian efforts to tackle them. Kashmir, claimed in full but ruled in part by India and Pakistan, has been at the heart of nearly seven decades of hostility between the neighbors. —Reuters



**KABUL:** Afghan policemen stand guard overlooking the site of a twin suicide bombing near the Ministry of Defense in Kabul yesterday. —AFP

# TWIN TALEBAN SUICIDE BLASTS IN KABUL KILL 24

**KABUL:** At least 24 people were killed and 91 wounded yesterday in a Taleban double suicide bombing in central Kabul during late afternoon rush hour, the latest assault on the Afghan capital. The carnage near the defense ministry came as the Taleban ramp up their nationwide summer offensive against the US-backed government. The two bombers on foot blew themselves up in rapid succession, in an assault apparently aimed at inflicting mass casualties as government employees left the ministry after work. "The first explosion occurred on a bridge near the defense ministry.

When soldiers, policemen and civilians rushed to the scene, there was the second explosion," defense ministry spokesman Mohammad Radmanish said. Health ministry spokesman Waheed Majroh said the attack left 24 people dead and 91 others wounded, some of them seriously. "The casualties could rise still further," Majroh said. The Italian-run Emergency Hospital in Kabul tweet-

ed that it had so far received 21 injured people, four of whom died on arrival.

President Ashraf Ghani strongly condemned the attack and offered condolences to the families of the victims. "The enemies of Afghanistan have lost their ability to fight the Security and Defense Forces of the country," Ghani said in a statement. "That is why they are attacking highways, cities, mosques, schools and common people." Taleban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said on Twitter that the defense ministry was the object of the first attack, while police were targeted in the second.

The attack took place more than a week after 16 people were killed when militants stormed the American University of Afghanistan in Kabul, in a nearly 10-hour raid that prompted anguished pleas for help from trapped students. Explosions and gunfire rocked the campus in that attack, which came just weeks after two university pro-

fessors—an American and an Australian—were kidnapped at gunpoint near the school. Their whereabouts are still unknown and no group so far has publicly claimed responsibility for the abductions, the latest in a series of kidnappings in the conflict-torn country.

The uptick in violence in the capital comes as the Taleban escalate nationwide attacks, underscoring the worsening security situation since NATO forces ended their combat mission at the end of 2014. Afghan forces backed by US troops are seeking to head off a potential Taleban takeover of Lashkar Gah, the capital of the southern opium-rich province of Helmand. The Taleban have also closed in on Kunduz—the northern city they briefly seized last year in their biggest military victory since the 2001 US invasion leaving Afghan forces stretched on multiple fronts. But NATO coalition forces have insisted that neither Kunduz nor Lashkar Gah are at risk of falling to the insurgents. —AFP

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## FROM 'UMBRELLA REVOLUTION' LEADER TO LAWMAKER: NATHAN LAW

**HONG KONG:** Nathan Law, a student leader of Hong Kong's mass 'Umbrella Revolution' democracy rallies two years ago, is now at the forefront of a new guard of young lawmakers pushing for autonomy from China. In the biggest polls since the 2014 protests made Law a household name in Hong Kong, the 23-year-old entered the legislature with a convincing victory, gaining more than 50,000 votes. He becomes the youngest lawmaker in the Legislative Council (LegCo). Law was representing new party Demosisto-which he founded with fellow Umbrella Movement leader Joshua Wong-calling for Hong Kong people to have the right to vote in a referendum on independence from Beijing.

Britain in 1997 handed the city back to China under a "one country, two systems" agreement, with its rights and

freedoms guaranteed for 50 years under a semi-autonomous system. But fears are growing that Beijing is tightening its grip and that those liberties are being eroded. Law has pledged to push his party's self-determination message from the start in LegCo, the city's law-making body. "People are voting (for) a new way and a new future for the democratic movement," he said after his win.

"I'm bearing the trust and support of many people. It motivates me to do better." In an interview with AFP, Law cast himself as a bridge to unite the factions of the democratic camp, which is split between established parties wary of a pro-independence message and new activists who want more autonomy. University student Law, who is reading cultural studies, rose to prominence during the 2014 rallies, delivering speeches to tens of thousands who

protested on the streets and meeting government officials in what were ultimately fruitless negotiations.

After the failure of the Umbrella Movement to win political reform, morale in the pro-democracy camp waned, with Law and Wong in and out of court on protest-related charges. Law was last month convicted of inciting people to join an unlawful assembly, but escaped jail time with a community service sentence.

His election is a validation of the 2014 rallies, says Law, one of at least four young campaigners who are calling for more distance from Beijing to win a LegCo seat. "There are a lot more people coming out to vote because they see new choice," Law said. "We inherited some spirit from the (Umbrella) Movement and I hope that that can continue in the future." — AFP



**HONG KONG:** Student Nathan Law (center) who helped lead the 2014 protests, celebrates after winning a seat at the legislative council elections in Hong Kong yesterday. — AP

## Council Election



**HONG KONG:** Pro-democracy candidates (from left) Lam Cheuk-ting, Alvin Yeung Ngok-kiu, Raymond Chan Chi-chuen, Fernando Cheung and Leung Kwok-hung celebrate after winning seats at the legislative council elections in Hong Kong yesterday. — AP

## ANTI-CHINA POLITICIANS EMERGE VICTORIOUS IN HONG KONG VOTE

FEARS GROW AS BEIJING TIGHTENS ITS GRIP

**HONG KONG:** A new generation of young Hong Kong politicians advocating a break from Beijing became lawmakers for the first time yesterday in the biggest poll since mass pro-democracy rallies in 2014. A record 2.2 million people voted in the city-wide legislative election as fears grow Beijing is tightening its grip on the semi-autonomous city. It was the highest turnout since Hong Kong was returned to China by Britain in 1997 and comes as tensions have reached unprecedented highs over Beijing interference. Hong Kong's freedoms were protected for 50 years in the handover agreement, but many believe they are disappearing. Young activists particularly have lost faith in the "one country, two systems" deal under which the city is governed, which grants it much greater liberties than on the mainland. That disillusion, exacerbated by the failure of the 2014 rallies to win political reform, has spawned a slew of new parties calling for more autonomy.

As results rolled in, four of the new breed of candidates were confirmed to have won seats, with a fifth also on course for victory. Among them was Nathan Law, 23, leader of the 2014 "Umbrella Movement" rallies, who came second in his constituency. Hong Kong is split into five geographical constituencies, each with several seats in the Legislative Council (LegCo), Hong Kong's lawmaking body. Law and his new party Demosisto are calling for a referendum on independence, emphasizing Hong Kongers' right to choose whether they want to split from China.

"I think Hong Kongers really wanted change," Law said, celebrating his win. "Young people have a sense of urgency when it comes to the future." With the pro-democracy camp divided between those who back the idea of possible independence and those who are more wary of the once taboo notion, Law said he would seek unity. "We have to be united to fight against the (Chinese) Communist Party," he said. Law has previously distanced himself from the more radical "localist" movement, which includes activists who are stridently pro-independence and have previously advocated violence.

## 'Message to Beijing'

Young campaigners have been galvanized by a number of incidents which have pointed to increased Beijing interference. The most high-profile was the disappearance of five city book-sellers known for salacious titles about Beijing politicians. They resurfaced in detention on the mainland. Political analyst Willy Lam said voters had chosen the new guard to "send a strong message to Beijing." "Beijing will be very unhappy about the results and its quite possible that they may use this as a pretext to squeeze Hong Kong even harder," he said.

Beijing and Hong Kong authorities have repeatedly railed against the concept of independence as unconstitutional. The loudest pro-independence voices were banned by the government from standing in the vote, a move which triggered widespread anger. However,

some localists who were allowed to run called for independence on the campaign trail. One of them, Yau Wai-Ching of new party Youngspiration, gained a seat saying Hong Kong had "the right to discuss its sovereignty".

Another Youngspiration candidate, Baggio Leung, who has openly supported independence, also looked likely to win a seat as the count neared completion. A recount in one remaining constituency held up the final result and was continuing Monday afternoon. Most established pro-democracy politicians do not support the notion of independence and there were concerns in the democratic camp that new activists would split the vote, triggering overall losses. If the democrats were to lose four seats, they would forfeit the one-third voting bloc they need to veto bills, stacking the already skewed legislature even more in favor of Beijing.

Results so far show they are likely to hold on to that veto power, although some veteran democrat campaigners were voted out to make way for the new generation. However, the overall make-up of the LegCo remains weighted towards Beijing under a system that makes it almost impossible for the democracy camp to take a majority. Thirty of the council's 70 seats are elected by special interest groups representing a range of businesses and social sectors. Those seats go predominantly to pro-Beijing candidates. Of 3.7 million voters, 58 percent came out to vote, compared with 53 percent in 2012. — AFP

## MALAYSIA 'ABUZZ' AS OLD FOES MAHATHIR, ANWAR JOIN HANDS

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Once bitter foes, former Malaysian leader Mahathir Mohamad and the one-time protege he jailed, Anwar Ibrahim, exchanged a previously-unthinkable handshake yesterday that illustrated the country's topsy-turvy politics. Mahathir sparked a social media frenzy with a show of support at a court appearance by Anwar, who was jailed again last year by Malaysia's current government following a controversial sodomy conviction, the same charge Mahathir used against him in 1998.

The brief and smiling encounter-images were shared widely online-underlined the current political flux in Malaysia, where opposition to scandal-tainted current Prime Minister Najib Razak has upended alliances. Najib is accused of massive graft in the alleged looting of billions of dollars in state money. He denies the charge and has cracked down in response. Mahathir, who imposed his will on Malaysia for 22 years as prime minister before retiring in 2003, has led calls for Najib to be toppled and to face justice. Yesterday's meeting capped months in which Anwar and Mahathir have flirted from a distance, reviving memories of their stormy past.

The charismatic Anwar was deputy premier and heir apparent to the autocratic Mahathir until he was sacked in 1998 by his boss over political differences, an episode that continues to reverberate. Charged with sodomy and corruption, Anwar spent six years in jail. But he emerged to lead the previously ineffectual political opposition to historically strong electoral showings until he was jailed again in 2015 by Najib's government. Mahathir played down yesterday's meeting, saying he was merely showing support for a legal challenge launched by Anwar against a new security law.

## 'Now I've seen everything'

The law, rammed through last year by Najib's government, grants Najib draconian security powers. "I don't know about

friends but I know I talked to him," Mahathir said with a chuckle when reporters asked after the encounter whether the two were friendly again. "I met him and had a long chat with him about what he was doing." But the encounter quickly went viral in politics-obsessed Malaysia. "Now I think I have seen everything," Eric Paulsen of activist group Lawyers for Liberty said in tweeting an image of the handshake "a big deal" and a sign that "Mahathir has come full circle". "The fundamental problem for the opposition was that Mahathir and Anwar couldn't get along," he said. "Their shaking hands means their interests have converged." Anwar has condemned both of his convictions-on charges of sodomizing male aides-as false and politically motivated. Sodomy is illegal in the Muslim-majority country.

Najib denies the corruption allegations against him, but the US Justice Department filed suit in July to seize more than \$1 billion in luxury assets which it says were purchased with money stolen from Malaysian state fund 1MDB. Mahathir is spearheading an effort to form a new political party of anti-Najib figures from the ruling United Malays National Organization (UMNO). But his attacks on Najib have garnered mixed reviews, with many accusing him of hypocrisy for tolerating corruption and repressing dissent during his own premiership. — AFP

## G20 TRENDS LIGHTLY ON 'GLOBALISATION' TABOO

**HANGZHOU:** Facing populist ire at home, leaders at the G20 summit have tried to walk a fine line: Acknowledge anti-globalization anger while arguing that ever more liberal trade is the cure for sluggish economies. "The feeling of the G20 is that if we do not address the question of fairness, it will endanger global governance as we know it," a senior European diplomat told AFP at the sprawling venue in the Chinese city of Hangzhou.

Leaders from the Group of 20 economies sought to put a gentler face on global trade, touting its benefits in lifting millions out of poverty, while acknowledging that too many had been left behind. It was a striking tone for the Group of 20, which represents 85 percent of world GDP and two-thirds of its population. But the declaration of inclusion and equality struck an incongruous note in a city largely deserted of ordinary people. Authorities have detained potential troublemakers and ushered away millions of citizens to make way for delegations that swept in along empty highways.

Germany's Angela Merkel best illustrated the delicate approach, calling for the system to be made fairer but also speaking out against the temptation to look inwards, with "protectionist measures that put the brakes on growth". "The fight against inequality is an important theme, to firmly connect growth and social justice," said

Merkel, whose own approval ratings have sagged after she welcomed huge numbers of refugees into Germany. French President Francois Hollande said: "France is for globalization but on condition that it is regulated, that there are principles, standards, particularly for the environment, for society."

## Backsliding on trade

China's leader Xi Jinping in his opening speech warned against protectionism and backsliding on trade amid a backdrop of sluggish global growth. But there have been mixed messages from the group's members. US President Obama came to the summit to advocate his two signature trade deals for the European Union and Asia-Pacific. But at home his party's nominee Hillary Clinton has disowned the policies, which stand to lose her votes. For opponents of free trade, there is no bigger target than the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) which Washington wants to finalize before Obama steps down in January. Activists have criticized it since negotiations began in 2013, believing it will give big business unfair benefits and allow multinationals to escape regulation through the backdoor. Obama admitted before the G20 there was a "reaction" to globalization and that people were "absolutely right" to worry about inequality, but insisted: "The answer is not to pull up the drawbridge." — AFP



**HANGZHOU:** Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (center) poses with volunteers after the closing of the G20 Leaders Summit in Hangzhou yesterday. — AFP

## NORTH KOREA FIRES 3 BALLISTIC MISSILES

**SEOUL:** North Korea yesterday fired three suspected medium-range Rodong missiles that travelled about 1,000 kilometers and landed near Japan in an apparent show of force timed to the G-20 economic summit

in China, Seoul officials said. North Korea has staged a series of recent missile tests with increasing range, part of a program that aims to eventually build long-range nuclear missiles capable of striking the US main-

land. Such tests are fairly common when international attention is turned to Northeast Asia, and this one comes as world leaders are gathering for the G-20 summit of advanced and emerging economies in the city of Hangzhou in eastern China. Beijing is the North's only major ally, but ties between the neighbors have frayed amid a string of nuclear and missile tests and what many outsiders see as other provocations in recent years. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said that the three missiles, all believed to be Rodongs, were launched from the western North Korean town of Hwangju and flew across the country before splashing in the sea. A Joint Chiefs of Staff statement described the launches as an "armed protest" meant to demonstrate North Korea's military capability on the occasion of the G-20 summit and days before the North Korean government's 68th anniversary.

In early August, another Rodong missile fired by North Korea also travelled about 1,000 kilometers, the longest-ever flight distance by that missile. Japan's Kyodo news agency

said all three missiles yesterday fell in Japan's exclusive economic zone in the Sea of Japan, which the Koreans call the East Sea. Japan's Foreign Ministry says Prime Minister Shinzo Abe approached South Korean President Park Geun-hye during a coffee break at the G-20 and agreed to cooperate closely.

The White House said the United States was closely monitoring what it described as the latest provocation by North Korea. President Barack Obama was in China meeting with the leaders of France and Germany around the time of the launch. Before yesterday's launch, on the sidelines of the G-20 summit, Park criticized the North for what she called provocations that are hurting Seoul-Beijing ties. The latest firing won't help the push by Chinese President Xi Jinping to get Park to scrap the planned deployment of a powerful US anti-missile system in the South. During a bilateral meeting yesterday's final day of the G-20, Xi warned Park that "mishandling the issue is not conducive to strategic stability in the region, and could intensify disputes." — AP



**SEOUL:** Visitors walk past replicas of North Korean Scud-B missile (left) and South Korean Nike missiles (right) at the Korean War Memorial in Seoul yesterday. North Korea fired three ballistic missiles off its east coast yesterday, Seoul said, in a new show of force that comes as top world leaders meet for the G20 summit in China. — AFP

## SAUDIS TIGHTEN BELTS FOR EID...

Continued from Page 1

The value of imports into Saudi Arabia plunged 24 percent from a year earlier in June; while some of the drop may be due to reduced purchases of equipment for government projects, some appears due to weaker imports of consumer goods.

### Purchasing Power

The official unemployment rate among Saudi citizens is around 11.5 percent. So far, relatively few have lost their jobs because of this year's slowdown; legal restrictions make firing Saudis difficult, so the kingdom's population of 10 million foreign workers has borne the brunt of layoffs. However, government ministries and state-owned firms, who employ about two-thirds of working Saudis, are adopting a more frugal approach to their staff.

Lavish bonuses, overtime payments and other benefits - once considered routine perks in the state sector - have been slashed. Essam Al-Zamel, another Saudi economist, said such benefits accounted for up to 30 percent of Saudis' take-home income, so many people now felt significantly poorer. Meanwhile, the government has raised domestic gasoline and utility prices to save money on state subsidies, almost doubling the annual inflation rate to around 4 percent.

Although Riyadh is encouraging Saudis to establish private businesses to reduce the economy's dependence on oil revenues, the economic slowdown is making this harder by cutting the incomes of some entrepreneurs. "I used to travel three times a year to Dubai and Europe, but this year I didn't and I am not going anywhere this Eid...I cannot afford it anymore," said Sultan Al-Dossary, 27, a Saudi who runs a small enterprise helping firms interact with the government. He said his net income had fallen to around 3,000 riyals (\$800) per month from 10,000 to 12,000 six months ago. He plans to sell one of his three cars to shore up his finances.

The impact of such belt-tightening can be seen in shopping centers and restaurants in Riyadh, Jeddah and oil-producing Eastern Province. Glitzy malls display signs such as "70% Sale", "Further Reduction" and "Clearance"; many restaurants offer cut-price lunch packages. Jarir Marketing Co, one of the biggest retailers in the kingdom, reported a 25 percent year-on-year drop in net profit for the first half of 2016 as sales fell 15 percent. The slide in retail consumer purchases at Jarir's stores has been in the high single digits, while the cut in corporate and government spending on office and computer supplies has been even steeper, Jarir's chairman Muhammad Alagil told Reuters.

There are reasons to think consumer spending may soon stop falling. Corporate surveys in the past two months suggest private sector growth is picking up somewhat on the back of rising oil output, and many people expect modestly higher oil prices next year, which could ease pressure on state finances. "We believe it will stabilize next year," said Alagil. But few expect any major rebound. Even with austerity,

Riyadh is expected to run a budget deficit in the tens of billions of dollars this year - unsustainable in the long run - and officials have said more subsidy cuts are in store. In 2018, the government plans to introduce value-added tax, probably at a rate of 5 percent with exemptions for items such as food. Many Saudis accept that low oil prices make austerity inevitable, and there is no sign of a significant political backlash against government policies. But belt-tightening is being widely discussed on Twitter under hashtags such as "Salary doesn't meet our needs". "We are nowhere near the bottom, and we think the years to come will be even more painful," said Samih Jarjura, an operations manager who handles distribution of foreign luxury goods to retailers in Jeddah. — Reuters



A Sudanese man sits in front of a piece of artwork reading in Arabic 'Darfur' in North Darfur's state capital El Fasher yesterday, ahead of political leaders' visit to the area. — AFP

## RUSSIA, SAUDIS TO STABILIZE OIL OUTPUT

Continued from Page 1

Emirati Energy Minister Suhail Al-Mazrouei hailed the "positive step". Nigerian Petroleum Minister of State Emmanuel Kachikwu added it was "good news" that "should help firm the price" if both sides agree to a "strong level of discipline in terms of production". OPEC and Russia together account for about half of the world's oil output. President Vladimir Putin had met Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in China on Sunday - and vowed to address a global glut and overproduction that has hammered prices for two years.

Putin, speaking at a closing G20 news conference yesterday, repeated his call that Iran should be allowed to return to pre-sanction production - a key sticking point with Saudi Arabia - and also appealed for a "fair" crude price that "could be a bit higher". Putin - whose economy slumped into recession on the

back of oil price falls - has already stated that an output freeze would be "the right decision" and called for "compromise".

Around 1645 GMT, prices had tempered their gains somewhat. Brent for November delivery stood at \$47.49 a barrel, up 66 cents from Friday's close. WTI for October was 75 cents higher at \$45.19. "There were no... immediate indications that this (deal) will lead to lower oil output," FXTM analyst Jameel Ahmad told AFP. "If there is no agreement to change output, or at least remove the excessive oversupply in the markets then the same oversupply will continue to weigh on investor sentiment - and this has ultimately led to oil retracing nearly half its gains already." The oil market has been plagued by a stubborn supply glut that saw prices crash to near 13-year lows below \$30 at the start of 2016. While it has recovered recently, the price is still well off highs of above \$100 seen in mid-2014. — AFP

## DOZENS KILLED IN STRING OF DEADLY SYRIA...

Continued from Page 1

in the coastal province of Tartous, a stronghold of President Bashar Al-Assad's government. The bombings hit a bridge outside the provincial capital Tartous city, killing at least 35 people and wounding 43, state media said.

The blasts targeted the Arzuna bridge, "the first a car bomb and the second a suicide bomber who detonated his explosive belt when people gathered to help the wounded," according to state television. Tartous has been largely spared the worst violence of Syria's conflict since it began with anti-government protests, and has become a refuge for many Syrians fleeing the fighting. In the northeastern city of Hasakeh, a bomber on a motorbike killed six members of the Kurdish security forces and two civilians. The city is mostly controlled by Kurdish forces, though the regime is also present.

In central Homs city, the target was the Al-Zahra neighborhood, whose residents mostly belong to the same Alawite sect as Assad and have regularly been targeted by devastating bombings. Four people were killed there yesterday, in a car bomb that hit a checkpoint at the district's entrance. State television broadcast images from the aftermath of the blast in Homs, showing rubble strewn on the streets and smoke rising from the charred remains of vehicles.

An additional attack hit the Al-Sabura road west of the capital Damascus, with state media saying one person had been killed and three wounded. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitoring group, said that attack targeted a checkpoint and gave a toll of three dead. The IS-affiliated Amaq agency carried a statement saying the jihadist group was behind a "string of simultaneous suicide attacks".

They came a day after Turkish forces and allied

rebels seized the last part of the Turkish-Syrian border under IS control. Turkey began an operation inside Syria on Aug 24, targeting both IS but also Syrian Kurdish forces that have been a key US partner in the fight against the jihadist group in Syria. The operation has put Washington in an awkward position, with two key allies at times clashing on the ground in Syria.

A State Department spokesman said yesterday that Washington's envoy to the US-led coalition against IS had been in Syria and Turkey last week holding talks with Syrian Kurdish forces and Turkish officials. Washington has urged Kurdish forces to honor a pledge to withdraw east of the Euphrates river to allay Turkish fears of a contiguous semi-autonomous Kurdish zone in Syria.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday said he was working with Russia and the US to have northern Syria declared a no-fly zone, a proposal that has failed to get off the ground in the past. Washington backs the uprising against Assad, but is working with the Syrian leader's key ally Moscow on a deal to stem the bloodshed. Hopes had been raised that a deal would be announced over the weekend, but US officials said it floundered after Russia backtracked.

Despite the failure, Obama said yesterday that a meeting with Putin on Syria had included "productive conversations about what a real cessation of hostilities would look like". Putin meanwhile said he felt there was "some alignment of positions and an understanding of what we could do to de-escalate the situation in Syria." He said a deal with Washington could be firmed up in the "coming days" but refused to give concrete details, saying that US and Russian officials are still "working out some of our preliminary agreements." US Secretary of State John Kerry and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov are expected to continue the talks in the coming days. — AFP

## GOVT TO LAUNCH SEPARATE HOSPITALS...

Continued from Page 1

for foreigners, the minister said, without setting a dateline for the launch of the project.

At present, the majority of expatriates are obliged to obtain health insurance from the ministry of health by paying up to KD 50 per year to receive essential medical services at ministry hospitals and centers. Expatriates are also required to pay additional fees for a variety of medical procedures, especially surgeries, hospital stays and radiology examinations. Expatriates also pay KD 1 for each visit to public clinics and KD 2 to casualty sections at hospitals.

Meanwhile, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih stressed that the planning ministry has set a strategic plan to handle the state's demographic imbalances within its 2015-2016/2019-2020 development plan. She added expats' residency periods would be limited, in addition to more restrictions on recruiting domestic helpers and stricter penalties for visa traffickers.

Responding to an inquiry made by MP Khalil Abdullah, Subaih said that new measures would be followed to increase the number of citizens compared to expats. "The government intends to set a fixed rate of expat population growth which is less than that of citizens," she underlined, noting that these limits would take into consideration the labor needs of development projects.

Separately, the Ministry of Electricity and Water stressed that paying overdue bills in installments is only available for citizens and that expats do not have such a privilege. They will either have to pay off their bills in full or have the power disconnected after receiving warnings. The ministry also stressed that the deposit paid to get a power connection was only used on changing addresses or paying off bills to get clearances. MEW undersecretary Mohammed Boshherhi added that once the new tariffs go into effect next May, consumers might be given some incentives, such as getting a 50 percent discount for those who manage to rationalize consumption by 10 percent, and a full free month for those who manage to rationalize 15 percent of their consumption.

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**Kuwait Times**  
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT  
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF  
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher  
**YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN**

Editor-in-Chief  
**ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN**

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432  
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7  
FAX : 24835620/1  
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163  
ACCOUNTS : 24835619  
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## Issues

DREAMS, FEARS AS  
GUYANA FINDS OIL

By Bert Wilninson

Sleepy Guyana has long been one of the hemisphere's poorest places, a sparsely populated nation on South America's northern shoulder that relies heavily on exports of sugar, rice and gold. But these days, there's a surge of excitement about an anticipated windfall from major oil-and-gas deposits found in the deep seabed 193 km off the coast - as well as worries about the disruptions and conflicts it might bring. Hopes are high that fuel siphoned in a few years' time from more than 5 km below the sea's surface might be an antidote to entrenched poverty and underdevelopment in the country of 750,000 people. "We will have billions in foreign reserves and our population is going to swell big time," miner Cosmos Santo said from a park bench in the seaside capital of narrow streets and mostly low-rise, wooden buildings. The US Geological Survey had long estimated that offshore Guyana was rich in gas and oil. Now US-based ExxonMobil has announced a "world-class oil discovery" off Guyana after drilling a well that struck oil-bearing sandstone with an estimated 800 million to 1.4 billion oil equivalent barrels.

Exxon and partner Hess Corp haven't yet announced development or investment plans, which could be complicated by low current oil prices and a dispute with neighboring Venezuela. But Guyanese authorities are racing to set up rules and plans to administer the hoped-for new industry while

## Huge oil deposits have been found off Guyana's coast

Major oil-and-gas deposits found in the deep seabed 120 miles off the coast of the hemisphere's third poorest nation have reignited a decades-old territorial dispute with struggling Venezuela, its larger neighbor.



avoiding what is known as the "resource curse." In places like Congo and Nigeria, oil or mineral wealth has fueled conflict instead of development.

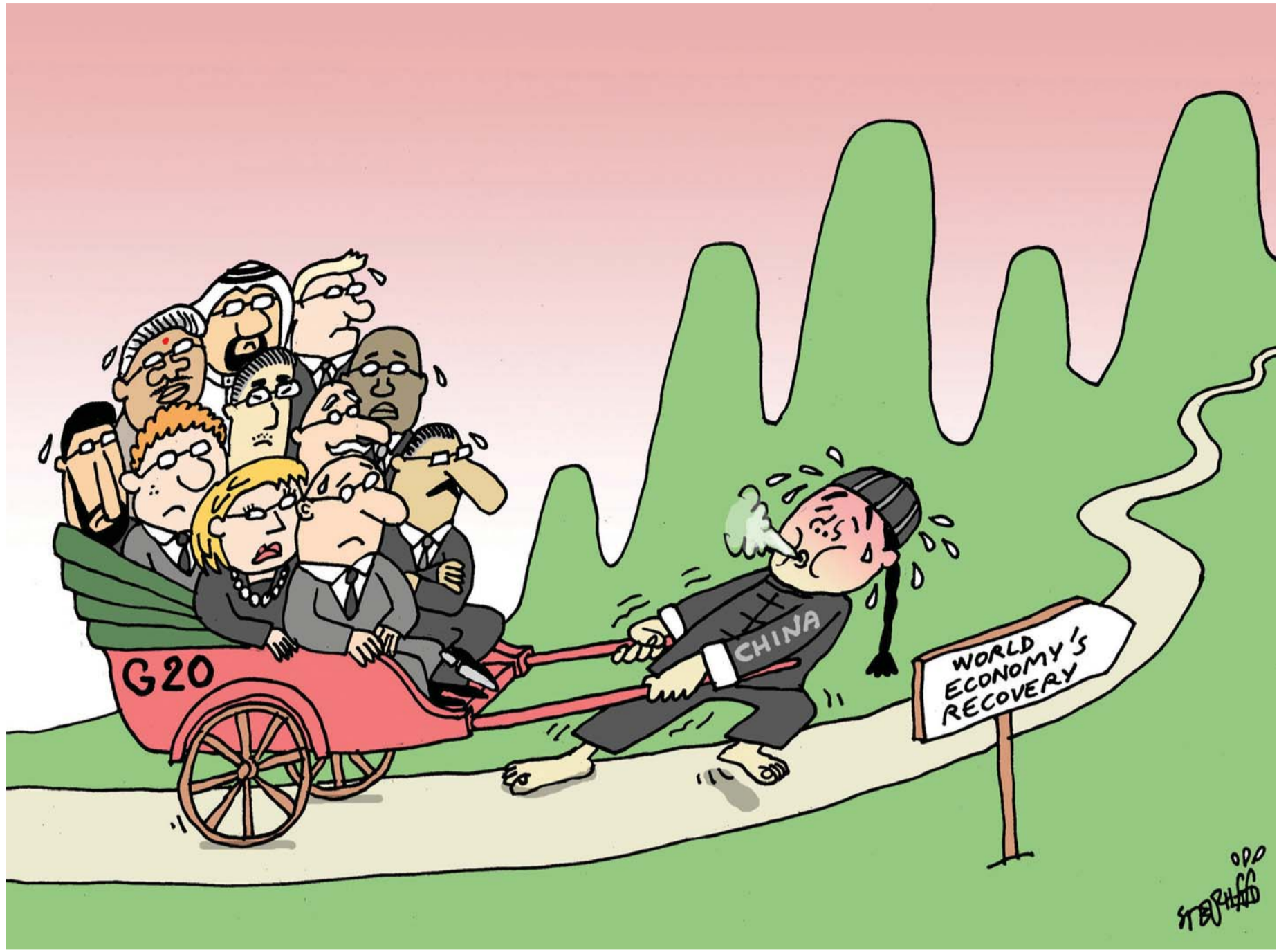
Guyana only has to look at Venezuela next door to see what can go haywire with an oil-dependent state. South America's biggest energy producer has been in economic free fall since the 2014 crash in prices for the oil that funds nearly all the spending of its socialist government. Guyana's presidential spokesman, Mark Archer, said the administration is determined to avoid the mistakes of Venezuela and other energy-rich nations that have run into hard times. "The plan is not to spend wildly like a drunken sailor but to put in a wealth fund for future generations and ensure we do not neglect agriculture," Archer said. Norway and the US Energy Department are advising Guyana on setting up such a fund as well as a regulatory framework for the industry, Natural Resources Minister Raphael Trotman says. Some of the hoped-for riches would go toward building a 565-km jungle road from the capital to northeastern Brazil, opening up Guyana's rugged, mineral-rich interior. Households would get free cooking gas and cheap gasoline.

## Dispute

Guyana's small military would get new aircraft to protect the offshore fields and borders, to provide some "comfort to Exxon and other investors," Archer said. "We must be able to protect our investment," he said. Protection may be necessary because the offshore discoveries have reignited a decades-old territorial dispute between Guyana and far-larger Venezuela. Venezuela has for decades claimed two-thirds of Guyana's territory as its own, arguing that the gold-rich region west of the Essequibo River - and the resulting maritime zone where Exxon's find lies - was stolen from it by an 1899 agreement with Britain and its then-colony.

Venezuela's navy briefly detained a ship carrying five American oil workers in 2013. They were conducting a seismic survey under a Guyana concession at the time. Guyana says it wants the International Court of Justice to settle the border dispute with Venezuela, though the case has not yet reached the court. Diego Moya-Ocampos, analyst with the London-based consulting firm IHS Global Insight, said he believes Venezuela's claim of sovereignty will pose a "major complication" to recovering oil and minerals. —AP

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## MEXICO SLAVERY SURVIVORS DEFY STIGMA

By Anastasia Moloney

When her captives tied the chains around her waist a little looser than usual, Zunduri knew it was her chance to escape. Wriggling free, she dashed out of the dry cleaning shop in Mexico City where she had been enslaved, beaten and starved for more than half a decade. "There is no part of my body without scars," Zunduri told Thomson Reuters Foundation in a phone interview from her home in Mexico's capital, recalling an ordeal that shocked Mexicans as one of the worst slavery cases to come to light in the city.

"Doctors counted more than 600 scars on my body. A hot iron was put to my head. I ironed and ironed. I didn't see the light of day. I didn't know when the sun set or when it rose. I had to drink steam from the iron to get water." Since her dramatic escape last year, Zunduri has become an icon of resilience in a country where shame and stigma make many slavery survivors reluctant to go public. And as her alleged tormenters await trial, her example has inspired others to speak out as they seek justice and try to rebuild their lives. "I was an animal to them," 24-year-old Zunduri said. "I want them to pay for everything I have had to suffer."

Her five alleged captors are the woman who owned the dry cleaners, plus the woman's two daughters, husband and sister. All are in prison facing charges of human trafficking, which carries a maximum sentence of 30 years. Their trial is set to be one of Mexico's highest-profile trafficking cases, underlining the country's status as a source, transit and destination country for adults and children coerced into forced labor and sex work.

While Zunduri reported the crime to police and gave testimony, prosecutors and activists say thousands of slavery cases remain invisible as many victims don't come forward due to fear of reprisal from traffickers. Nearly 380,000 people are trapped in modern slavery in Mexico, according to the 2016 Global Slavery Index by rights group Walk Free Foundation. In Mexico, the most common form of human trafficking involves women and girls forced into sex work, with indigenous people and migrants most vulnerable.

Men, women and children are also exploited as forced labor-

ers on farms, in factories and on building sites, according to the US State Department's 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report. "In Mexico we still have people who are slaves in homes, especially children, who work in exchange for food, water and a bed," said Rosi Orozco, who heads the Commission United Against Human Trafficking, a Mexican non-governmental organization.

She said the message Zunduri and other prominent survivors promote is that lives can be rebuilt after slavery. "They are examples to the world that trafficking survivors can successfully reintegrate back into society," said Orozco, a former congresswoman who helped push through Mexico's new and tougher anti-trafficking law in 2012. "It takes time for each survivor to take away the shame. But now they are not ashamed about what happened to them."

For Zunduri, the goal is to raise awareness about the many difficulties facing survivors who are often traumatized and vulnerable. "It's a long process for the physical scars to heal and disappear. But the main scar is the one I have in my soul, in my heart, and in my mind," said Zunduri, who has undergone psychological therapy and plans to set up a bakery and learn English.

## 'Living Again is Possible'

For Karla Jacinto, a Mexican survivor of sex trafficking, life after slavery can give way to depression and despair. When Jacinto was 12, she was lured from poverty and sexual abuse at home by a man posing as a car salesman who showered her with kind words and gifts. The charming "dream man" became her boyfriend but later turned into her trafficker and tormentor, Jacinto said in a telephone interview. He forced her to work for four years as a child prostitute on streets and roadside motels in Mexico and threatened to harm her family if she refused or tried to escape.

"The first time with a client was the hardest. I was 12. I had to close my eyes," Jacinto, now 24, said. "I was forced to be with on average 20 to 30 men a day. Around 43,000 men between the ages of 12 to 16." She said one man who became a regular client helped her escape in 2008. "At first, I didn't want to live anymore," Jacinto said. "Some girls don't escape. Some die, others commit

suicide." It took two years of therapy before Jacinto could begin to think about moving on with her life. "You need unconditional support from psychologists and your family, like I have with my mother, to get through this and move on," said Jacinto, who will start studying at university this year.

Her work as an anti-trafficking activist brought her, together with Zunduri, to the Vatican last year where they shared their experiences with Pope Francis. "My message to others is that we can dream. We can survive," Jacinto said. "There are opportunities beyond the life we once knew. Living again is possible."

## Few Shelters, Little Justice

Both Jacinto and Zunduri hope their gradual recovery can encourage others to come forward and rebuild their lives as Mexico does more to tackle human trafficking. The number of federal and state investigations for trafficking has increased across the country, rising to 665 in 2015 from 449 in 2014, according to the US State Department's latest report. Yet prosecutions for trafficking remain low in Mexico, as they do worldwide, in an industry the International Labor Organization estimates is worth \$150 billion a year.

Few trafficking victims get justice in Mexico. Authorities convicted 86 traffickers last year - around 2 percent of cases. That's "a rate consistent with conviction rates for other crimes in Mexico," the US State Department's 2016 report said. Mexico's conviction rate for human trafficking is high though when compared to Latin American neighbors and other countries worldwide, Orozco said. But support for trafficking victims, especially outside of Mexico City, is limited, leaving many survivors vulnerable to being trafficked again.

In Mexico, there are no shelters for male trafficking victims and most are only for underage girls, Orozco said. She added that more needs to be done to provide long-term personalized care. "There is no one model, no one response to help survivors. Every person is different, and every person needs their own program, their own personalized help," Orozco said. Trafficking victims can only stay in government-run refuges for a maximum of six months. "It's inhumane and unfair to think that a person can recover and rehabilitate in that space of time," Orozco said. "The process takes years." —Reuters

## BRITISH TEA BOOMING IN CHINA, ITS BIRTHPLACE

By Leonora Beck

Ji Mengyu sinks into a soft chair with her cup of tea to the sound of tinkling teaspoons and light chatter. The opulently decorated Victorian tea salon is quintessentially British, something straight out of Downton Abbey. Except it's in Beijing. The 25-year-old HR professional is one of a growing number of Chinese who are looking past their country's ancient tea traditions in favor of imported British blends. For Ji, the tea has an aura of luxury and quality, and gives her a sense of partaking in the posh British culture popularized globally by TV shows and fashion brands.

"I think British people's traditional customs and culture have a kind of classical style," says Ji, who says she's inspired by TV shows like Downton Abbey, but also Sherlock Holmes and Game of Thrones. For three centuries, countries in Asia and Africa have been quenching Britons' thirst for tea, supplying dried leaves worth millions of pounds every year. Now, that trend is showing some signs of reversing. China and Hong Kong in particular are seeing a surge in appetite for British tea blends - some of which are made with leaves from China itself, an example of the twists in trade that the globalization of tastes can create.

Upscale tea blends from storied British companies like Twinings, Taylors of Harrogate and Hudson & Middleton occupy increasingly more space on shelves in Chinese supermarkets, restaurant menus and online shops. Teahouses serving British afternoon tea have sprouted up in the bigger cities in China. Five years ago, Annvita English Tea Company managed ten teahouses around China, serving imported blends and pastries in British-style tearooms. The number has since grown tenfold, with more planned. "It fits the taste of people who want to pursue a higher quality of life," says Li Qunlou, general

manager at Annvita English Tea House in Sanlitun in Beijing.

As a result, British tea companies selling premium blends have seen their exports to China and Hong Kong skyrocket. In the first five months of 2016, British tea exports to Hong Kong nearly tripled in value compared with two years earlier. They doubled to the rest of mainland China, data from the U.K. HM Revenue & Customs show. Shipments to China and Hong Kong only make up 7 percent of total British tea exports, but the share is growing quickly.

Some of these deliveries come from Harrogate, a small town in northern England that is the home to Taylors of Harrogate. The fourth generation family-owned company has been selling tea to China for more than 10 years. In the past three years, sales have more than

doubled every year, albeit from a low starting point. "China produces nearly one half of the world's tea, so on the surface you would think that there is a limited opportunity for Taylors of Harrogate," says Matthew Davies, Head of International Sales at Taylors of Harrogate.

Tea originates from China and has been a central part of the culture for thousands of years. In Britain, tea was not introduced until the 17th century, though it has since become a staple and adapted to local tastes. Every day thousands of tea samples arrive in Harrogate for the tasters to evaluate. The business essentially relies on their taste buds to find the right mix of leaves to maintain the signature flavors that the company bases its reputation on. Chinese customers mainly buy Taylor of Harrogate's Earl Grey and English Breakfast tea.



**HARROGATE, England: An employee packs boxes of tea at the production line at Taylors of Harrogate's tea packaging facilities in Harrogate, England, Tuesday Aug. 30, 2016. —AP**

## Demand

"Our approach was to invest time and resources to understand consumer behavior and we found that there are a number of Chinese consumers with a high level of discretionary income and demand for Taylors of Harrogate brands," says Davies. The demand is growing mainly among China's wealthy middle class and is fueled by portrayals of British high society featured in TV shows, news stories of the British royal family and classical novels like Jane Austen's, analysts say.

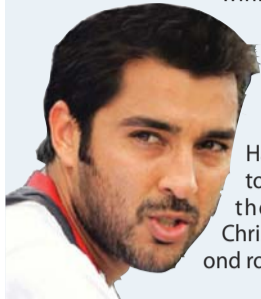
"Previously, Chinese consumers were more exposed to American culture, McDonalds and Hollywood-style things. These few years, because of the popular British TV dramas, Chinese consumers are more exposed to British brands and the lifestyle," says Hope Lee, senior drinks analyst at Euromonitor International. Another reason for the thriving popularity of British imported tea is the seemingly endless string of food scandals that plagues China and Hong Kong.

Greenpeace and government investigations found high levels of pesticides or poisonous earths in tea, also in some of the best known brands. Imported premium British tea brands are perceived as being safer and of higher quality. Paradoxically, some of the British tea sold in China and Hong Kong is originally grown in China. However, it represents only a small amount of British exports there - about 3 percent, according to Frost & Sullivan, a market research company.

British tea makers mainly import leaves from Africa and India, regions where the taste for British tea blends has not grown in the same way, for economic and cultural reasons. Despite the recent slowdown in the Chinese economy, Taylors of Harrogate and many other companies and industry experts are optimistic about the country's consumers. "We are continuing to strengthen our lengths in China," says Davies. —AP

## QURESHI PULLS OUT OF NZ DAVIS CUP TIE

**KARACHI:** Pakistan's number one tennis player Aisam ul Haq Qureshi said yesterday he has pulled out of a Davis Cup tie in New Zealand later this week "to take a stand." The 2010 US Open Doubles finalist remains unhappy that a 2013 match against the same opponents held in Myanmar was handed by the match referee to New Zealand because of poor playing conditions, while Qureshi was winning. Pakistan has not hosted a Davis Cup tie since



2005 and plays its home matches in neutral venues because of security concerns. He tweeted: "I believe we need to make a stand for our Country & rights specially nowadays when unfortunately no place is safe." Speaking to AFP, his father Ehtisham ul Haq added: "Aisam is not in the right frame of mind and to pre-empt any further controversy he has pulled out of the tie." The Pakistan team was due to travel to Christchurch for their Davis Cup Asia Oceania Group I second round play-offs from September 16-18. — AFP

## GREEK SEASON TO KICK OFF AFTER REFEREE FEUD ENDS

**ATHENS:** Greece's Super League will finally kick off this weekend after the Hellenic Football Federation (EPO) and the Super League ended their feud over referees yesterday. Greece risked being suspended from international football by global soccer body FIFA and its European counterpart UEFA after the government intervened in a long-running dispute over the selection of referees by ordering the postponement of the new season on the grounds of public safety. But after numerous discussions, former FIFA referee Kyros Vassaras was appointed as chief arbitrator on the refereeing committee until the EPO elections on Oct. 1, meaning matches will now get underway. "The championship will start; the fans are rightly anxious because football should be played," said the EPO president Giorgos Gkirtzikos in a statement. "We have found a solution to the problems by bringing in Mr Vassaras. He is a member of UEFA and one of our own," he added. "I hope for a great season ahead for the Super League and that Greek football can continue to improve its status." It is not the first time Greece has risked running into trouble with FIFA. — Reuters

## PAYET'S FIRST TEAM RETURN CAN INFLUENCE WEST HAM

**LONDON:** Attacking midfielder Dimitri Payet's return to the first team will give West Ham United a major boost, manager Slaven Bilic has said ahead of Saturday's Premier League clash with Watford. The 29-year-old had an impressive debut season in England, scoring 12 goals in all competitions since joining from Olympique Marseille in June last year. Payet, who has made just one appearance in the league this season, was also joint second-top scorer at Euro 2016 with three goals and was named in the team of the tournament after helping France reach the final. "It is key for us if he can produce his best form again. He has the qualities that the best players have and can help change a game. They are influencing their team mates and opponents," Bilic told the club's website (www.whufc.com). "He makes the team play better and everyone around him is benefiting. The team recognised that last season." West Ham, who failed to make the Europa League group stage for the second year in a row after being eliminated by Astra Giurgiu last month, have managed only three points from their opening three Premier League games. — Reuters



## SOCCER STAR RAPINOE KNEELS DURING NATIONAL ANTHEM

**CHICAGO:** US soccer star Megan Rapinoe knelt during the national anthem Sunday night before the Seattle Reign's game against the Chicago Red Stars "in a little nod" to NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick.

Kaepernick's refusal to stand for the national anthem to protest racial injustice and minority oppression came to public notice when he remained seated on the bench before a preseason game against Green Bay. On Thursday night in San Diego, he and safety Eric Reid knelt during the anthem before a game against the Chargers.

"It was very intentional," Rapinoe told American Soccer Now after Seattle's 2-2 tie in the National Women's Soccer League game. "It was a little nod to Kaepernick and everything that he's standing for right now. I think it's actually pretty disgusting the way he was treated and the way that a lot of the media has covered it and made it about something that it absolutely isn't. We need to have a more thoughtful, two-sided conversation about racial issues in this country."

"Being a gay American, I know what it means to look at the flag and not have it protect all of your liberties. It was something small that I could do and something that I plan to keep doing in the future and hopefully spark some meaningful conversation around it. It's important to have white people stand in support of people of color on this. We don't need to be the leading voice, of course, but standing in support of them is something that's really powerful." Seattle Seahawks cornerback Jeremy Lane

showed his support for Kaepernick by sitting on the bench during the national anthem at a preseason game in Oakland.

The 31-year-old Rapinoe has played for Seattle since 2013, after a stint with the French team Olympique Lyon. A standout at the University of Portland, she made her name with the senior US Women's national team in 2006. Known for her creativity on the field, she has played in two Women's World Cups and two Olympics.

She injured her knee last December during training and required surgery, but was able to come back and play in the Rio Games. The United States, which had won three straight gold medals in the sport, was eliminated in the quarterfinals by Sweden.

Since coming out in 2012, Rapinoe has been devoted advocate for LGBT rights and has worked with the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and other organizations.

Rapinoe also has been vocal about pay equity, and was among five national team players who lent their names to a complaint filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission alleging wage discrimination. The players claim that members of the team make in some cases up to four times less than their male national team counterparts.

She has frequently spoken out on Twitter, delving into politics and even calling out NWSL when a match was played on an extremely narrow field earlier this summer. — AP



**NORTON:** Paul Casey, of England, tees off on the third hole during the final round of the Deutsche Bank Championship golf tournament in Norton, Mass, yesterday. — AP

# CASEY TO END LONG PGA TOUR VICTORY DROUGHT

**NORTON:** Paul Casey is going after his first PGA Tour victory in seven years at the Deutsche Bank Championship, and he has plenty of names behind him to consider in the Labor Day finish.

Brian Harman is three shots behind. PGA champion Jimmy Walker is another shot back. Rory McIlroy, six shots behind, is still in the mix. But the biggest name of all might be Hermine. Once a hurricane, now classified as a post-tropical cyclone, the system was moving out toward the Atlantic and leaving behind some potentially challenging weather for the final round at the TPC Boston. In the forecast is 35 mph wind and bursts of showers for most of the final round.

Wind and rain make a recipe for just about anything. "I used to do it fairly well in Europe," said Casey, who grew up in England and lives in Arizona. "I don't necessarily like it, but I can deal with it." He might not have a choice.

### THE LEADER

No one led by more than one shot in the third round Sunday until Casey hit 7-iron to 5 feet for birdie on the 16th hole, and then closed out his round with a 3-iron that landed just left of the green on the par-5 18th, hopped on and caught a ridge that sent the ball 30 inches below the hole to set up an eagle.

That put him at 15-under 198. What does that mean for Casey? "I haven't really thought about

it," he said. "Still digest my 3-iron on the last. I don't know. Depends on how bad it is."

### THE CHASERS

Harman's only victory was two years ago at the John Deere Classic. Four shots behind, and playing in the final group, is Smylie Kaufman, who won his first PGA Tour event in Las Vegas at the start of the season. Walker and Kevin Chappell also were four back at 11-under 202.

Chappell is the only player from the top 10 on the leaderboard who has yet to win on the PGA Tour. He was in the lead at 13 under until a perfect tee shot on the 12th hole landed in a divot. He came up short into a hazard, tried to play out of the native area and wound up with a double bogey. "I said yesterday that at some point in time during the next 36 holes, I was going to be hit with adversity," Chappell said. "Felt like I hung in there and finished with six straight pars from not-the-best position. So that's what I'm going to choose to look at, and hopefully tomorrow I can get the ball in position and try to make some birdies."

### THE OTHER RACE

The top 70 in the FedEx Cup after Monday advance to the third playoff event at Crooked Stick in the BMW Championship. Casey was at No. 59 and Harman at No. 67 and now should have no trouble advancing. Monday could be far

more significant for Steve Stricker, Charles Howell III and Billy Hurler III. Stricker barely made it into the Deutsche Bank Championship and is No. 98. He was tied for 11th, which at the moment is just enough for him to sneak into the top 70.

Hurler is at No. 77 and shot 69 to get into the large tie for 11th. Hurler should be fine, but a good finish would help.

Howell? He's safe at No. 50, but every point counts. The better he finishes in the Deutsche Bank, the more progress he makes toward being among the top 30 who reach the Tour Championship. Howell hasn't made it to East Lake since 2011. Those who reach East Lake get into the Masters, which the Augusta native has not played since 2012.

### RYDER CUP IMPLICATIONS

There wouldn't appear be any. US captain Davis Love III doesn't make his three picks until after the BMW Championship, and he still has another pick after that. But it's worth keeping an eye on Jim Furyk, who is No. 84 and tied for 48th. He needs a big round to advance.

Furyk is under consideration for a captain's pick, in part because he is No. 15 despite losing four months at the start of the year recovering from wrist surgery. But it might be tougher to pick a "hot" player who doesn't even make it to the third playoff event. — AP



Megan Rapinoe

## TITLE CONTEST MAY BE DECIDED BY CLUTCH CONTROLS

**MONZA:** The outcome of this year's drivers world championship may be decided by the capricious nature of Mercedes' clutches unless the team finds a reliable solution to its ongoing poor starts.

That was the unwanted scenario in prospect for both title contenders Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg ahead of a meeting at the team factory at Brackley today when a series of bad getaways from the grid goes under the technical microscope.

Mercedes drivers' have failed to take advantage of seven pole positions this season. Series leader and defending three-time champion Hamilton was the latest to suffer when, after blitzing to pole position with a memorable qualifying lap on Saturday, he was bogged down at the start of Sunday's Italian Grand Prix and fell down to sixth.

That he eventually finished second behind the triumphant Rosberg was of little consolation as his lead in the championship was trimmed to nine points to two, with seven races remaining.

"We never stop improving and learning, but this year has been a hard year for us with our clutch," said the 31-year-old Briton in the wake of Sunday's race.

"They'll be working very hard. It's not a quick fix. It's not something we can change for the next race. "We have made improvements so you've seen better starts, but we are still caught out by the random variation that we have from one start to another."

"We do practice starts all weekend and they vary a little bit and then, every now and then, we get a drastic variation."

"You've seen it with Nico. You've seen it with me, quite a few times. It's something we need to continue to work on."

"I can assure you we'll be talking about it today. "We'll try to get as much information and learn as much as we can to try and

make sure in the remaining seven races that we're not struggling to get off the line from pole positions."

### SLUGGISH START

Hamilton's sluggish start at Monza was not his first and followed similar problems for him in Australia, Bahrain, Spain and Canada while Rosberg was the victim of clutch gremlins in Melbourne, Hungary and Germany. As arguments raged over who was responsible for this latest failure to convert a dominant pole into a secure victory, Hamilton and team chief Toto Wolff both side-stepped 'the blame game' and took a broader view.

Hamilton said he went through his start procedures correctly, but this had created too much torque, which in turn resulted in wheel-spin. Wolff said: "In this team, I will never blame anybody - not the driver, not the engineer, nobody. "If you start to blame, this is where you start going downhill because people try to protect themselves and (then we) have a conservative system in place, rather than putting the best development on the car. "Nobody is to blame and in this particular case it's a combination of many things. We changed the rules last year (going from a double to a single clutch start) and this is why I don't want to go there."

"Once we've seen all the data, we'll address it internally to see what needs to be done in order for it to be avoided."

"So it's not a game of blaming. As a team you win and lose together. In this case, the team has lost." For Rosberg, it was an unexpected gift of victory, taking him to seven wins for the year to Hamilton's sixth.

"I had an awesome start and that made the win," he said. "So it was all there."

Looking ahead, he added: "The race is on with Lewis. It's always going to be a great battle and I look forward to what's to come." — AFP

# STROLL EMERGES AS A WILLIAMS CONTENDER

**MONZA:** Canadian teenager Lance Stroll has emerged as a frontrunner to replace Felipe Massa at the Williams Formula One team next season after the Brazilian announced his retirement last week.

Jacques Villeneuve, the 1997 world champion who was the last Canadian to race for the British-based team, told Reuters at Monza that he believed the deal was all but done for the 17-year-old. A team source confirmed separately that Stroll was on the short list, along with Brazilian Felipe Nasr, who was a Williams reserve before securing his current race seat at Sauber.

Stroll turns 18 in October and is on course to win the European F3 title, which would secure him the necessary super-licence.

His career has been bankrolled by billionaire father Lawrence, who made his fortune with the Tommy Hilfiger and Michael Kors fashion brands.

Williams signed the youngster last year as a development driver with a promise he would be 'fully immersed' in the team in the same way that current race driver Valtteri Bottas was.

Mexican Sergio 'Checo' Perez has also been in the rumour mill but Force India, who are battling Williams for fourth place, have him under contract. "We're just going through the process now, which is very close, to finalising the commercial side and then hopefully there will be an announcement in the near future," deputy principal Bob Fernley told Reuters.

"At the moment, his alternatives are either sideways or backwards." Perez told reporters he hoped for an announcement within weeks and



Lance Stroll

was confident he would get "what I always wanted". When asked what that might be, he replied "You will find out very soon." Some interpreted that as a hint that he could move to Renault, with that works team rebuilding, but it could equally refer to release clauses. Ferrari have Kimi Raikkonen, the 2007 champion and oldest driver on the starting grid at 36, out of contract at the end of 2017 and Perez started out as a member of the Ferrari young driver academy.

The Mexican, who had one unhappy season at McLaren, has made no secret of his desire to drive for a top team again and being locked into a multi-year contract would make that harder.

The fate of Denmark's Kevin Magnussen and British rookie Jolyon Palmer at Renault remains uncertain, with the latter yet to score a point in 14 races. Russian Daniil Kvyat is also looking insecure at Toro Rosso, with French GP2 leader Pierre Gasly eager for a chance. — Reuters

## AFGHAN VETERAN SNYDER FEELS HIS WAY TO SWIMMING GOLD

**LOS ANGELES:** A competitive swimmer since childhood, Brad Snyder lost his eyesight in 2011 while working in Afghanistan for a US Navy bomb-disposal squad when he stepped on an improvised device.

Neither his legs nor arms were affected by the blast but shrapnel tore into his face, leading to the removal of his eyes and their replacement with prosthetics.

A gruelling recovery followed, with three weeks in intensive care followed by five weeks in Florida.

Snyder returned to swimming in February 2012. "Swimming is something that I was pretty good at before, and I thought it might be something that's fun for me to do," he said in a 2012 interview.

"I hop in the pool, and everything just flows. Everything's just really natural. Every once in a while I crash into the lane line, but other than that it feels really good to do well."

Exactly a year after the blast that claimed his eyesight, the fiercely competitive Snyder was competing in the

2012 Paralympic Games as a blind swimmer, winning gold in the 100m and 400m freestyle and a silver in the 50m freestyle. Snyder says he hopes his example can inspire others.

"I know there are a lot of guys out there, guys and girls, who are struggling with a tough hand and hopefully my success can reach out to those people and say, 'Hey, there is a way forward; there is something you can go out and do that will give you that relevance and success again,'" he says.

Snyder has also worked to raise awareness about blindness, teaming with the Swim For Sight organisation to raise money to tackle blindness and perform cataract operations in the developing world.

"The travesty about that number (of people who are blind) really is that most of it is preventable," Snyder said earlier this year.

"Being someone who's had to negotiate the challenges of being blind for the past four-and-a-half years or so, if there's

a way to prevent that, I want to support that as much as possible."

### Brad Snyder

**EVENTS:** 50m freestyle, 100m free, 400m free, 100m backstroke, 100m butterfly.

**Age:** 32  
**Paralympian experience:** 2012 Paralympics. Golds in 100m free, 400m free; silver 50m free. IPC World Championships: 3 golds (50m free, 100m free, 400m free). — AFP

## 22 Paralympic sports

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** The 2016 Paralympics, starting in Rio tomorrow, includes canoe-kayak and triathlon for the first time among the 22 sports detailed here by AFP Sport:

### ARCHERY

A staple on the Paralympic menu since the very first edition in 1960.

Individual and team competitions with athletes divided into wheelchair users and standing athletes. Archers aim at a target with a diameter of 122cm from a distance of either 50 metres or 70 metres. The United States have won the most golds. The Czech Republic's David Drahnonsky won gold in Beijing and silver in London.

### ATHLETICS

One of the original eight sports to figure in the inaugural 1960 Paralympics in Rome, and the most popular, with 1,100 athletes competing in 177 track, field and road events in Rio with the only disciplines not covered the pole vault, hammer and hurdles. Visually, intellectually and physically impaired athletes compete. Athletes compete either standing or using a wheelchair, with or without prosthesis. Visually impaired Jason Smith, Ireland's answer to Usain Bolt, aims to repeat his 100m and 200m success at Beijing and London, while Felipe Gomes, from a notorious Rio favela, will have home support behind him.

### BOCCIA

Of Greco-Roman origin, Boccia is one of the rare sports not to have an Olympic equivalent. Comparable to British bowls or French petanque, Boccia is played in a wheelchair on a 12.5 x 6m surface. A game of strategy and accuracy originally designed for people with cerebral palsy, it is now open to all athletes with motor skills impairments. Players must throw or roll six coloured balls to get as close as possible to a white target ball, known as the 'jack'. The player, pair or team with the most balls near the jack is the winner. There are seven medal events—all mixed gender—with four different classes. Brazil's Dirceu Pinto is out to add to his four Paralympic medal haul.

### CANOE-KAYAK

One of two disciplines making its debut in Rio, para-canoe events will be competed in line over 200 metres in specially adapted kayaks. Three categories of athletes: those with no use of their legs, some use of their legs and body, and partial use of their legs. There are six medal events - three each for men and women - at the Lagoa Stadium on the Rodrigo de Freitas lagoon, next to Copacabana Beach.

### CYCLING

Races on both the road and track for amputees, those with a physical handicap, visually impaired and blind athletes. The sprint, individual pursuit, and both individual and team time-trials will be contested. Former Formula One driver Alex Zinardi, who lost his legs in an accident, won two golds at London.

### EQUESTRIAN

Great Britain's Lee Pearson is peerless in this Paralympic sport where men and women compete equally. He won three golds at each of Sydney, Athens and Beijing, but 'only' one in 2012. The only discipline is dressage, open to physically and visually impaired riders in four categories. Equestrianism made its Paralympic debut at Atlanta in 1996. The only difference with the Olympic Games is that riders can use 'compensating aids' such as adapted saddles for amputees, or 'callers' for visually impaired competitors.

### FOOTBALL 5-A-Side

Football 5-a-side is for athletes with visual impairment. Eight men's teams play each other and to ensure fairness all competitors, apart from the goalkeeper, wear eyeshades, with the ball making a sound which helps players locate it. The rules are more or less the same as football but the pitch is smaller and the off-side rule does not exist. Brazil are the masters of the sport, winning every title since it was introduced in 2004, and will be inspired by the Pele of Paralympic football Jefinho.

### FOOTBALL 7-a-side

The sport is for those affected by cerebral palsy. Like the five-a-side game, it uses a smaller pitch than the 11-a-side game with matches made up of two 30-minute halves. There is no offside rule and throw-ins are taken with just one hand. Russia are the defending champions.

### GOALBALL

A sport for visually-impaired athletes, goalball is not unlike handball.

The aim is to throw the ball, equipped with a bell inside, into the opposing team's goal. A team consists of three players, all of whom are blindfolded. The Erkki Miinala-inspired Finland routed Brazil in 2012.

### JUDO

Open only to visually impaired athletes judo has several distinctive differences to the Olympics. The mats have different textures to help judoka identify where they are, while they begin with their hands already on each other's jackets. Yet they must still fight for five minutes. Mexico's Eduardo yvila Sanchez won gold in 2008 and bronze in London.

### POWERLIFTING

A means of post-war rehabilitation, powerlifting is one of the core sports for people with physical disabilities. Open to both men and women, with 10 different weight categories, athletes lie on their back strapped to a bench as they perform a bench press.

### ROWING

Rowing first made its appearance in 2008. Four races over 1000m split into three categories: single sculls for men and women with use of shoulders and arms, mixed double sculls for those with use of their trunk and arms, and coxed fours for rowers with functional use of their legs, trunks and arms, including up to two visually impaired athletes.

### SAILING

There are three categories of craft—a solo 4.6m single keel dual sail Norlin for men and women, a 5.8m mixed doubles Skud 18 and a 7m trio Sonar A class, for either sex. As yet there are no events for the visually impaired. Star sailor Damien Seguin of France was gold medalist in the solo craft at Athens and Beijing.

### SHOOTING

Competitors are placed at a distance of either 10, 25 or 50 metres, either standing, sitting or prone. Divided into three categories shooting uses a classification system which enables athletes from different impairment groups with the same level of functional ability to compete together.

SH1 is for pistol and rifle competitors that do not require a shooting stand, while SH2 is for rifle competitors who are not able to support the weight of the firearm with their arms and therefore require a spring mounted stand to shoot. Sweden and South Korea are the most successful nations in the history of paralympic shooting.

### SWIMMING

Featuring Brazil's most successful 10-gold Paralympic champion Daniel Dier. Accessible to even the most severely handicapped, swimming is one of the headline events. Competitors are grouped into 14 categories. Visually-impaired swimmers rely on the aid of a tapper, who uses a cushioned pole to indicate when they are nearing the wall.

### TABLE TENNIS

One of the traditional Paralympic events, players are either in wheelchairs or standing, in singles, doubles or in teams. Para table tennis follows the laws set by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) with only slight modifications to the serving laws for athletes competing in wheelchairs. No surprise that China is the most successful nation

### TRIATHLON

The "Paratriathlon" is making its Games bow, it starts with a 750m swim, followed by a 20km bike ride and culminates with a 5km run. Men and women compete in the same race although the athletes are divided into three categories. Star Athlete Lauren Steadman of the UK, won the 2015 Rio Paratriathlon.

### WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Originally developed by American WWII veterans the game has a basket at 10ft, or just over 3 metres. Shaun Norris of Australia Rollers debuted at Athens, the shooting guard won a gold in 2008 and silver at London.

### WHEELCHAIR FENCING

2012 champion Jovane Guisone, who lost the use of his legs after being shot in a robbery, is one of Brazil's big hopes for gold in this discipline open to athletes with motor impairments. Competitors' wheelchairs are firmly fixed to a metal frame in the competition area, known as the 'piste'.

As in the Olympics, events are divided across three weapons—epee, foil and sabre. Part of the Paralympic Games since Rome 1960, wheelchair fencing will have 14 medal events for individuals and teams in Rio.

France and Italy have traditionally been the most successful nations, but China led the medals table in 2008 and 2012.

### WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

A combination of rugby, basketball and ice hockey, this is the only collective sport in the Games for quadruplegics. An aggressive game, it involves four-person teams trying to cross into the opposition goal area with ball in hand. Australia boast Ryley Batt, considered the best in the world.

### WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

This popular sport was created in the 1980s. The rules are the same as for able-bodied athletes except the ball is allowed to bounce twice. There are six events in Rio: women's singles, men's singles, women's doubles, men's doubles, quad singles and quad doubles. Japan's Shing Kunieda aims for a third straight title.

### WHEELCHAIR VOLLEYBALL

Two teams of six face off on the two sides of the court divided by a lowish net (1.05m for women, 1.15m for men) and the players are not allowed to stand up. Star Player Katie Holloway of the USA is a two-time silver medallist. Safet Alibasic inspired Bosnia and Herzegovina to gold in London. — AFP



**SAO PAULO:** In this July 22, 2016 photo, athlete Alan Fonteles, from Brazil, left, who competes mainly in category T44, trains ahead the Paralympic Games athletics events in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AP

## GERMANY'S 'BLADE JUMPER' READY FOR RIO DEFENCE

**BERLIN:** Having abandoned an attempt to compete at the Rio Olympics, Germany's 'Blade Jumper' Markus Rehm will defend his long jump title at the Paralympic Games in the city. The 28-year-old, who had his right leg amputated as a teenager after a wakeboarding accident, ended his fight to jump alongside able-bodied athletes in Rio de Janeiro due to doubts that his prosthetic limb gives him an advantage.

International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) rules blocked Rehm from competing at an Olympics until he can prove his carbon limb does not give him an extra lift on take-off. There has never been a definitive answer to the debate and after protracted discussions, Rehm abandoned his Olympics dream in July.

His personal best of 8.40m, set in Doha in October 2015, would have been enough to win the men's long-jump at the 2012 London Olympics and this year's Rio Games where Jeff Henderson claimed gold with a leap of 8.38m in Brazil. "That jumped changed a lot for me and it showed to many people that we Paralympians are really amazing athletes," Rehm said in Rio during a recent visit.

"I'm really pushing myself to the limits to get a really good result at the Rio Paralympic Games, to jump close to my world record or, in the best case, even a bit further."

Rehm won Paralympics gold in London four years ago in the F44 category with a then-world record of 7.35m and earned a bronze in the 4x100m relay. He has won the world title three times in the F44 since 2011

and his nearest rivals on prosthetics are more than a metre behind him. He jumped against 2012 Olympic champion Greg Rutherford in the Netherlands in June 2013, when the Briton leapt 8.24m with Rehm trailing at 7.44m. The German, who trains in Leverkusen, has since improved significantly.

He has a job working in the German military, building prosthetic limbs, but his disability means he is unable to fight. His achievements are considerable given the accident he suffered as a 13-year-old, on a family holiday in Wurzburg, when the propeller of a passing boat shredded his leg while he bobbed in the water while wakeboarding. An infection, which left the teenager in agony, meant the leg had to be amputated three days after the accident. — AFP

## SPORTING HEROES BATTLE ON DESPITE RIO CRISES

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Austere but as battling as ever, the Paralympics start in Rio de Janeiro tomorrow hoping that rivalry in competition can overshadow controversy off the track.

Caught in political and economic crises, Rio 2016 organisers have skimped as far as they can on food, transport and accommodation. But they have not put off Iranian powerlifter Siamand Rahman, Britain's wheelchair racer David Weir and China's blind sprinter Liu Cuiqing as they seek sporting glory.

Rio's problem is that it is following London 2012, hailed as the best Paralympics ever in terms of fervour and sporting performance.

To keep the Rio Games on track, city authorities had to promise 150 million reais (\$46 million, 41 million euros) in August while the government got state companies to inject another 100 million reais in sponsorship. International Paralympic Committee (IPC) president Philip Craven said that during the Rio Olympics he was sleeping two hours a night preparing to welcome the 4,300 paralympians competing in 22 sports.

He said the cuts "are likely to impact every stakeholder attending the Paralympic Games". "The Games will happen, but they may not be—I wouldn't say top, but maybe not as relatively luxurious as in the past," he declared. "Paralympians are resilient people, and the staff teams that back them up, and our Paralympic family will pull together," he vowed. The number of tickets reportedly sold has risen from 300,000 of the 2.4 million available on August 20 to 1.4 million last Friday. "My expectations have been growing daily," Craven said when giving his latest update. Money may be less easy to find at the Paralympics than for its Olympic counterpart, but the controversy is the same: doping.

### 300KG AND COUNTING

The IPC banned all Russian athletes from the Rio Paralympics over allegations of state-run doping made by Canadian lawyer Richard McLaren in his report for the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

Russians are even excluded as neutral competitors. The decision was "outside the law, morality, humanity," according to Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

The IPC remained unrepentant. "It wasn't athletes that were cheating the system, it was the state-sponsored doping system that was

cheating the Russian athletes," Craven said on Friday. With a host of para-athletes from other countries also suspended in recent months, Rio para-athletes can expect the toughest testing ever.

And with canoe-kayak and triathlon taking the number of sports up to 22, Rio will be looking to produce new sporting heroes now that London 2012 sprint star Oscar Pistorius is in a South African prison for the killing of his girlfriend. The 41 career gold medals won by blind American swimmer Trischa Zorn between 1980 and 2004 looks unbeatable, but the Paralympics will inevitably produce new tales of courage.

The 28-year-old Rahman, disabled since birth, is aiming to become the first Paralympian to bench press 300kg. His rivals in the powerlifting over 107kg category have already conceded the gold medal to the Iranian. China will have a record 308 athletes in Rio looking to beat their 95 gold medals

from London when they topped the table for the third straight Paralympics.

They have swimmer Xu Qing competing in his fourth and possibly last Games, seeking to add to his seven gold medals.

Blind sprinter Liu Cuiqing last year inflicted the first defeat on reigning T11 400m champion Terezinha Guilhermina of Brazil in nine years. Liu, 23, won four golds at the world championships, stunning the Brazilian, 13-years her elder, each time. The Chinese woman thanks her coach Hu Zhengguan.

"I used to need help even in the simplest tasks like walking," Liu said. "Because of him, I can now run fearlessly on the track. Because of him, I am no longer unknown—I can run today under the attention of the world."

After his glorious four golds in London, and two before that at Beijing 2008, British wheelchair racer Weir is looking to leave the Paralympics at the age of 37 with at least one more title. — AFP



**SAO PAULO:** In this June 30, 2016 photo, Brazilian Paralympic swimmers Vanilton Filho, left, and Felipe Rodrigues prepare for the Paralympic Games in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Only a last-minute Brazilian government bailout has helped save the Paralympic Games from a shortfall in the local, privately funded operating budget. Almost everything will be scaled back: venues, seating, and staffing, but Paralympic officials say that no sports or nations have been cut out. — AP



## LANCASTER DEFENDS ENGLAND APPROACH AFTER JOINING LEINSTER

**DUBLIN:** Stuart Lancaster has hit back at suggestions he was insufficiently hands-on during his four years as England head coach. The 46-year-old, who stepped down as England boss last November after the team became the first host nation to suffer a group-stage exit at the World Cup, was confirmed as a member of Irish province Leinster's coaching staff yesterday. Three-times European champions Leinster turned to Lancaster after defence coach Kurt McQuilkin left to return to New Zealand for family reasons. Lancaster will now work under Leo Cullen, the head coach of the Dublin-based side.

As England boss, Lancaster presided over four successive runners-up finishes in the Six Nations before the team failed

to escape a 'Group of Death' at the World Cup following defeats by Wales and Australia. By contrast, Lancaster's successor, Eddie Jones, led England to a Six Nations Grand Slam in his first season in charge and the team have yet to lose under the Australian.

While he was with England, Lancaster had several high-profile assistants in Andy Farrell, Mike Catt and Graham Rowntree—all former England internationals—with the trio widely reported to be running most of the day to day training sessions. However, Lancaster said yesterday: "I've coached virtually every part of the game, whether I go back to my teaching career 'til I was 30, but I've coached now for 16 years.

"I think there was a perception in

England that I probably didn't do any coaching," explained former Leeds Tykes player Lancaster, who since leaving Twickenham has had short-term roles at NFL side the Atlanta Falcons, British Cycling, the Football Association and in New Zealand rugby with Counties Manukau."

### 'PHILOSOPHY'

He added: "Andy Farrell clearly led on the defence when I was with England (but) I was coaching defence not less than three weeks ago in New Zealand. "(At Counties Manukau my main remit was to coach defence. So I've got my own philosophy. Clearly it's been influenced by the people I've worked under as defence coaches.

"I watched Mike Ford when he was England defence coach, obviously Andy Farrell latterly, I worked with Paul Gustard in Argentina when he came with me. "I think I understand a lot about defence but equally as I mentioned earlier on, I've got a reasonably broad range and hopefully I can influence the attacking stuff as well and also reach down a bit to some of the academy work. "I come from a player development background, my role in England was not just head coach, (I was) head of elite player development, and I like to think I can offer Leinster something in that regard as well." Lancaster's assistants were also shown the door by England after the World Cup and he will be able to meet up in Dublin with Farrell, now a member

of Ireland's coaching staff.

At Leinster, Lancaster-whose new job title is "senior coach"—will join a backroom team consisting of Cullen plus his assistants Girvan Dempsey and John Fogarty. "Stuart brings a wealth of experience and is a highly respected figure in world rugby. We are all looking forward to having Stuart join our team and together helping the players maximise their potential as a group," Cullen told leinsterrugby.ie.

Leinster face Glasgow in the second round of the Celtic League on Saturday, having begun their campaign with a 20-8 victory over Treviso on Friday. Leinster have reached the final of the Celtic League nine times in its 15-year history, winning four titles. — AFP

# ATHLETICS GET FIRST HIT ON REPLAY REVERSAL IN 8TH, EDGE RED SOX 1-0

**OAKLAND:** Eduardo Rodriguez's no-hit bid for the Boston Red Sox was broken up after a replay reversal with two outs in the eighth inning, and Khris Davis hit a game-ending double in the ninth that sent the Oakland Athletics to a 1-0 victory Sunday. Brock Holt misplayed Davis' double in deep left field for an error that allowed Danny Valencia to score from first base. Valencia drew a leadoff walk against Craig Kimbrel (2-4), and Oakland averted a three-game sweep. Marcus Semien reached on an infield single in the eighth after Rodriguez stuck out his right leg to knock down a grounder. The left-hander found the ball and threw to first, where Semien initially was ruled out by umpire Laz Diaz. A's manager Bob Melvin challenged the call, which was overturned after a quick review. Replays clearly showed Semien was safe. Oakland has not been held without a hit since four Orioles pitchers turned the trick on July 13, 1991 - the longest active streak in the majors. The last-place A's snapped a five-game losing streak overall, and a nine-game skid to Boston. Ryan Madson (5-4) pitched the ninth for the win.

### ANGELS 4, MARINERS 2

Los Angeles starter Matt Shoemaker was hospitalized after taking a line drive to the head. Shoemaker was hit on the right side of his head with one out in the second inning on a 105 mph line drive from Kyle Seager. Shoemaker was able to turn his head slightly to avoid a direct blow to his face but was unable to get his mitt up in time. After the game, the Angels announced that a CT scan revealed Shoemaker suffered a small skull fracture and small hematoma. He was to be seen by a neurologist and remain in Seattle overnight for observation. Albert Pujols and C.J. Cron hit back-to-back home runs in the first inning and six Angels relievers combined to shut down the Mariners. Deolis Guerra (3-0) was the first to enter, and Andrew Bailey worked the ninth for his first save since 2013 with Boston. Pujols hit his 29th homer off starter Hisashi Iwakuma (14-11).

### CARDINALS 5, REDS 2

Randal Grichuk and Kolten Wong homered, Carlos Martinez carried a shutout into the seventh inning and St. Louis Cardinals snapped a three-game losing streak with a win over Cincinnati. Yadier Molina had two of the Cardinals' five hits as they avoided being swept in Cincinnati for the first time since July 2012. St. Louis, which turned four double plays, remained one game ahead of the Mets for the final NL playoff spot. Martinez (13-7) improved to 8-1 in 13 road starts this season. Seung Hwan Oh earned his 15th save. Tim Lincecum (2-3) gave up three runs in five innings.

### METS 5, NATIONALS 1

Seth Lugo kept pitching like a playoff-tested ace rather than a rookie, and New York got two-run homers from Curtis Granderson and Jay Bruce to beat Washington. The Mets won for the 11th time in 15 tries but didn't have much time to savor the victory - they hurried to Cincinnati for a 1:10 p.m. Monday holiday start. Lugo (3-2) limited the NL East leaders to one run in seven innings.

The 26-year-old righty has won three straight starts, permitting a total of three runs, to help rejuvenate an injury-plagued rotation. Granderson drove in three runs. Danny Espinosa matched a career high with his 21st homer for Washington. Reynaldo Lopez (2-3) threw three wild pitches over four innings in his return from Triple-A.



**OAKLAND:** Boston Red Sox's David Ortiz throws his bat after striking out in the fifth inning of a baseball game against the Oakland Athletics, Sunday, in Oakland, Calif. — AP

### BLUE JAYS 5, RAYS 3

Russell Martin hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the eighth inning to help Toronto overcome a poor start by 17-game winner J.A. Happ and avoid a three-game sweep against Tampa Bay. The Blue Jays moved a game ahead of Boston atop the AL East. Martin hit his 17th home run on a 3-0 pitch from Kevin Jepsen (2-6). The catcher has nine homers and 24 RBIs over his last 18 games. Joaquin Benoit (3-1) struck out three in a scoreless seventh. Roberto Osuna got his 30th save. Toronto manager John Gibbons was ejected from the dugout by plate umpire Pat Hoberg after Martin struck out in the fourth. The Blue Jays tied it at 3 in the seventh on Devon Travis' two-run single off Brad Boxberger, costing 17-game loser Chris Archer a shot at his ninth win. Archer struck out nine, running his AL-best total to 211.

### YANKEES 5, ORIOLES 2

Chase Headley and Austin Romine had two RBIs apiece, and New York beat Baltimore to prevent a three-game sweep and remain

a float in the AL wild-card race. With five rookies in the starting lineup, the Yankees closed within 3 1/2 games of the Orioles and Tigers for the league's final playoff spot. Luis Severino (2-8) pitched two strong innings of relief and Dellin Betances, the fifth New York reliever, got four outs for his eighth save. The loss dropped Baltimore three games out of first place in the AL East.

New York had been shut out three consecutive times by the Orioles in a seven-day span. But the Yankees promptly put an end to the streak with a three-run first against Wade Miley (8-12).

### CUBS 3, GIANTS 2, 13 INNINGS

Jason Heyward hit a tying single in the ninth inning and a game-winning single in the 13th as Chicago took three of four from San Francisco in a possible playoff preview. Anthony Rizzo singled leading off the 13th against Matt Reynolds (0-1) and went to second on Ben Zobrist's sacrifice. Addison Russell, who had three hits, was walked intentionally before Heyward drove in his third run of the game. Trevor Cahill (4-4) worked a perfect inning in a series in which all four games were decided by one run. The Cubs were starting at a second straight loss when Russell led off the ninth with a double against Santiago Casilla. Russell went to third on a wild pitch and scored on Heyward's single to hand Casilla his seventh blown save.

### INDIANS 6, MARLINS 5

Lonnie Chisenhall capped a three-run rally with a two-out RBI single in the ninth inning against Fernando Rodney, leading Cleveland over Miami. Chisenhall's hit dropped in front of a sliding Ichiro Suzuki in right field and scored pinch-runner Michael Martinez, giving the AL Central leaders their sixth straight win. Jose Ramirez's two-run single tied it, also with two outs. Rodney (2-4) allowed three runs, two hits, three walks and threw two wild pitches. Indians manager Terry Francona was ejected earlier in the inning for arguing when Jason Kipnis struck out on a checked call. Cody Allen (3-5) got two outs to help the Indians complete a three-game sweep and maintain a 5 1/2-game lead over Detroit.

Suzuki's ninth-inning double off Andrew Miller broke a 3-all tie. Martin Prado added a sacrifice fly, giving the Marlins a two-run lead. Miami has dropped eight of nine.

### ASTROS 7, RANGERS 6

George Springer and Evan Gattis homered to help Houston avoid a series sweep and snap Texas' seven-game winning streak. The Astros still trail the first-place Rangers by 9 1/2 games in the AL West and have won only three of 16 meetings this season. Springer led off the game with his 26th homer, and Houston built a 5-0 lead before Yu Darvish (5-4) was lifted after four innings. Gattis hit his 24th homer in the fifth for a 6-2 lead. Chris Devenski (3-4) pitched 1 2/3 scoreless innings. He took over for starter Collin McHugh with one out in the fifth after the Rangers had cut it to 6-5. Ken Giles pitched the ninth for his eighth save.

### BREWERS 10, PIRATES 0

Domingo Santana had his first two-homer game, pinch-hitter Jonathan Villar delivered his first grand slam and Chris Carter connected for his 32nd home run as Milwaukee completed a three-game sweep and handed Pittsburgh its sixth straight loss. The Pirates' skid follows a four-game sweep at Milwaukee last weekend, and has dropped them 3 1/2 games behind St. Louis for the second NL wild card. The Pirates host the Cardinals in a three-game series beginning Monday. Santana hit a solo shot off starter Steven Brault (0-2) to open the scoring. The third-year outfielder hit the second of back-to-back homers with Carter, who had a three-run drive, off Kelvin Marte during a five-run ninth. Villar connected in the sixth. Chase Anderson (8-11) scattered five hits over five innings.

### DODGERS 7, PADRES 4

Jose De Leon struck out nine while winning his major league debut, pinch-hitter Yasmani Grandal drove in three runs, including a go-ahead single in the fifth inning, and Los Angeles rallied to beat San Diego. De Leon (1-0) gave up four runs and six hits in six innings and didn't issue a walk. The right-hander struck out the side in the sixth. Kenley Jansen pitched the ninth to earn his 42nd save in 48 chances. Kevin Quackenbush (7-5) took the loss in relief.

### TIGERS 6, ROYALS 5

Justin Upton hit a two-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning, sending Detroit past Kansas City. Upton also doubled home J.D. Martinez in the second. Upton has seven homers and 18 RBIs in his last 14 games.

Miguel Cabrera was on first after a leadoff single when Upton drove a fastball from Joakim Soria (4-7) to center for his 20th homer, giving the Tigers a 6-5 lead. Shane Greene (3-3) pitched 1 1/3 innings for the win. Francisco Rodriguez worked the ninth for his 38th save in 42 opportunities.

### WHITE SOX 13, TWINS 11, 12 INNINGS

Jose Abreu hit two three-run homers and drove in a career-best seven runs, and Chicago used Tim Anderson's two-run double in the 12th inning to get a wild win over Minnesota. Abreu, Anderson and Melky Cabrera had three hits apiece, helping the White Sox overcome four homers by the Twins. The teams combined for 18 home runs while splitting the four-game series. Juan Minaya (1-0) earned his first major league win. He pitched a scoreless 11th but walked the first two batters in the 12th. Tommy Kahnle came in and earned his third career save, retiring Eddie Rosario with the bases loaded for the final out. Byron Buxton hit his first grand slam for Minnesota. Brian Dozier, Miguel Sano and John Ryan Murphy also went deep. Pat Dean (1-6) took the loss.

### BRAVES 2, PHILLIES 0

Julio Teheran pitched six sharp innings, Matt Kemp homered and last place Atlanta beat Philadelphia for its sixth consecutive win. Teheran (5-9) allowed five hits and struck out seven while lowering his ERA to 3.01. Jim Johnson worked the ninth for his 15th save, finishing a five-hitter. Kemp hit a leadoff drive in the second for his 28th homer. Freddie Freeman added another leadoff drive in the eighth for his 29th of the year. The Phillies dropped their sixth consecutive game, wasting another solid start by Jake Thompson (1-5). The rookie allowed four hits and struck out six in seven innings.

### DIAMONDBACKS 8, ROCKIES 5

Socrates Brito snapped a seventh-inning tie with a three-run homer, and Arizona held off a late rally to beat Colorado. Archie Bradley (6-8) scattered six hits over six innings and Jean Segura had three hits in his return to the lineup for the Diamondbacks. Rockies starter Jon Gray (9-7) allowed a run in the first inning but retired 17 of 19 batters before Arizona roughed him up in the seventh. Colorado scored twice in the ninth, but Daniel Hudson struck out DJ LeMahieu and Carlos Gonzalez with two runners on to end it. — AP

## MLB results/standings

St. Louis 5, Cincinnati 2; Toronto 5, Tampa Bay 3; Atlanta 2, Philadelphia 0; Milwaukee 10, Pittsburgh 0; NY Yankees 5, Baltimore 2; Chicago White Sox 13, Minnesota 11 (12 innings); Detroit 6, Kansas City 5; Chicago Cubs 3, San Francisco 2 (13 Innings); Houston 7, Texas 6; Oakland 1, Boston 0; Arizona 8, Colorado 5; LA Angels 4, Seattle 2; Cleveland 6, Miami 5; LA Dodgers 7, San Diego 4; NY Mets 5, Washington 1.

American League Eastern Division					National League Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	L	PCT	GB
Toronto	77	59	.566	-	Washington	79	57	.581	-
Boston	76	60	.559	1	NY Mets	71	66	.518	8.5
Baltimore	74	62	.544	3	Miami	68	69	.496	11.5
NY Yankees	70	65	.519	6.5	Philadelphia	60	76	.441	19
Tampa Bay	58	77	.430	18.5	Atlanta	54	83	.394	25.5
Central Division					Western Division				
Cleveland	79	56	.585	-	Chicago Cubs	88	48	.647	-
Detroit	74	62	.544	5.5	St. Louis	71	64	.526	16.5
Kansas City	70	66	.515	9.5	Pittsburgh	67	67	.500	20
Chicago W Sox	65	71	.478	14.5	Milwaukee	60	76	.441	28
Minnesota	51	86	.372	29	Cincinnati	57	78	.422	30.5
Western Division					Western Division				
Texas	82	55	.599	-	LA Dodgers	76	60	.559	-
Houston	72	64	.529	9.5	San Francisco	73	63	.537	3
Seattle	69	67	.507	12.5	Colorado	65	71	.478	11
LA Angels	61	75	.449	20.5	Arizona	58	78	.426	18
Oakland	58	78	.426	23.5	San Diego	56	80	.412	20

## TEST DOOR AJAR FOR FORGOTTEN MAN BAILEY

**MELBOURNE:** Nearly three years have passed since George Bailey was shut out of test cricket after one middling series but the door has creaked ajar as Australia searches for answers to its subcontinental malaise before a daunting tour to India.

Having watched the test side slump to an unprecedented 3-0 whitewash to Sri Lanka, Bailey ensured there would be no repeat in the one-day tournament by smashing 270 runs at an average of 67.50 to top the batting lists and drive the tourists to a 4-1 victory.

Bailey's unbeaten 90 in the fourth match fired Australia to an unassailable 3-1 lead in the series and showed the hallmark composure that made the Tasmanian first understudy to Michael Clarke before the captain's retirement last year. Australia's woeful performance against probing spin bowling on flat, turning wickets in the test series has forced selectors to go back to the drawing board.

The top six batsmen who worked so

seamlessly on home wickets against New Zealand and West Indies last summer are expected to be picked apart after being found out in Sri Lanka.

David Warner, one of the few who would feel comfortable about their place, gave Bailey a ringing endorsement while just stopping short of nominating him for the four-test tour of India.

"He's played fantastic, he's played unbelievable cricket in the subcontinent," Warner told reporters after blasting a match-winning century in the final ODI in Kandy on Sunday. "I think he's averaging almost 70 now. He's been a fantastic player in these conditions for a while now and as I've said previously I'm not here to put names up for selection. (The selectors) have to make hard choices ... to pick the right team come February."

Bailey played the last of his five test matches in Jan. 2014, having scored an underwhelming 183 runs at an average of 26.14 in Australia's 5-0 whitewash of



**DAMBULLA:** In this file photograph taken on September 1, 2016, Australian cricketers George Bailey (L) and Matthew Wade leave the grounds with the stumps after victory in the fourth one day international (ODI) cricket match between Sri Lanka and Australia at The Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium in Dambulla. — AFP

England in the home Ashes series.

Although a proven leader and hugely respected by team mates, Bailey has also seemed desperately unlucky at times, and was pushed out of Australia's formidable one-day side for last year's World Cup triumph on home soil when making way for Clarke's return from injury.

He turns 34 on Wednesday but has never lost hope of winning a spot back on the test team and he showed the patience and sound technique against Sri Lanka's spinners to mount a good case for his inclusion for India, according to Tasmania state coach Dan Marsh.

"If they're looking for someone who can play spin well in the subcontinent, I'm sure he's got his name up there," Marsh, the son of selectors' chairman Rod Marsh, told Cricket Australia's website (cricket.com.au).

"He will just have to back this up and ... continue his good form in Shield cricket, as he did last year, to get his name up there." — Reuters

## THAILAND HOPING PRESSURE GETS TO JAPAN: COACH

**BANGKOK:** Thailand's football coach yesterday said the pressure will be on Japan when the sides meet in Bangkok with both seeking to reboot their quest for a World Cup 2018 spot after first game defeats.

The War Elephants host Asian giants Japan on Tuesday evening, just days after a contentious late penalty saw them go down 0-1 to Saudi Arabia in Group B of Asian qualification for Russia.

Japan are also still smarting from a 2-1 home loss to UAE after new Arsenal signing Takuma Asano had a goal controversially disallowed despite TV replays showing it crossed the line.

Both teams need to finish in the top two of their group in third round Asian qualification to secure an automatic place in Russia in two years time. "Anything can happen," Thai coach Kiattisuk Senamuang-better known to fans as "Zico"-told reporters, adding he hoped vocal home support could swing the game in Thailand's favour. "We want to put pressure on Japan. They will have a problem if they lose a second game. If Japan are careless or cannot earn point, pressure will be on them."

Zico has won praise for driving a young team without global stars into the last 12 in Asia for World Cup qualification.

The Thais are arguably the surprise package of the last 12 on the road to Russia. But Japan, a regional powerhouse with several players at top European clubs, are firm favourites in Bangkok, where they will also enjoy the support of a large expatriate community.

Thailand have not beaten Japan since 1997 when Zico scored two in a 3-1 victory.

Japan's Bosnian coach, Vahid Halilhodzic, said his charges were ready for Tuesday's challenge and determined to rectify their first game loss to the UAE. "Japan has recovered and will go with strong character (into this game), looking for victory," he said through a translator. "Thailand are fast but Japan has the quality and experience. There are no easy way to qualify but we are playing to win." The top two from six in Group A and B advance to Russia.

The teams that come third will face off in a two-legged tie, before playing an inter-continental play-off for another spot in Russia. — AFP



**NEW DELHI:** Australian former cricketer Ricky Ponting (C) takes a selfie with a guest during a function to promote tourism in his home state Tasmania at the Australian High Commission in New Delhi yesterday. Australia's former World Cup-winning skipper Ricky Ponting said loads of one-day cricket may put the 50-over version in danger of losing its relevance. Speaking to the media a day after Australia consolidated their top ODI spot with a 4-1 series win against Sri Lanka, Ponting seemed underwhelmed by his country's achievement. — AFP



**BANGKOK:** Thailand football coach Kiattisuk Senamuang speaks at a press conference prior to the 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Thailand today in Bangkok. — AFP

## INDIA COURT QUASHES DHONI'S 'GOD' CASE

**NEW DELHI:** India's top court quashed criminal proceedings yesterday against one-day international captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni over a magazine cover depicting him as a Hindu god.

The Supreme Court said a lower court in southern Karnataka state had wrongly summoned Dhoni over the case, one of several brought mainly by Hindu nationalists accusing him of hurting religious sentiments.

"(We) quash the proceedings including the summoning order against the accused... we have taken note of the complaint and the offence alleged while passing this order," a bench headed by Justice Ranjan Gogoi said, according to the Press Trust of India.

The controversy dates back to 2013 when Business Today magazine ran a

drawing portraying Dhoni as Hindu god Vishnu, holding various products representing his wide-ranging endorsement deals, including a shoe. Hindu nationalists lodged criminal complaints to police against him in different parts of the religiously diverse but Hindu-majority country, although most were later dismissed.

The Supreme Court stayed criminal proceedings against Dhoni last year after he appealed against the case in the Karnataka High Court lodged by an activist — before the top court quashed the proceedings yesterday.

The top court also stayed in January an arrest warrant issued for Dhoni by a lower court in southern Andhra Pradesh state for failing to answer repeated summons to appear there over the same issue. — AFP

## 'EXCITING' ENGLAND ENCOURAGE MORGAN

**CARDIFF:** England limited overs captain Eoin Morgan said he was "excited" by his team's progress in 50-over cricket despite a season-ending four-wicket loss to Pakistan in Cardiff on Sunday. That defeat meant England had to be content with a 4-1 one-day international series win rather than a first home 5-0 whitewash.

It also denied Morgan's men, who back in June tied an ODI with Sri Lanka in Nottingham before winning that series, a maiden unbeaten season in white-ball cricket ahead of Wednesday's lone Twenty20 against Pakistan in Manchester. England may still be fifth in the International Cricket Council ODI rankings but they have made significant progress since their embarrassing first-round exit at last year's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

And with England staging both the 2017 Champions Trophy and the 2019 World Cup, it is no longer fanciful to think they could win their first major international 50-over trophy within the next few years.

"We've been outstanding," said Morgan. "Every game throughout the series, we've come out with a hunger and determination to perform at our best." England fell short of what they wanted in making 302 for nine in Cardiff, with opener Jason Roy top-scoring with 87 and all-rounder Ben Stokes contributing an ODI-best 75.

But they were on course for a whitewash when Pakistan lost two wickets in one Mark Wood over to be 77 for three. However, a record fourth-wicket partnership of 163 between wicket-keeper Sarfraz Ahmed (90) and Shoaib Malik (77) turned the match Pakistan's way.

### 'HUNGER'

Morgan, though, remained heartened by England's commitment to an aggressive approach in ODI cricket since their World Cup debacle. "I think it's exciting," he said.

"The attitude and hunger to want to be better playing in that manner, I think, sums up the direction one-day international cricket is going and the talent we have." But with world number one-ranked Australia also completing a 4-1 series victory away to Sri Lanka on Sunday, Morgan denied England-beaten on home soil in the 2013 final by India at Edgbaston-were favourites for next year's Champions Trophy.

"Australia are playing some really strong cricket... South Africa, India as well," said the Irishman. "I know the last Champions Trophy we played (here), the pitches were a bit drier than we thought, and brought in sub-continent teams. "I don't think, this far out, you can label anybody as favourites." Man-of-the-match Ahmed, who also scored Pakistan's first ODI hundred at Lord's in the

second match, was the leading overall run-scorer in the series with exactly 300 at an average of 60. "The way Sarfraz batted, this whole tour he's been exceptional," said Pakistan one-day captain Azhar Ali following a much-needed win. "He's been positive and scoring good runs at number five, so we've got some good performances but we just need to bind it together."

Nevertheless, Pakistan remain ninth in the ODI rankings, with the 1992 champions in danger of missing out on automatic qualification for the 2019 World Cup. Azhar has often been compared unfavourably to celebrated Test captain Misbah-ul-Haq, who has led Pakistan to the top of the ICC standings in the five-day game.

But Azhar responded to suggestions he might resign the captaincy by indicating he intended to carry on as skipper. "I got a few 80s (against England) so that will really help my confidence. Leading by example is very important. I will try and keep that form in the coming series. That will help the team."

He added: "It's a very happy camp right now because it has been a very tough tour for us in ODIs, and getting a victory at the end and finishing on a high is really good. "A few guys we have seen on this tour have really stepped up-they are young guys, and if they can play good consistent cricket we are looking at a bright future." — AFP

## CHINA LOOKING FOR KOREA BOUNCE AGAINST IRAN

**BEIJING:** China are hoping to reproduce the form that gave South Korea palpitations last week as they take on heavyweights Iran in another big World Cup qualifying test today. China fought back from 3-0 down to make it 3-2 with 14 minutes left in Seoul, ensuring a tense finale to a game which South Korea had looked like wrapping up with ease.

While China started the final round of Asian qualifying with a defeat, they are taking heart from the performance ahead of today's home game against Iran in Shenyang.

"I don't think we have much pressure," said Guangzhou Evergrande midfielder Huang Bowen, according to the Global Times. "I just hope we can play the way we did in the last 15 minutes against South Korea."

China are bidding to reach only the second World Cup in their history in a tough Group A which also brackets 2022 hosts Qatar, Uzbekistan and Syria. They are not the only team needing a positive result with Japan, still smarting from a disallowed goal in their 2-1 defeat to UAE, facing a tricky away trip to Thailand.

The top two teams from both of the six-strong Asian groups will earn spots at the 2018 World Cup in Russia, while the third-placed

teams go into a play-off series. "Iran are stronger than us," said Huang. "But we are playing at home, so I hope we can deliver."

China's first task will be to avoid conceding after Zheng Zhi's own goal, followed by strikes from Lee Chung-Yong and Koo Ja-Cheol, gave them a mountain to climb in Seoul.

Carlos Queiroz's Iran are Asia's top-ranked side at 39th in the world, and they started the qualifying round with a 2-0 victory over Qatar in Tehran-although both goals came in injury time.

"It's going to be very tough... We come from different results in the first games, but the situation is reversed now that China will play at home," Queiroz said, according to the Global Times.

### RIOT ACT

In Bangkok, Japan desperately need a win after their shock loss to UAE, but it won't be easy for the four-time Asian champions at a steamy Rajamangala stadium.

Outspoken AC Milan forward Keisuke Honda read his younger team-mates the riot act after last week's defeat, telling them they need to work harder. "A surprising number of players watch and read the news so they know what I say. I don't think they are going to change

straight away, but maybe become aware of the fact that they have to make more of an effort," Honda said, according to Japan's Kyodo News.

"I want to give them the opportunity to change their mindset. I have to pull the team forward when it needs pulling, and it's not just me. There are a number of experienced players on this team that feel the same way." Meanwhile the UAE can seize the initiative in Group B when they host Australia looking for their second big scalp after beating Japan last week.

Asian champions Australia were tentative in last week's 2-0 win over Iraq in Perth, and home conditions will suit UAE with free entry expected at Abu Dhabi's 42,000-capacity Mohammed bin Zayed Stadium. UAE playmaker Omar Abdulrahman urged fans to come out in force, warning that the game "won't be easy at all".

"We have to win for the second successive time, which will help us at the end of our journey," he told The National newspaper. "But we need our stadium to be full, with more than 40,000 Emiratis to come and support their national team."

Elsewhere, war-torn Syria play their 'home' fixture against South Korea in Malaysia, which is also hosting Iraq's game against Saudi Arabia. — AFP



**KINSHASA:** Central African Republic's Vianney Mabide (C) vies with Democratic Republic of the Congo's Yannick Yala Bolasie (L) during the 2017 African Cup of Nations qualifying football match between Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic on Sunday at the Martyrs stadium, in Kinshasa. — AFP

## SWEDEN KICKS OFF POST-ZLATAN REFORM PHASE

**STOCKHOLM:** No longer able to call up Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Sweden are in dire need of radical changes to win fans and games, as it faces the Netherlands in their Group A 2018 World Cup qualifying opener. After a dismal showing at Euro-2016, Sweden's all-time high scorer put an end to his 116-cap international career, leaving big boots to fill.

The Swedes are now turning the page to begin the post-Zlatan era. "I had a conversation with Zlatan where he was perfectly clear. This chapter is closed," Sweden's new coach Janne Andersson said in late August. "There's no point in thinking about how things used to be." Andersson now finds himself building a team from scratch. In addition to Ibrahimovic, five other players have quit the squad after the Euros, including goal-

keeper Andreas Isaksson, defender Erik Johansson and midfielder Kim Kallstrom.

The side on call for today's match is full of new recruits. Two players are expected to make their international debut, Marcus Rohden, 25, and Alexander Fransson, 22.

But the pool of talent is clearly shallow. The pillars of the team are now captain Andreas Granqvist, his fellow defender Victor Lindelof, a young hopeful at Benfica, and Albin Ekdal, a playmaker who will sit out against the Netherlands due to injury. In other words, Sweden poses little threat in Group A, which also includes France, Bulgaria, Belarus and Luxembourg.

Andersson is fully aware the team will need some time to find its form. "I can't guarantee victory. But I can guarantee that we are 100 percent professional," he told daily Aftonbladet recently.

### BUILDING A BARBECUE

To give Andersson the best shot at success, the Swedish Football Federation has provided him with an adviser who worked miracles at the Euro as Iceland's coach, Swede Lars Lagerback. But so far he has stayed in the shadows and it is unclear what exactly his role will be.

Andersson, who won the Swedish first division championship in 2015 with Norrkoping, is known for his tough, no-nonsense style and an offensive game, a stark contrast from his predecessor Erik Hamren, who infuriated fans with his cautious, defensive style.

Barely wet behind the ears, Andersson has already courted controversy by insisting that all players sing the national anthem, something Ibrahimovic never did. He later backed



**SOLNA:** Netherland's national football midfielder Wesley Sneijder attend a press conference on the eve of the WC 2018 football qualification match between Sweden and Netherland in Solna, yesterday. — AFP

down and said singing wouldn't be mandatory. And just last week, he took the squad out into the woods to have them build a barbecue as a team-building exercise.

It took them two-and-a-half hours and team spirit was bolstered. The same day, the Netherlands played a friendly against Greece and lost 1-2. As far as game strategy goes, Andersson hopes to forge a more well-balanced team that works together—a change welcomed by observers.

Sportswriter Mathias Luhr, of Swedish daily Expressen, said he believed in "this much-needed and interesting fresh start, with a team rather than a Hollywood production made up of one superstar and slew of (pretty) anonymous sidekicks." — AFP

## UAE SURPRISE JAPAN, AUSTRALIA BEAT IRAQ

**PERTH:** The United Arab Emirates upset Japan 2-1 to pick up a valuable three points away and Australia scored twice in six minutes to hold off Iraq 2-0 to kick off the final round of Asian qualifying for the World Cup. Ahmed Khalil scored twice in Saitama to help the UAE team overcome an early 1-0 deficit against Japan in Group B. South Korea got away to a big lead and held on to beat China 3-2 in Group A in Seoul, then Uzbekistan beat Syria 1-0 in Tashkent, and Iran defeated Qatar 2-0 at Tehran.

Saudi Arabia edged Thailand 1-0 in Group B, leaving UAE as the only team with an away win in the opening matches of the round. The top two teams in each group automatically qualify for the 2018 World Cup, and the third-place teams go into a playoff for an intercontinental qualifier for the last spot in Russia. Asian Cup champion Australia's next match will be a tough one - UAE on Tuesday in the heat and humidity of Abu Dhabi.

"This is no surprise, UAE is a very good team, and this is a very difficult group," Australia coach Ange Postecoglou said, when told of UAE's win moments after the Socceroos beat Iraq.

### UAE 2, JAPAN 1

A month-long training camp in Spain appears to have helped the UAE, while four-time Asian champion Japan struggled to put together its top team after some players arrived only a few days ahead of the match. An unmarked Keisuke Honda gave Japan the lead in the 11th minute from a free kick, but Khalil, the Asian player of the year, equalized nine minutes later. Khalil scored his second from the penalty spot nine minutes into the second half.

### AUSTRALIA 2, IRAQ 0

Second-half goals from Massimo Luongo and Tomi Juric gave Australia the win after a frustrating first half. Australia

had 20 shots to six and had 72 percent of possession but their passing wasn't accurate, while Iraq crowded the midfield and defended well. "We've got this one out of the way, now we need to recover and play again in a few days," Australia captain Mile Jedinak said.

### SOUTH KOREA 3, CHINA 2

South Korea held on to beat China. Zheng Zhi's own-goal put South Korea ahead, Lee Chung-yong headed home the second, and Koo Ja-cheol made it 3-0 midway through the second half. But Hai Yu pulled a goal back for China in the 74th, and Hao Junmin curled home a free kick two minutes later. South Korea, the 2002 World Cup semifinalist, plays Syria on Tuesday, when China hosts Iran.

### UZBEKISTAN 1, SYRIA 0

Forward Alexandr Geynrikh went on in the second half and scored the only goal late at Tashkent, pouncing on a rebound and sending a half-volley into the Syrian goal. Syria had a late equalizer chance but Omro Al Midani's effort was blocked.

### IRAN 2, QATAR 0

Injury-time goals from Reza Ghoochannejhad and Alireza Jahanbakhsh secured the win for three-time World Cup qualifier Iran at Azadi Stadium. Substitute Ghoochannejhad capitalized on a mistake by Qatar goalkeeper Amine Lacomte to give the home side the lead four minutes into injury time, and Jahanbakhsh's long-range strike clinched the win.

### SAUDI ARABIA 1, THAILAND 0

Attacking midfielder Nawaf Al Abed scored from the penalty spot in the 84th minute at Riyadh's King Fahd International Stadium to give Saudi Arabia its fifth win over Thailand - along with a scoreless draw - in six internationals. — AP



**OSLO:** Germany's midfielder Thomas Mueller (R) vies with Norway's Markus Henriksen during the World Cup 2018 football qualification match between Norway and Germany in Oslo on Sunday. — AFP

## MUELLER, KIMMICH FIRE GERMANY PAST NORWAY

**OSLO:** Bayern Munich team-mates Thomas Mueller and Joshua Kimmich fired title-holders Germany to a commanding 3-0 win away to Norway in their opening 2018 World Cup qualifier on Sunday.

Mueller struck in the 16th minute at the Ullevaal Stadion in Oslo before Kimmich netted Germany's second goal on the stroke of half-time. Mueller then scored again on the hour to ensure a winning start for Joachim Loew's team in Group C as the world champions set off on the road to the finals in Russia.

Germany top the group after the opening round of matches, with Azerbaijan also claiming a 1-0 victory against San Marino and Northern Ireland holding Czech Republic to a 0-0 draw.

"We can always find things to improve, but generally speaking, we were on the right track tonight," Mueller told RTL Television. "We're very happy, even if there is room for improvement."

Loew added: "I think we played a good match, we dominated our opponents. Norway weren't at their best tonight, they never got into the match but that's also because we played

well." The four-time world champions are trying to become the first European team since Italy in 1938 to retain the trophy, and the visitors quickly took the game to Per-Mathias Hogmo's Norway. Benedikt Hoewedes found himself in an advanced position inside the Norwegian box and Mueller's cutback picked out the Schalke centre-back who forced Rune Jarstein to make an excellent save with his legs.

### MUELLER SHINES

But Mueller edged the Germans ahead on the quarter-hour as the Bayern forward, having fluffed his first attempt, reacted quickest amid a chaotic scramble to shoot beyond Jarstein, the Norway goalkeeper unable to keep the ball out as it squirmed inside the far post.

Kimmich nearly doubled the lead almost immediately as he escaped behind the defence and struck firmly at Jarstein, but Norway should have equalised on 24 minutes when Josh King rifled narrowly over rather than playing in an unmarked Veton Berisha.

While Neuer, in his first game since taking

over as full-time captain following the international retirement of Bastian Schweinsteiger, was largely untroubled, his opposite number Jarstein tried his best to keep Norway in the match.

The Hertha Berlin keeper raced off his line to claw the ball away from Julian Draxler as Germany continued to look dangerous, but Loew's side grabbed a deserved second before the break as Mueller's deft touch released Kimmich to drill a superb low strike into the corner. Norway couldn't have asked for a much tougher test as they seek to qualify for a first major tournament since Euro 2000, and their hosts took another hit as Mueller headed Sami Khedira's cross past Jarstein early in the second half. Mueller failed to score even once during Germany's run to the Euro 2016 semi-finals, but the 27-year-old rediscovered his best form in Oslo as he increased his international goals tally to 34. Loew has vowed to blood the country's next generation as part of their World Cup preparations and 20-year-old Julian Brandt, the Bayer Leverkusen winger, went close to grabbing his first senior Germany goal after coming on as a substitute. — AFP



**SAITAMA:** United Arab Emirates (UAE) midfielder Omar Abdulrahman (R) and Japan's midfielder Makoto Hasebe (L) fight for the ball during their football match in the final round of Asian qualifiers for the 2018 World Cup at Saitama Stadium. — AFP

## FIFA CLEARS KOSOVO PLAYERS TO MAKE WORLD CUP DEBUT

**ZURICH:** Amid last-minute confusion about which players are eligible to play for Kosovo, soccer's newest national team will have almost a full squad to pick from in its World Cup debut yesterday.

FIFA said hours before kickoff in Finland that it approved several former Albania players to represent Kosovo.

Five of the six players confirmed by FIFA, including goalkeeper Samir Ujkani, were in the squad to play Finland in Turku. The cases of midfielder Valon Berisha, who played for Norway before Kosovo gained FIFA and UEFA membership in May, and one other player were still not resolved before the 9:45 p.m. (1845 GMT) kickoff.

Confusion over paperwork threatened to mar Kosovo's first World Cup qualifying match, more than eight years after the former province of Serbia declared independence. FIFA's players' status committee has been evaluating requests to switch allegiance of Kosovo-eligible players who

had represented other countries at youth or senior level while their home country was not recognized in international soccer. Kosovo's assistant coach, Tord Grip, said the confusion has been unsettling.

"Maybe it's both the Kosovo federation and FIFA that have messed this up. I don't know all the details," Grip, a former longtime assistant to Sven-Goran Eriksson, told Swedish radio yesterday.

Kosovo's entry into FIFA membership has tested the rules on switching allegiance. Created to regulate typical cases in which players had nationality of two existing FIFA member federations, the rules have struggled to cope with a new national team like Kosovo.

FIFA had in recent months approved requests from nine Kosovo players who had represented six different European countries, including Albania, Germany and Switzerland. Kosovo's qualifying group also includes Croatia, Iceland, Turkey and Ukraine. — AP

## NORTHERN IRELAND HOLD CZECHS TO GOALLESS DRAW

**PRAGUE:** Northern Ireland opened their World Cup 2018 qualifying campaign with a goalless draw against Group C rivals the Czech Republic in Prague on Sunday.

Playing their first competitive game since their 1-0 defeat to Wales in the last-16 phase of Euro 2016, Northern Ireland relied on solid defence and breakaways throughout the game.

"We're pleased with the point," said Northern Ireland manager Michael O'Neill.

"It's a better point for us than it is for them, obviously." In their best scoring chance of a rather dull first half, Paddy McNair saw his low shot stopped by Czech keeper Tomas Vaclik. The Czechs never managed to put the defensive visitors under real pressure during the first 45 minutes. Pavel Kaderabek, Milan Skoda and Vladimir Darida all sent shots wide, leaving Northern Ireland keeper Michael McGovern with little to do. "I thought first half we were very good at times, we defended well, we counter-attacked well, but... we should have done better with the final pass," said O'Neill.

"We set our team up to play that way so it was pleasing to see the players took that on board." Czech coach Karel Jarolim, who took over from Pavel Vrba after Euro 2016 at which the Czechs bowed out following the group phase, said he was upset with the loss of points.

"But we have to raise our heads and go on," he added. The hosts created better chances early in the second half, but Vaclav Kadlec sent his low shot straight at McGovern after three Czechs had stormed into the visitors' box.

Czech winger Filip Novak then squandered his team's best chance as he blasted wide from five yards, while Ladislav Krejci and Jan Kopic both missed the target in the closing stages.

"I should have scored," Novak told the Czech

Television. "I was alone and I could have asked him (McGovern) where I should place it. Unfortunately I missed."

### 'FATIGUE ELEMENT'

Jarolim said the second half "was better" and showed his team the way to go in the games to follow. "We had enough scoring chances but failed to convert them." O'Neill blamed the "fatigue element" for his team's lack of stamina after the break.

"We started the game with four players that have played very little club football this year, the

front three and obviously Paddy McNair." "We weren't as big a threat in terms of being on the counter-attack (in the second half), but again the spirit of the team, to defend and to make sure we took something from the game, was admirable." "We're not going to come here to a team of the Czech Republic's calibre and dominate possession of the ball.

"We're a very good team when we don't have the ball but we have to improve a lot when we do have it." Germany lead Group C after beating Norway 3-0 at Oslo on Sunday, ahead of Azerbaijan who won 1-0 at San Marino. — AFP



**MONTEVIDEO:** Claudia Umpierrez, the first woman to referee first division men's football in Uruguay, referees a match between Uruguayan teams River Plate and Boston River on Sunday in Montevideo. — AFP

# Sports

**Athletics get first hit on replay reversal in 8th, edge Red Sox**



**Mueller, Kimmich fire Germany past Norway**



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CASEY TO END LONG PGA TOUR VICTORY DROUGHT Page 15



NEW YORK: Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina hits a return against Dominic Thiem of Austria during their 2016 US Open Men's Singles match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York yesterday. — AFP

## DEL POTRO LOWEST RANKED Q-FINALIST IN 25 YEARS

NEW YORK: Former champion Juan Martin del Potro became the lowest ranked player in 25 years to reach the US Open quarter-finals when Dominic Thiem quit their last-16 tie through injury yesterday. The 142nd-ranked Argentine was leading 6-3, 3-2 when the eighth-seeded Austrian retired with a right knee injury having received a medical timeout just moments earlier.

Del Potro, the 2009 champion who was pushed to the brink of retirement earlier this year after undergoing three surgeries on his left wrist, will face either Stan Wawrinka or Ilya Marchenko for a semi-final place. Jimmy Connors was ranked 174 when he went on to the US Open semi-finals in 1991.

"You never want to win a match like this. I wish Dominic a quick recovery as he has a great future," said 27-year-old del Potro. The giant Argentine had required treatment himself on a right shoulder injury after dropping

ping serve to go 2-1 down in the first set. But he recovered to break back for 3-3 before edging ahead at 5-3 and taking the opener on an ace.

Del Potro was a break to the good again at 2-1 in the second set before Thiem began to flag. The 23-year-old Austrian had needed five sets to beat Australia's John Millman in the first round and four to get past Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain in the last 32.

He was also playing in a season-leading 70th match of the season and 21st tournament, a gruelling schedule which finally caught up with him on Arthur Ashe Stadium yesterday. "I couldn't bend my knee too much in the last three days so I was handicapped," said Thiem who said he was also suffering blisters on his feet. "You can't take too many risks with the knee."

Should del Potro make the semi-finals, he would be the lowest-ranked man to do so at a Grand Slam since

237-ranked Vladimir Voltchkov at Wimbledon in 2000. No man ranked as low as del Potro has ever made the final of a major. "It's amazing to play in New York. There's a great connection between the US fans and Argentina fans," said del Potro who was handed a wildcard for the US Open after winning the silver medal at the Olympics. "I don't know if I am playing better than I was in 2009 but I will try to keep winning."

### MURRAY IN ACTION

Andy Murray, the 2012 champion, who has reached the last 16 or better for the 23rd straight Slam, will open the night session against resurgent Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov. Murray leads the head-to-head with Dimitrov 6-3 although the 25-year-old Bulgarian won their last match in Miami in March. Japan's sixth seed Kei Nishikori has made the fourth round of all the majors in

the same year for the first time.

The 2014 runner-up takes on in-form Ivo Karlovic who, at 37, is the oldest player in the fourth round since 39-year-old Connors made the semi-finals in 1991.

Having saved a match point in an epic triumph over Dan Evans in the last round, third-seeded Wawrinka, a semi-finalist in 2013 and 2015, faces 28-year-old Ukraine journeyman Marchenko.

World number 63 Marchenko arrived in New York on a seven-match losing streak, a run of failure stretching back to Istanbul in April. The first two quarter-finals take place today when defending champion Novak Djokovic faces France's Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and Lucas Pouille, the conqueror of Rafael Nadal, tackles French compatriot Gael Monfils. It's the first time since 1947 that three French men have reached the quarter-finals of one Grand Slam. — AFP

## HALEP SOLVES SUAREZ TO REACH US OPEN Q-FINALS



NEW YORK: Carla Suarez Navarro, of Spain, returns a shot to Simona Halep, of Romania, during the fourth round of the U.S. Open tennis tournament, yesterday. — AP

NEW YORK: Simona Halep punched her ticket to the US Open quarter-finals yesterday, where the fifth-ranked Romanian will likely find world number one Serena Williams waiting. Halep, a former French Open finalist who has won three WTA titles in 2016, defeated Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro 6-2, 7-5 — edging ahead in a rivalry that had seen them split their previous 10 matches 5-5. "I just gave everything I had," said Halep, who sailed through the first set and gained an early break in the second before Suarez put the brakes on. Serving for the match at 5-4, Halep was broken, but she broke back immediately and made no mistake with her second chance. "I'm really happy I could win this match," said Halep, who was already looking forward to a probably clash with Williams. "The next round will be a very tough one, so I want to enjoy this victory today," she said.

Williams, gunning for a seventh US Open title and 23rd Grand Slam crown—both of which would be Open Era records—was the star attraction Monday taking on 52nd-ranked Yaroslava Shvedova.

Williams has won all four of her prior meetings with the Kazakh and even though she's still receiving treatment on a balky right shoulder she has reached the round of 16 without dropping a set. A victory over Shvedova would not only put her into the last eight, it would take her to 308 Grand

slam match wins — past Roger Federer for the most by anyone in the Open Era.

Although she seems to rack up a Grand Slam record any time she steps on the court, Williams' reign atop the world rankings is under pressure, with quarter-finalist Angelique Kerber now poised to topple her if the American doesn't reach the final.

Fourth-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska, who also has an outside chance of seizing the number one ranking, faces a tricky battle for a quarter-final berth against Ana Konjuh.

Poland's Radwanska had to save three match points to get past the 18-year-old Croatian in the second-round at Wimbledon this year. In the fourth round of a Grand Slam for the first time, Konjuh will be out to prevent Radwanska from advancing in the only major in which she has never reached the quarters.

Sixth-seeded Venus Williams was also in action, taking on hard-hitting Czech Karolina Pliskova for a place in the last eight.

The other quarter-finals have already been set, with two-time runner-up Caroline Wozniacki to face Latvia's Anastasija Sevastova in a battle of comeback kids and Kerber taking on seventh-seeded Roberta Vinci, the Italian who shocked Serena last year en route to the 2015 final, where she was beaten by compatriot Flavia Pennetta. — AFP



NEW YORK: Simona Halep, of Romania, reacts after beating Carla Suarez Navarro, of Spain, during the fourth round of the U.S. Open tennis tournament yesterday. — AP

# Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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Kuwait's credit growth  
flat at 7.7% y/y

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Emerging markets drove  
global equities higher  
as oil declined

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Ooredoo Kuwait  
named 'Speedtest  
Awards Winner 2016'

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## AL-MAZAYA SHOWCASES PROJECTS AT CITYSCAPE GLOBAL

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HANGZHOU: IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde addresses a press conference on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Hangzhou yesterday. World leaders gathered in Hangzhou for the 11th G20 Leaders Summit from September 4 to 5. —AFP

# G20 PROMISES FIXES TO ECONOMIC ILLS

## SUMMIT AGREES TO OPPOSE PROTECTIONISM, EXPAND TRADE

**HANGZHOU, China:** Leaders from the world's top economies broadly agreed at a summit in China yesterday to coordinate macroeconomic policies and oppose protectionism, but few concrete proposals emerged to meet growing challenges to globalization and free trade.

The two-day gathering in the scenic Chinese city of Hangzhou agreed to oppose protectionism, with Chinese President Xi Jinping urging major economies to drive growth through innovation, not just fiscal and monetary measures. "We aim to revive growth engines of international trade and investment," Xi said in a closing statement. "We will support multilateral trade mechanisms and oppose protectionism to reverse declines in global trade."

Discussions at the meeting were distracted by North Korea test-firing three medium-range ballistic missiles in a defiant reminder of the risks to global security. North Korea has tested missiles at sensitive times in the past to draw attention to its military might. But yesterday's launch risked embarrassing its main ally Beijing, which has gone to extraordinary lengths to ensure a smooth summit meeting in Hangzhou.

Beijing said it hoped relevant parties would avoid taking any actions that would escalate tensions. The United States called the launch reck-

less, while Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told US President Barack Obama that it was unforgivable.

On other fronts, the United States tried but failed to finalise a deal with Russia for a ceasefire in Syria on the sidelines of the summit. Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin had a longer-than-expected discussion about whether, and how, they could agree on a deal, a senior US administration official said.

### Tax avoidance issue

US President Barack Obama said yesterday that the United States had to move in concert with other countries on the issue of tax avoidance, as some US allies were "racing to the bottom" with their tax policies.

The European Commission said last week that Apple Inc owed up to 13 billion euros (\$14.5 billion) in back taxes to Ireland, based on existing regulations, a decision that both Apple and Ireland, which relies on low taxes to attract investment, have vowed to fight.

The ruling against Apple has pushed the issue into the limelight and raised the risk of significant push-back from the United States, where some lawmakers are saying it represents a European encroachment on the US potential tax base.

Obama said he had raised tax avoidance with leaders from the world's 20 biggest economies at the G20 summit in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou, but did not mention the Apple case.

"We're doing a bunch of stuff at home and we want to coordinate internationally," Obama told reporters at a briefing at the close of the summit. "The one thing that we have to ensure we do is to move in concert with other countries, because there is always a danger that if one ... acts unilaterally, that it's not just a matter of a US company being impacted, but it may also have an impact in terms of our ability to collect taxes from that same company," Obama said.

"In the same way, we then have to do some coordination with even some of our closest allies racing to the bottom in terms of how they enforce their tax policies in ways that lead to revenue shifting and tax avoidance in our country."

Obama said tackling the issue effectively was important to "regain the trust" of people who feared the system is rigged, but that it would not be fixed overnight. The EU decision against Apple comes amidst a coordinated global initiative to crack down on tax evasion by multinational companies, spearheaded by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Apple's Chief Executive Tim Cook last week described the ruling as "total political crap", but France and Germany have come out to back Brussels on the decision. European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said on Sunday in Hangzhou that the ruling against Apple was clearly based on facts and existing rules and was not a decision aimed against the United States. It is the last time that Obama will be attending the G20 summit, and his visit to Hangzhou got off to a chaotic start. There was no rolling staircase provided for Air Force One when it landed and Obama had to disembark from an exit in the plane's belly. Then, a Chinese security official blocked National Security Adviser Susan Rice on the tarmac and yelled at another US official trying to help journalists get closer to Obama. China levelled responsibility at the United States and journalists for the fracas. Obama told reporters he "wouldn't over-crank the significance" of the airport events.

When he left China yesterday, he boarded Air Force One via a full-sized staircase provided by Hangzhou International Airport.

The G20 called for the formation of a global forum to take steps to address steel excess capacity and encourage adjustments, the White House said in a statement, one of the controver-

sial issues discussed at the summit. China produces half the world's annual output of 1.6 billion tons of steel and has struggled to decrease its estimated 300 million ton overcapacity, and rising prices have given companies there an incentive to boost production for export.

### ISOLATIONIST TREND

With the summit taking place after Britain's vote in June to exit the European Union and before the US presidential election in November, G20 leaders had been expected to mount a defence of free trade and globalization and warn against isolationism.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who supports protectionist trade policies, has pulled into an effective tie with Democratic rival Hillary Clinton, erasing a substantial deficit.

### Inclusive growth

International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde, speaking after the summit, also said more inclusive growth was a priority in the global economy. "We need increased growth, but it must be better balanced, more sustainable, and inclusive so as to benefit all people," she said. —Agencies

## OIL RALLY BOOSTS SAUDI, PROPERTY SUPPORTS UAE

### MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

**DUBAI:** Saudi Arabia's stock market posted its biggest daily gain in four months yesterday as oil prices surged, while shares of Dubai's property developers rose before a major exhibition for the industry this week. Riyadh's stock index rose 1.7 percent to 6,204 points, and trading volume grew by more than half, as Brent crude futures jumped almost 5 percent before a news conference at which Saudi Arabia and Russia said they would cooperate in oil markets.

The two countries said they would not act immediately, and many analysts doubt the agreement will make much difference to oil prices in the long run. But oil's surge was enough to boost Saudi petrochemical shares, with bellwether Saudi Basic Industries gaining 2.7 percent. Also aiding sentiment was a purchasing managers' survey that showed growth in Saudi Arabia's non-oil private sector hit a 12-month high in August, suggesting the economy may be stabilising after a slow-down driven by low oil prices and government austerity measures. The positive mood spilled into other sectors. Saudi British Bank jumped 4.8 percent to 19.80 riyals. "The market seems to be bouncing from a news conference at which Saudi Arabia and Russia said they would cooperate in oil markets. Over the last several weeks, the market has been pricing in negative economic expectations, and the recovery in oil is a nice positive surprise," said Mohammad Al-Shammasi, chief investment officer at Riyadh-based Derayah Financial. Some banks, depressed by concern about Saudi Arabia's economic slowdown and the threat of bad debt in the slumping construction sector, are trading below what analysts consider to be fair value. SABB, for example, is at a 21 percent discount to the mean tar-

get price of 10 analysts polled by Reuters.

Emaar, The Economic City surged 4.5 percent in unusually heavy trade. The stock is now up 8.2 percent since Sunday, when Reuters quoted a source as saying Saudi Arabia's top sovereign fund, the Public Investment Fund, was in talks to invest in King Abdullah Economic City, the huge project being developed by EEC. Middle East Healthcare Co added 5.0 percent after saying Saudi tax authorities have agreed to its request for a 13.6 million riyal (\$3.6 million) tax credit.

### PROPERTY PROPELS DUBAI

Other Gulf markets closed yesterday before oil prices took off, but Dubai edged up 0.3 percent in the highest volume for four months. Cityscape, the property exhibition which will open in Dubai on Tuesday, offers companies a platform to announce new projects and contract awards. Union Properties, the most heavily traded stock on the exchange, gained 4.0 percent. Deyaar Development rose 1.8 percent after saying it had started work on a Dubai hotel project. Shuaa Capital surged 15.00 percent, its daily limit, to a 16-month high. Shares in the investment firm have gained 22.6 percent since Thursday, when Nasdaq Dubai began trading single-stock futures on shares in some of the United Arab Emirates' biggest companies. Shuaa is providing market-making facilities. At an event hosted by Nasdaq Dubai yesterday, brokers who have been trading the futures said transactions had been running smoothly so far, though volumes were expected to remain low for now as most institutional investors were still on the sidelines. —Reuters

## UK EYES POST-EU TRADE AMID PRESSURE TO OUTLINE BREXIT

**LONDON:** Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May sought to drum up trade deals yesterday for a post-Brexit world, as she came under increasing pressure from all sides to define what that would look like.

May met Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull at the Group of 20 summit in China to discuss a free trade agreement and said India, Mexico, South Korea and Singapore had all signalled they would "welcome" talks on removing trade barriers. In the wake of its vote to leave the European Union, Britain must renegotiate its access to world markets, an issue currently handled for it by Brussels.

It is a huge task for the world's fifth biggest economy, which is struggling to flesh out May's oft-repeated slogan: "Brexit means Brexit". May says she will not invoke Article 50 — the formal procedure for an EU member state to initiate departure — before the end of this year and the government has given little detail on how it wants to proceed.

But whether Britain aims to retain access to the single market or not and how it plans to achieve its aim of curbing immigration from the rest of the EU remain open questions, as does the timing of exit. She gave little away during her visit to China, except to rule out introducing an Australian-style points-based immigration system for workers arriving from other parts of the bloc.

### Hard or soft Brexit?

"I want a system where the government gets to decide who comes into the country," she told reporters, rejecting a key proposal made by Brexit campaigners including now Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson. May, who backed staying in the EU during the campaign, has also cast doubt on other Brexit campaign promises such as ending contributions to the EU budget and using the money saved to fund the National Health Service (NHS) and scrap sales tax on petrol.

She has also said she wants the "best possible deal" for Britain and a "unique" solution rather than an existing model such as Norway or Switzerland. Brexit minister David Davis was due to address parliament and MPs will also discuss an online petition calling for a second referendum that has received more than four million signatures.

"This is an historic and positive moment for our nation. Brexit isn't about making the best of a bad job. It is about seizing the huge and exciting opportunities that will flow from a new place for Britain in the world," Davis said in a statement. "There will be new freedoms, new opportunities, new horizons for this great country." A group of pro-Brexit campaigners are also expected to rally outside parliament as anti-EU leaders raise the pressure on government to outline its strategy.

"Brexit voters demand delivery," UK Independence Party leader Nigel Farage told the BBC. "What we don't want is a backslide."

The uncertainty over Brexit is weighing on businesses and investors, and when May met her Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe on the sidelines of the G20 summit he asked for her to ensure the environment for Japanese companies remained as "transparent and predictable as possible," a Japanese official said. More than 1,000 Japanese companies do business in Britain, employing some 140,000 local people, many of them lured by the access the country offered to the EU and its single market of hundreds of millions of consumers.

Scotland's pro-EU leader Nicola Sturgeon has criticized the government and yesterday, she told BBC Radio Scotland she wanted Britain to remain in the single market, implying this could be the test for whether she would call for another independence referendum. "The best position in my view would be continued membership of the EU-but let's try and get the UK as a whole into the least-worst position and that means staying in the single market," she said.

Her government's newly-appointed Brexit minister Michael Russell said: "This is the issue between a hard Brexit and soft Brexit." "This is not about accessing a shop, this is signing on to the four freedoms, the things that underpin the single market, and unless you sign on to those you do not get to access the single market and that could be many are now saying-very difficult," he added. —AFP



## OOREDOO KUWAIT NAMED 'SPEEDTEST AWARDS WINNER 2016' NEW TELEVISION COMMERCIAL FOCUSING ON NETWORK POWER

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo Kuwait announced that it won the title "Speedtest Awards Winner 2016" by Ookla, the company



**Mijbil Alayoub**

that operates the famous website Speedtest.net, a tool that measures network speed on users' devices. The awards are based on speed test results conducted by hundreds of thousands of actual smartphone users in Kuwait.

### Caring and Connecting

Commenting on this, Corporate Communications Director in Ooredoo Kuwait Mijbil Alayoub says: "We're proud of this achievement, which reiterates our belief in our values of caring, connecting and challenging. We've adopted a very customer-centric policy in recent years to enrich their experience and fulfil their needs, and this policy translates in all our efforts and strategies."

### Nationwide Coverage

Alayoub noted that Ooredoo regularly benchmarks its services in relation to all competition, and results have indicated that it scores higher than competition



in terms of speed and capacity. The tests were conducted in various locations and under different conditions across Kuwait to better measure the network's strength. He also noted that Ooredoo Kuwait currently has more than 1,800 deployed LTE sites across Kuwait, covering the entire country. Ooredoo is continuously working with reputable organizations worldwide to introduce the future 5G internet to its customers.

### Commendable efforts

Commenting on this, Ookla CEO and founder Douglas Suttles said: "Ooredoo Kuwait consistently provides its users with the fastest mobile network speeds available in the country. Ooredoo Kuwait's investment in their network speed is commendable and we are delighted to acknowledge their efforts



with this award."

Ookla Speedtest puts the most sophisticated broadband testing and analysis tools into the hands of anyone interested in finding out just how connected they actually are. This free service from Ookla opens hundreds of testing locations around the world to anyone curious about the performance of their Internet connection.

### "The Most Powerful Network for Your Life"

On this occasion, Ooredoo launched



**SPEEDTEST  
AWARDS  
WINNER  
2016**

**KUWAIT'S  
FASTEST  
MOBILE  
NETWORK**

its new television commercial "The Most Powerful Network for Your Life", which tackles everyday life situations of Kuwaiti youth and the importance of fast and reliable internet to empower their endeavors.

The commercial is produced by Senyar, making this the fourth collaboration with Ooredoo Kuwait. Senyar previously produced Ooredoo's successful Ramadan commercial "Closer Connection", which was a star-studded production featuring some of the Arab world's most talented singers.

## BEAT THE SPIKE IN GAS PRICES WITH HONDA 'EARTH DREAMS TECHNOLOGY'

**KUWAIT:** Honda "Earth Dreams Technology" is a next generation set of technological advancements that greatly enhance both driving performance and fuel efficiency using as its base advanced environmental technologies to pursue the joy of driving unique to Honda.

Honda is first and foremost a motor company, and the new Earth Dreams Technology engines once again assert Honda's desire to lead the industry in powertrain efficiency while providing responsive power and fun for drivers. Having both the 4-cylinder and V-6 honored as Ward's 10 Best Engines list shows that world-class powertrain technology doesn't have to come at a premium price.

### Key features of "Earth Dreams Technology"

1. A gasoline engine which realizes top level driving performance and fuel efficiency.
2. A compact diesel engine which realizes the world's lightest body\*1, top-of-class\*1 acceleration performance and fuel efficiency.
3. CVT which combines at a high level the fun of driving and fuel efficiency.
4. A two-motor hybrid system which realizes top-of-industry efficiency\*1.
5. A high-efficiency, high output electric SH-AWD hybrid system which combines superior driving and environmental performance.
6. A compact, high efficiency electric powertrain for EVs.

1. Gasoline engine which achieves top-of-industry driving performance and fuel efficiency

\* By enhancing Honda's original VTEC (Variable Valve Timing and Lift Electronic Control System) technology to thoroughly improve thermal efficiency and minimize friction, a combination of high output and fuel efficiency was achieved. Further, a new engine series employing a new structure for higher expandability was developed.

\* By gradually renewing the engine starting with the mini-vehicle N BOX, Honda utilized this technology to achieve top-of-industry output and fuel efficiency in every vehicle class

\* A wide range of engine classes including the 1.3L, 1.5L, 1.8L, 2.0L, 2.4L, and 3.5L classes feature the technology.

Earth Dreams Technology is Honda's latest generation of engines proving their commitment to fuel efficiency and environmental impact. By enhancing Honda's original VTEC (Variable Valve Timing and Lift Electronic Control System) technology to further improve thermal efficiency and minimize friction, a new combination of high output and fuel efficiency was achieved. Each engine class received modifica-



tions in the new Earth Dream Technology roll out.

### \* 1.3 to 1.5L class engine

Employs VTC, direct injection technology and the Atkinson cycle using the DOHC, VTEC technologies as the base. Extensive friction reduction measures have been implemented.

### \* 1.8 to 2.0L class engine

Employs direct injection technology and the Atkinson cycle using the DOHC, VTEC technologies as the base. Implementation of VTC and high-capacity EGR (Exhaust Gas Recirculation) to both the intake and exhaust ports creates significantly reduced friction.

### \* 2.4L class engine

Based on the DOHC and VTEC technologies, it employs VTC and direct injection technology and implements extensive friction reduction measures. Engine has

improved 5% in fuel efficiency and output, and a 10% improvement in maximum torque compared to the previous engine.

### \* 3.5L class engine

Employs new valve train mechanisms and direct injection technology in the SOHC, VTEC, VMC systems to improve fuel efficiency by over 10% and 5% of output; relative to the present standalone engine model.

Through its implementation first in the mini-vehicle N BOX and gradually onto other vehicle models,

Honda has achieved top-of-industry fuel efficiency for every category.

### CVT which combines at a high level the fun of driving and fuel efficiency

\* Three CVT structures for mini, compact, and mid-size vehicle classes are newly developed to be adopted for a variety of engine models.

\* Reinforced belt is used to realize a structure for which a wide ratio range can be set.

\* Implementation of analysis technology over the contact behavior between the belt and pulley, and a high-precision hydraulic control system allows for continual optimization of hydraulic pressure to the pulley under a variety of driving conditions, contributing to improved fuel efficiency.

\* Use of an electronic oil pump to realize an idle stop system with high response contributes significantly to improved usability and fuel efficiency.

\* "G-Design Shift", a new coordi-

nated control system for shift transmission, throttle, and hydraulic control responds quickly to driver demands and realizes an exhilarating, sporty drive with superior acceleration.

\* In the mini-vehicle class, a control mechanism and innovations in axle placement to reduce the engine size lengthwise, while a reduction in parts by simplifying the transmission casing structure helps realize a lightweight and compact body.

\* For the compact and mid-size classes, in addition to the reductions in size and weight, transmission efficiency was greatly improved by expanding the ratio range to achieve fuel efficiency improvements of 5\*3 and 10\*3 compared to the conventional CVT and comparable 5ATs, respectively

### Honda Environmental Leadership

In addition to the Earth Dreams Technology powertrain suite, Honda is committed to further advancements in fuel efficiency, with a focus on the broad application of technologies such as Eco Assist, VTEC and Variable Cylinder Management (VCM). Honda has also led the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) rankings of overall vehicle environmental performance since 2000, and a Honda vehicle has topped the list of America's greenest vehicles from the America Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) for 15 consecutive years.

### Alghanim Motors

As an exclusive distributor of Honda automobiles, motorcycles, power and marine products in Kuwait, Alghanim Motors is committed to providing customers with flexible payment solutions and efficient and cost-effective services. Honda customers will enjoy the utmost professionalism when servicing their car that will be under the attentive care of experience and skilled technicians. The Honda showroom goes beyond car care by providing customers with a comfortable waiting lounge that includes free entertainment such as gaming consoles, digital satellite TV, free WiFi and relaxing massage chairs.



## KFH ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF BANKING CARDS 8TH DRAW

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced 7 winners of the eighth draw of the new banking cards campaign themed "Use KFH Cards and You May Win up to 2 Mercedes-Benz SUVs and Cash Prizes up to \$200,000" in an attempt to encourage clients to use KFH credit, prepaid and debit cards while making purchases in Kuwait and overseas.

The winners are: Msaed AlQahtani, Sultan AlAtefi, Mohammad Albarrak, Rashed Almekhyal, Shahrazad Mohammad, Maasoma Albloushi, and Fay Alajmi.

For every KD 10 spent on their KFH cards, clients will gain a chance to enter a draw and win up to 2 Mercedes-Benz cars and a chance to win the value of their purchases up to \$2000 daily for 100 days ending October 11th 2016. It is worth noting that KFH Credit and Prepaid cards used in domestic and international purchases and KFH Debit cards used in international purchases are eligible for the daily draw.

Moreover, clients will gain the chance to enter 2 draws to win 2 Mercedes-Benz cars. The first draw will be for the first car Mercedes Benz GLE 400. This draw will be held after 50 days of the launch for purchasing transactions conducted from day 1 to day 50, while the second draw will be for the second car Mercedes Benz GLE

450 Coupe, and will be held after 100 days of the launch for purchasing conducted from day 51 to day 100 of the campaign.

KFH strives to continuously offer its clients new promotions and discounts in order to distinguish them among peers, not to mention to further bolster the bank's pioneering position in the field of banking cards. KFH marketing campaigns play a significant role in underlining KFH's principles that include boosting sales, while benefitting clients and merchants.

This new campaign is part of KFH's efforts to reward its clients and grant them additional value; thus achieving customer satisfaction and boosting their confidence. The campaign also aims at enhancing the bank's presence, especially that it dominates the largest market share in the field of banking cards.

KFH has won several awards in the field of banking cards which reiterates its success and efficiency in banking cards market. KFH enjoys high confidence and leadership in the market in addition to high quality products which have enabled it to achieve growth in cards market and increase the number of customers. KFH occupies the leading position as the issuer of banking cards and one of leading banks at the GCC level.

Automobiles France, where he was responsible for all of FCA's brands and activities within the French market.

Maurizio has a solid international automotive background and will play an important role as head of the FCA Middle East team that has been handed increasing responsibility within the company's EMEA regional organisation - in line with the ambitious and forward thinking business plan set in place following the formation of FCA. Maurizio has responsibility for one of the most strategically significant markets within the EMEA region. He presides over a portfolio of brands that includes Alfa Romeo, Chrysler, Dodge, Fiat, Fiat Professional, Jeep,

Ram and Mopar, with a range of models that includes a wider than ever choice of driving options - light, efficient vehicles (such as the iconic Fiat 500, Fiat 500X and Alfa Romeo Giulietta QV); class-leading 4x4s (including the world's most awarded SUV, the Jeep Grand Cherokee) through to the Ram truck range and the latest high performance models from the Dodge brand, including the 707hp Dodge Charger and Challenger Hellcat models.

Maurizio is Italian and holds a Masters Degree in Business Management as well as a Degree in Economics and Commerce from the University of Ancona. He joins FCA Middle East as the company aims to continue

building on the momentum achieved in the region over recent years. "FCA has been on a product offensive over the last few years, and that has brought many new customers to our wide portfolio of brands," said Maurizio. "I'm very excited to take on the challenge of further expanding our partnerships with our distributors and through them, to our customers, with a strong focus on brand development across the region."

"With many further exciting new model introductions to come in the next few years, my objective is to grow our business through a combination of great brands and products plus a renewed emphasis on enhancing customer satisfaction at all levels."



**Maurizio Zuares**

## MAURIZIO ZUARES CEO FOR FCA MIDDLE EAST

**KUWAIT:** As part of a long-term strategy to further develop and strengthen FCA's large brand portfolio in the Middle East, Maurizio Zuares has been appointed as CEO of the Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) Middle East Regional Office in Dubai.

51 year old Maurizio has over two decades of experience in the automobile industry, the last 17 years of which have been spent in a variety of roles within the FCA Group, including International Sales Director for Alfa Romeo (EU and Extra-EU), International Sales Director - Fiat/Alfa/Lancia (EU/Japan), President of Fiat Auto Japan, CEO of Fiat Group Automobiles Spain and most recently, four years as CEO of Fiat Group





## SAFAT HOME ANNOUNCES FINAL MARKDOWNS AND CLEARANCE ITEMS

CUSTOMERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO HURRY UP BEFORE SALE COMES TO AN END

**KUWAIT:** Safat Home is announcing its final markdowns sale and inviting all customers to visit its Al-Rai and Shuwaikh locations as soon as possible for a chance to purchase the furniture products they have always wanted at incredibly low prices.

Exclusively available at Safat Home's Al-Rai and Shuwaikh showrooms, the Bargain Corner is offering never-before-seen prices on clearance items. Products range from end tables, starting at a mind-blowing price of KD 3, dining tables, starting from KD 29, sofas, starting only at KD 39, to wardrobes, starting at KD 79, and more! This is, indeed, an incredible opportunity for customers to furnish their homes without having to dent their wallets; thus, Safat Home encourages all customers to benefit from this unique promotion while stock is still available.

This unbelievable sale should come as no surprise for Safat Home's loyal customers and fans considering the brand's core values are embedded in offering high quality products at affordable prices. Safat Home welcomes everyone to visit its Al-Rai showroom at Safat Alghanim, open from 9:30 am until midnight everyday, the

Shuwaikh showroom, located near Yusuf A Alghanim Service and Maintenance Center, open from 9am to 11pm, Thursday to Friday, and from 9am to 10pm, Monday to Wednesday, and the Fahaheel showroom, Dabbous St. above X-Cite, open from 9am to 10pm. For more information, please call 1838883.

For the past 75 years, Alghanim has been a highly respected family & brand name; Safat Home is proud to be part of that heritage. Safat Home brings a wide range of products, great value, friendly shopping environment & exceptional service.

The Safat Home concept has been evolving ever since the home furnishings business was launched more than five years ago as "Furniture at Al Rai Safat". Today, Safat Home displays an impressive collection of furniture, home furnishings and decorative accessories to make your house a home, whether it is an apartment, chalet or villa. The inspiring and exclusive designs are carefully sourced from around the world including USA, Italy, Holland, England, Belgium and Turkey. Whether customers seek the classic Kuwaiti look, the traditional



'American Home' dEcor, or the contemporary modern house, Safat Home offers products, accessories and services to furnish any dream home. Safat Home hosts more than 35 most coveted and contemporary brands to suit a wide variety of customer needs and desires. With these

new international brands come hundreds of new products, 95 percent of which are exclusive to Safat Home in Kuwait. The list of new brands arriving at Safat Home continues to grow, with new products arriving at the showroom each week.



**TOKYO:** People stand near an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. — AP

## BOJ MAY DEEPEN NEGATIVE RATES IF MORE EASING NEEDED

**TOKYO:** The Bank of Japan will likely choose to deepen negative interest rates than expand its bond purchases if more policy easing is needed, as the cost of cutting rates is less than topping up an already huge bond-buying program, former central bank policymaker Sayuri Shirai told Reuters yesterday.

Shirai, who was an International Monetary Fund economist before serving a five-year term as BOJ board member until March, also said it was hard for the central bank to buy foreign bonds as that goes against an agreement between the Group of 20 nations to refrain from competitive currency devaluation. "Buying foreign bonds would have an impact on the currency market, so it would be difficult to do under the current G20 framework," said Shirai, now a professor at Japan's Keio University.

Shirai said the BOJ's purchases of long-term bonds have had a much bigger effect in flattening the yield curve and hurting financial institutions' profits than negative rates. The BOJ's bond buying was also drying up market liquidity, she said.

"The BOJ shouldn't ease further. If it were to ease, it will probably choose to deepen negative rates rather than expand bond purchases because the demerits of accelerating bond buying are bigger than those of rate cuts," she said.

The comments by Shirai, who retains close contact with policymakers across the globe, come ahead of the BOJ's policy meeting on Sept. 20-21, when it will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the

effects of its policy framework that combines negative rates with a huge asset-buying program.

Once a vocal advocate of BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda's radical monetary experiment, Shirai has recently warned of the rising cost of maintaining a massive stimulus program for too long. While undesirable, the BOJ may be forced to ease this month if it maintains its pledge to achieve 2 percent inflation as soon as possible, since the comprehensive assessment will show Japan won't see the price target being reached any time soon, she said.

"Given the BOJ has been committed to doing additional monetary easing in case the path toward 2 percent inflation is questioned, it's hard to think how the central bank can get away with not easing this month." The BOJ decided in January to charge a 0.1 percent interest on a portion of excess reserves financial institutions park with the central bank. It has maintained that rate so far, including at its previous policy meeting in July.

Shirai also dismissed speculation about a possible change to the BOJ's base money target - set at 80 trillion yen (\$774 billion) - to a range of 70-90 trillion yen. Proponents of this idea say it will give the central bank more flexibility in its bond buying.

"It's inappropriate to set such an ambiguous range. It would only heighten market volatility by causing confusion," she said. Kuroda yesterday signalled his readiness to ease further using existing or new tools, suggesting he has no intention of watering down the price goal. — Reuters

## BRITISH SERVICES PMI REBOUNDS IN AUGUST

**LONDON:** Britain's services industry bounced back strongly last month from a slump triggered by June's vote to leave the European Union, a closely watched survey showed yesterday, reducing the likelihood of a recession. The survey echoed the upbeat tone of numbers released last week on the manufacturing and construction sectors in August.

But overall economic growth still looks set to slow sharply, keeping alive the prospect of another Bank of England rate cut before the end of the year. The Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for the services sector jumped to 52.9 in August from July's seven-year low of 47.4, the biggest one-month gain in the survey's 20-year history and one which beat all forecasts in a Reuters poll.

Sterling rallied by almost half a cent to hit a seven-week high against the dollar, and British government bonds trimmed earlier gains. "The survey data is very useful in giving us a feel for how the economy is doing in the short term, but in this case I think it might pay to be a bit more cautious," RBC economist Sam Hill said, adding the PMI data seemed volatile and he would look for official output data for July later this week. Last week, PMIs for the much smaller manufacturing and construction sectors showed similar gains to the services PMI, boosting August's all-sector PMI to a five-month high of 53.2.

However, given the weakness in July, economic growth in the third quarter overall was likely to be just 0.1 percent, survey compilers IHS Markit said. "It remains too early to say whether August's upturn is a dead cat bounce or the start of a sustained post-shock recovery," IHS Markit economist Chris Williamson said. "But there's plenty of anecdotal evidence to indicate that the ini-

tial shock of the June vote has begun to dissipate."

Overall the figures suggested "an imminent recession will be avoided", Williamson added. A mild recession was the central forecast in a Reuters poll of economists conducted last month after the BoE cut rates for the first time since 2009 and restarted quantitative easing to help protect the economy from a Brexit shock.

The BoE did not forecast a recession and instead predicted growth of 0.1 percent for the third quarter. "Now that we've seen some resilience in the UK economy, many are questioning whether last month's ... decision was the right one. We believe the Bank of England has taken the correct course of action and expect them to ease further before the year is out," UBS Wealth Management economist Dean Turner said.

Britain's new finance minister Philip Hammond will also pay close attention to the figures as he considers how decisively he will break with his predecessor's austerity plans later this year. Part of August's gains were linked to sterling's slump against the dollar and the euro, with more demand for exports and a higher number of Britons holidaying at home.

Separate figures from the car industry showed sales up 3.3 percent in August, driven by sales to company car fleets, after stagnation in July. But the weaker pound also pushed up prices at the fastest rate in over two years while business confidence remained near its lowest in four years, despite some improvement from July. "Many companies remain worried about the outlook and how the economy will fare in the event of Brexit, suggesting that political and economic uncertainty is likely to prevail in coming months, subduing growth," Williamson said. — Reuters

## EMERGING MARKETS DROVE GLOBAL EQUITIES HIGHER AS OIL DECLINED

NBK Capital monthly report

**KUWAIT:** Global equities were slightly positive for the month of August, led by emerging markets. Brent oil reversed some of July's declines and climbed over 6. Gold was notably weaker for the month, falling over 3.

In August, US rate hike probability has risen following Janet Yellen's speech on the state of the economy. In the UK, the Bank of England cut its interest rate for the first time since 2009 by 0.25. Furthermore, they announced to expand their quantitative easing program.

US ISM Manufacturing Index came in at 52.6, weaker than the 53.0 expected number, but still over 50, which suggests steady gains in the factory sector. That was soon followed by a strong July non-farm payrolls coming in at 255,000, which exceeded expectations of 180,000. However, the unemployment rate came in slightly higher than expected at 4.9 versus consensus of 4.8. Retail sales were flat in July; Industrial production came in higher than expected and new home sales rose to the highest level since 2007.

US rate hike expectations have increased following Yellen's speech; interest rate futures showed that the probability of a federal rate hike in September has risen from 32 to 42. The probability of a rate hike in December has risen from 57 to 65.

US equity market was fairly calm and flat for the month. Price volatil-

ity and trading volume were both light, which is often the case during August.

UK's central bank cut its benchmark lending rate by 25 bps to 0.25, and expanded its quantitative easing with an extra £70 billion to reach £435 billion. Bank of England committed to purchasing £10 billion of UK corporate bonds and added £100 billion to a new Term Funding Scheme to provide funding for banks at interest rates close to Bank Rate.

UK equities ended the month with gains, mainly due to a weaker British pound. Second quarter GDP in the Eurozone grew as expected by 0.3 quarter over quarter and the revised second quarter German GDP report confirmed that Europe's biggest economy grew by 0.4. European equities also registered slightly positive returns for the month, gaining 1.1 as measured by the Euro Stoxx 50.

Japanese second quarter GDP grew slightly at an annual rate of 0.2 this year, according to official data released. Exports fell during the second quarter, as well as business investment. Japanese stocks, as measured by the Nikkei 225, finished the month higher by 1.9. Chinese manufacturing improved in July after 16 straight months of decline, with the Caixin China Purchasing Managers Index coming in at 50.6. The recovery was mainly driven by growth in domestic



orders, which more than offset a slight decline in foreign demand.

Chinese stocks gained in August, driving some of the gains in the emerging markets index.

The GCC equity markets finished slightly negative for the month dragged by the Saudi and the Kuwaiti equity markets, declining -3.5 and -1 respectively. Saudi's declines were mainly due to the

government's plans to cut subsidies further. The UAE equity markets were slightly positive in August on increased overall inflows to Emerging Markets stocks; However, Qatar was the exceptional winner gaining over 3.6 on FTSE's announcement that it will relax liquidity tests for Qatari stocks for inclusion in its widely tracked FTSE Emerging Markets Index.



**Governor of The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Raghuram Rajan**

## INDIA'S CB CHIEF WARNS AGAINST LOW INTEREST RATES WORLDWIDE

**MUMBAI:** India's outgoing central bank chief Raghuram Rajan warned countries against a rush to low interest rates as his tenure as governor of the Reserve Bank of India came to an end. Rajan, who famously predicted the 2008 global financial crisis, told the New York Times that central banks across the world would find it hard to raise rates again for fear this "would see growth slowdown".

The 53-year-old, who clashed with the Indian government over the speed of cuts, said low interest rates should not be an alternative to reforms that may be needed to boost growth, according to the paper.

Interest rates are low across many major economies, including in the United States, Europe, and Japan-where rates are in negative territory-but they have yet to stimulate a sluggish global economy. "Often when monetary policy is really easy, it (low interest rates) becomes the residual policy of choice," the newspaper quoted Rajan as saying, adding that "other instruments of policy" may be needed to encourage economic growth.

Rajan, who was immensely popular

amongst the Indian public and media during his tenure, officially stepped down on Sunday, with deputy governor Urjit Patel taking over. Rajan was widely credited with bringing inflation down in India, stabilizing the rupee and creating a stable environment for growth.

He slashed interest rates to their lowest level since 2011 but angered some in the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) who wanted deeper cuts intended to boost growth further. The former governor, who returns to a life of academia in Chicago, told the New York Times in the article published Sunday he did not think that was the reason his three-year-term was not renewed by the government.

In a separate interview with the Financial Times, Rajan predicted that his reforms, including setting inflation targets and tackling bad bank loans, would continue. "Broadly speaking, I think we have sort of unfrozen an older equilibrium and moved the system towards a new equilibrium. My sense is that momentum cannot be and will not be arrested," he told the paper. — AFP

## EUROZONE ECONOMY 'LOSING TEMPO' AS GERMANY FALTERS

**LONDON:** The 19-country eurozone lost some economic momentum in August, largely because of a slowdown in Germany, a closely watched survey showed yesterday, days ahead of another possible stimulus package from the European Central Bank. Financial information company IHS Markit said its purchasing managers' index - a broad gauge of economic activity - for the eurozone fell to a 19-month low of 52.9 points in August from 53.2 the previous month. The fall was unexpected as the initial estimate for August was 53.3.

In spite of the fall, the eurozone is still growing, albeit sluggishly as anything above 50 indicates expansion. IHS Markit said the August reading is pointing to a quarterly economic growth rate of 0.3 percent. The firm did not assign any fundamental reason to the slowdown, such as uncertainty related to Britain's decision in June to leave the European Union, but did note that Germany was "perhaps the biggest cause for concern" as output growth slowed to a 15-month low.

Italy and France also saw modest rates of growth while Spain remained the "standout performer" with another strong quarter of growth at around 0.7 percent.

The firm's chief economist, Chris Williamson, said the survey overall was "clearly disappointing" and suggested it may fuel expectations of a further stimulus package from the European Central Bank this week. "The survey data will fuel expectations that the ECB would prefer not to wait before injecting more stimulus into the economy, adding pressure for policymakers to act later this week to help shore up confidence in both the outlook for the economy and the bank's commitment to its inflation target," he said.

The central bank has launched a series of stimulus measures to help the eurozone over the past couple of years, including cutting its key interest rate to zero. It is also pumping 80 billion euros (\$90 billion) of new money into the economy every month by buying bonds from banks and companies in the hope of keeping a lid on borrowing rates in the real economy to encourage lending and promote business activity.

Williamson said the central bank may just extend the duration of its bond-buying program, which is currently set to end in March 2017, at its meeting on Thursday. The decision over whether the ECB will do anything more is no foregone conclusion, not least after separate figures from the European Union's statistics agency showed retail sales across the eurozone rising by a whopping 1.1 percent in July, more or less double the rate anticipated among economists. That increase, which followed on from a 0.1 percent decline in June, adds weight to the argument that Britain's Brexit vote may not have had much of an impact on economic confidence - at least in the short-term. — AP





## SINGAPORE SAYS WILL NO LONGER ISOLATE ZIKA PATIENTS

**SINGAPORE:** Singapore will no longer isolate people who test positive for Zika or are suspected of carrying it as the number of cases of the mosquito-borne virus increases across the city-state, the health ministry said yesterday.

Tropical Singapore, a global financial and transit hub, has reported just over 240 Zika cases since the first locally infected case was detected on Aug. 27, and media has quoted

the deputy health minister as saying the virus was "here to stay".

In a statement, the health ministry said the presence of the Aedes mosquitoes that carry the virus, as well as the fact that most people do not display symptoms, meant isolating patients already infected would have limited effect. "Over time, we expect Zika cases to emerge in more areas given the presence of

the Aedes mosquitoes here," the ministry said. "As the cases of Zika in Singapore have been mild so far, confirmed cases will no longer need to be hospitalised unless medically indicated." The government will also pay for the cost of Zika tests for Singaporeans with symptoms of the virus, the ministry added. Most people who are infected with Zika have mild symptoms but infections in pregnant women

have been shown to cause microcephaly - a severe birth defect in which the head and brain are undersized - as well as other brain abnormalities. The connection between Zika and microcephaly first came to light last fall in Brazil, which has since confirmed more than 1,800 cases of microcephaly. In adults, Zika infections have also been linked to a rare neurological syndrome known as Guillain-Barre,

as well as other neurological disorders.

Neighbouring Malaysia has reported at least one case of locally transmitted Zika. Experts and officials say both countries will struggle to contain the virus because of the spread of the Aedes mosquitoes, which also carry dengue, a potentially fatal virus that Singapore and Malaysia have been battling for years. — Reuters

## AT 82, JANE GOODALL EMBRACES MODERN TECHNOLOGY TO SAVE PLANET

**HONOLULU:** Best known for rolling with chimpanzees in the African wild and revealing the apes' true nature as never before, Jane Goodall is now embracing modern technology in her mission to save the planet. And at 82, the British primatologist said she has more energy than ever, particularly due to her work with young people around the world.

"I do have hope for the future, even though I think I have seen as much as anybody of the harm that we are inflicting on this planet," Goodall told attendees at the International Union for Conservation of Nature's World Conservation Congress in Honolulu. "We are coming up with new technology all the time that will enable us to get in greater harmony with nature."

Goodall rose to fame for her pioneering, up-close study of the behavior of chimpanzees in the 1960s. She was the first researcher to give names rather than numbers to the apes, and was the first to observe them using tools, a capacity that was until then thought to belong only to humans.

Now, her Jane Goodall Institute is using satellite imagery, digital mapping and NASA technology to encourage large-scale conservation projects in the forests of Africa. The initiative, led by her co-worker Lilian Pintea, has allowed people living in Gombe National Park in Tanzania to see high-resolution digital maps of their forests from above for the first time.

Seeing how these landscapes have changed since the 1970s, with trees dwindling and important chimp habitat lost, has encouraged them to protect their forests, better manage their own resources and replant trees, he said. "The reason why this change happened was because we merged and integrated this perspective from above with the local understanding about the nature of the ecology in the right context at the community level," Pintea said.

Goodall herself said she is not involved with technical details—that is all handled by Pintea, an expert in mapping tools who previously worked at the World Bank. But she said she is in awe of the power of US space agency technology to make connections with the most primitive cultures. "I find this a very fascinating juxtaposition of ideas," she said.

### Inspired by youth

Goodall said she travels 300 days of the year, and is inspired by meeting young people, particularly through a program she

began in 1991 with a dozen students in Tanzania. Called Roots and Shoots, the program encourages kids to come up with ideas to help people, animals and the environment, and is now a major movement in nearly 100 countries. "As I travel around the world," she said, "I meet more and more young people who seem to have a new determination that they are going to take over and they are going to make change."

She also touted the power of social media to connect people around environmental causes. "Social media used in the right way can bring together people around the world in unprecedented numbers," she said.

Goodall spoke at several sessions during the IUCN World Conservation Congress this weekend, opening at least one of them by stepping to the microphone and mimicking the greeting call of a wild chimpanzee. The packed room cheered and applauded in response, and a few women wiped away tears.

### 'Trump doesn't'

She is also featured in a new movie about the perils of climate change, called "Time to Choose," written and directed by Academy Award winner Charles Ferguson. "You can see how far Jane has come out of her comfort zone," said the film's executive director Jeff Horowitz, remarking on Goodall's move from the wilderness to the forefront of modern technology.

Goodall "is generally known to strike up a conversation with everyone around her," he added. "Jane's calling in her life is to help people understand what is important about our home." Seated next to Horowitz as he introduced a screening of the film, Goodall, who is a vegetarian, urged people to eat sustainably and consider how much damage meat-eating incurs on the planet.

She also weighed in on the US presidential race. As Horowitz spoke about his belief that most Americans understand that climate change is a real problem, Goodall interjected, "Trump doesn't." "Sorry?" he said. "Trump doesn't," she repeated, drawing more cheers from the crowd.

Soon, she opened the floor to questions. Someone asked if she ever found it difficult to face the enormous task at hand. "I'm finding it easier to get more passionate," she answered. "I speak from the point of view of being 82. Each year I live, I am closer to the end," Goodall added. "There is such a lot to do. I'm absolutely galvanized to use my remaining time." — AFP



KUALA LUMPUR: A pest control worker fumigates a school classroom on the eve of the annual national Primary School Evaluation Test on Sunday. — AFP

## TOO COSTLY FOR INDONESIA TO THOROUGHLY TEST FOR ZIKA

PUBLIC HEALTH SPENDING ONE OF THE LOWEST IN THE REGION

**JAKARTA:** Indonesia cannot afford to thoroughly check for a possible Zika outbreak, a health ministry official said, as Southeast Asia's most populous country must focus on fighting dengue, a potentially fatal virus also carried by mosquitoes.

The World Health Organization (WHO) lists Indonesia among Asian countries with possible endemic transmission of, or evidence of, local Zika infections, but authorities in the sprawling nation of 250 million people have yet to report any recent infections.

Both dengue and Zika are spread by the Aedes aegypti mosquito, which is common across Southeast Asia. Neighboring Singapore has over the past week said it detected more than 240 Zika cases while Malaysia reported its first locally transmitted infection on Saturday.

"At the moment we cannot go out there and test everybody or every suspected case for Zika because it is too costly," Muhamad Subuh, direc-

tor general for disease prevention and control at Indonesia's health ministry, told Reuters. "There are other priorities like dengue fever, which is more prevalent and more dangerous, and we have to allocate our resources accordingly."

### Thousands of infections a year

Like many of its neighbors, Indonesia records thousands of dengue infections a year. Indonesia is Southeast Asia's biggest economy but the World Bank estimates the government spends 5.7 percent of its gross domestic product on public health, which works out to \$99 per person per year, compared with \$459 in Malaysia, the region's third largest economy.

Subuh said the ministry was actively monitoring for Zika, but experts said authorities would struggle to identify patients as few hospitals offered Zika testing, and those that did expected patients to pay more than \$150 for a test, putting it out of reach of many ordinary Indonesians

"The biggest challenge right now is that we may miss Zika-infected patients because of lack of facilities and testing," said Tedjo Sasmono, a scientist at Jakarta's Eijkman Institute, one of only two facilities in Indonesia capable of diagnosing Zika. The institute receives no government funding specifically for Zika and relies on funds from private hospitals, he said. Most people who are infected with Zika have mild symptoms but infections in pregnant women have been shown to cause microcephaly - a severe birth defect in which the head and brain are undersized - as well as other brain abnormalities.

In adults, Zika infections have also been linked to a rare neurological syndrome known as Guillain-Barre, as well as other neurological disorders. Regional experts say the spread of Zika across Southeast Asia is likely to remain significantly under-reported as health authorities fail to conduct adequate screening. (\$1 = 13,145,000 rupiah). — Reuters

## SATELLITE OWNER SAYS SPACEX OWES \$50 MLN OR FREE FLIGHT

**CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA/JERUSALEM:** Israel's Space Communication Ltd said on Sunday it could seek \$50 million or a free flight from Elon Musk's SpaceX after a Spacecom communications satellite was destroyed last week by an explosion at SpaceX's Florida launch site.

Officials of the Israeli company said in a conference call with reporters Sunday that Spacecom also could collect \$205 million from Israel Aerospace Industries, which built the AMOS-6 satellite.

SpaceX said in an email to Reuters that it does not disclose contract or insurance terms. The company is not public, and it has not said what insurance it had for the rocket or to cover launch pad damages beyond what was required by the Federal Aviation Administration, which oversees commercial U.S. launches, for liability and damage to government property.

SpaceX has more than 70 missions on its manifest, worth more than \$10 billion, for commercial and government customers. The space launch company is one of three major transportation and energy enterprises Musk leads. The others are electric car maker Tesla Motors Inc and SolarCity Corp, and Musk faces separate challenges at each of those money losing companies. Spacecom has been hit hard in the aftermath of the Thursday explosion that destroyed the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket and its payload. The Israeli company said the loss of the satellite would have a significant impact, with its equity expected to decline by \$30 million to \$123 million.

Spacecom shares dropped 9 percent on Thursday, with the explosion occurring late in the last trading day of the week. Trading in the shares was suspended on Sunday morning, and the stock plummeted another 34 percent when trading resumed. In a conference call with reporters, Spacecom's general counsel Gil Lotan said it was too early to say if the company's planned merger with Beijing Xinwei Technology Group would proceed.

Xinwei last month agreed to buy Spacecom for \$285 million, saying the deal was contingent on the successful launch and operation of Spacecom's AMOS-6 satellite. "We hope to continue fruitful communications with the prospective buyer," Lotan said. Xinwei officials on Monday declined to comment on whether the incident would impact the terms of the deal.

The firm said in a statement on Friday it was in close communication with Spacecom about



CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA: This NASA TV video grab obtained September 1, 2016 shows the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket explosion. — AFP

how the incident would impact the merger. It added the accident would not impact its broader strategy to establish an integrated space information network.

### Cause unknown

AMOS-6 was to be used by a number of key clients, including Facebook and Eutelsat Communications which leased the satellite's broadband services to expand internet access in Africa. Both firms are pursuing other options, the companies said in separate statements after Thursday's accident.

The cause of the accident is under investigation. Neither SpaceX, nor the FAA which is overseeing the investigation, have said how much damage the explosion caused at SpaceX's primary launch site at Cape Canaveral Air Force

Station in Florida.

SpaceX said on Friday that it would shift flights to a second launch site in Florida, which is nearing completion and which was last used to launch NASA's space shuttles. Thursday's accident, which occurred as the company was fueling its rocket as part of a routine prelaunch test firing, was the second failed mission for Musk's space company in 14 months. In June 2015, a Falcon 9 rocket exploded about two minutes after liftoff from Florida, destroying a load of cargo headed to the International Space Station.

SpaceX returned to flight in December and since then has flown nine times, all successfully. It was scheduled to fly for the 29th time on Saturday. SpaceX declined to comment about what impact Thursday's accident would have on its schedule. — Reuters



HONOLULU, HAWAII: Primatologist Jane Goodall speaks at a session of the International Union for Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress on September 2, 2016. — AFP

## PHILIPPINES CONFIRMS FIRST CASE OF ZIKA VIRUS THIS YEAR

**MANILA:** The Philippines confirmed yesterday its first case of the Zika virus this year and said it was "highly likely" it had been locally transmitted, and it expected more cases after stepping up surveillance.

A 45-year old woman who lives in Iloilo city in the central Philippines has the virus, Dr Eric Tayag, spokesman at the health ministry, told a media briefing. The woman is not pregnant, he said, and was recovering at her home. It was considered "highly likely" she had contracted the virus locally as she had no history of travel to any affected country in the past two weeks, Tayag said.

The Philippines reported its first case of Zika in 2012, that of a teenage boy in Cebu island in the central Philippines. Four subsequent cases were foreigners. A Zika outbreak is affecting large parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, with Brazil the hardest hit, but cases have

been cropping up in Asia.

Singapore has reported more than 240 Zika cases since the first locally infected case was detected on Aug. 27 and neighboring Malaysia has reported one such case. Zika infections in pregnant women have been shown to cause microcephaly - a severe birth defect in which the head and brain are undersized - as well as other brain abnormalities.

The connection between Zika and microcephaly first came to light last fall in Brazil, which has since confirmed more than 1,800 cases of microcephaly. In adults, Zika infections have also been linked to a rare neurological syndrome known as Guillain-Barre, as well as other neurological disorders.

There is no vaccine or treatment for Zika, which is a close cousin of dengue and chikungunya and causes mild fever, rash and red eyes. — Reuters



AFGHANISTAN: An Afghan health worker administers polio drops to a child during a polio vaccination campaign in the Surkh Rod district of Nangarhar province on August 29, 2016. — AP

## WHO CONFIRMS 3RD CASE OF POLIO IN NIGERIA, ROTARY CLUB SAYS

LAGOS, Nigeria: Rotary Club says the World Health Organization is confirming a third case of polio in Nigeria: A crippled toddler found in an area newly liberated from Boko Haram Islamic extremists.

The West African nation that once was the epicenter of the wild polio virus had been declared polio-free last year.

But two cases were discovered last month among refugees from areas recently

won back by Nigeria's military.

It was an indicator that Nigeria's war on polio cannot be won until it overcomes the insurgency by extremists who are violently opposed to Western medicine. Rotary Club is part of a new emergency vaccination drive. WHO has said the virus has been circulating undetected for five years in Borno state, where Boko Haram began its Islamic uprising in 2009. — AP

## ITALY'S 100 CLUB VILLAGE REVEALS ITS SECRET

ROME: Scientists on yesterday revealed part of the secret to why a small village in southern Italy has an unusual number of centenarians-low levels of a particular hormone that affects circulation.

Italian and US experts have spent the last six months investigating the extraordinary longevity of residents of Acciaroli, where more than one in 10 — 81 at the mayor's last count-of the village's population of 700 is over 100 years old.

Acciaroli is part of the Cilento coast, an area of outstanding natural beauty where the late US nutritionist Ancel Keys first established convincing evidence of the health benefits of a Mediterranean diet based on olive oil and rich in fresh fruit, vegetables and fish. As well as reaching extremely old age, people in Acciaroli and tiny communities nearby also seem to be largely immune to dementia, heart disease and other chronic conditions associated with ageing in most of the Western world.

Researchers from Rome's Sapienza University and the San Diego School of Medicine said Monday that the explanation could lie in low levels of adrenomedullin, a hormone that acts to widen blood vessels.

Adrenomedullin is present "in a much reduced quantity in the subjects studied and seems to act as a powerful protecting factor, helping the optimal development of microcirculation", or capillary circulation, they said in a statement.

Capillary blood vessels tend to degenerate in older people, but the seniors in Cilento had capillaries of the sort found in much younger people, even those in their 20s. The study also found "metabolites present (in the bodies of those studied) which may have a positive influence on longevity and the well-being of Cilento's centenarians", the statement said, without giving further details.

The researchers have decided to extend the study and expand their research, including by launching a fundraising campaign. Aside from blood tests, the researchers also carried out cardiac and neurological tests, Alan S. Maisel, the San Diego cardiologist heading up the project, told AFP.

The scientists are looking into whether genetics could combine with lifestyle factors-diet and physical activity-to extend the villagers' longevity. The Cilento locals all eat rosemary-known to improve brain function-almost every day, and also all practise some physical activity daily, such as fishing, walking or gardening, another line of enquiry for the scientists.

Before Monday's release of results, Maisel also pointed to what may be another important ingredient in the recipe for a long and happy life. "Sexual activity among the elderly appears to be rampant," Maisel said. "Maybe living long has something to do with that, it's probably the good air and the joie de vivre." — AFP

# SHOULD EARNHARDT JR RETIRE AFTER YET ANOTHER CONCUSSION

NEW YORK: Dale Earnhardt Jr., your work is done. Long ago, you escaped the enormous shadow of your father. Lately, you've ensured an important legacy all your own by raising a caution flag on head injuries in NASCAR.

Now, it's time to seriously consider walking away. For good. Earnhardt is already sitting out the rest of 2016 to deal with the lingering effects of yet another concussion, but he made it clear that he hopes to be back behind the wheel next February for the season-opening Daytona 500. "My heart is there to continue," he said Sunday at Darlington Raceway. "And if my doctor says that I'm physically able to continue, then that's an easier decision for me to make. It's not something that I think about. We're trying to focus on just getting well and getting normal."

There's no doubt that NASCAR will be rooting for his recovery, given the sport's dwindling television ratings and ever-increasing number of empty seats at the tracks. Earnhardt remains the sport's most popular driver, and to have him walk away would be a huge blow given the reluctance of the fan base to embrace a new generation of stars.

But Junior can't worry about any of that. He's got bigger issues to consider. Earnhardt should give a hard look at all those former giants of the NFL whose brains were addled by one brutal hit after another, who died far too young or lived out their years in the cruel isolation of dementia. No one knows for sure what another hard crash would do to Earnhardt's brain. He might be fine. He might not be. "There are different levels of concussion. There are individual differences. The age the concussion occurs plays a part," said Dr. Katherine Dec, a professor at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine who specializes in sports-related concussions.

"We'd all love to have an easy answer," she added. "That's what everyone wants to know, something that makes the decision kind of black and white. But the brain is a miraculous thing. There are still a lot of things we don't know."

### Previous concussions

We know that Earnhardt, at the very least, had two concussions about six weeks apart in 2012, which was the wakeup call that everyone in NASCAR needed to address an issue that had long been swept under the rug. Junior sat out two races that year and sought out concussion experts to get the lowdown on potential problems down the road.

He became the most vocal advocate for brain safety, prompting NASCAR to mandate that all



DARLINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA: Dale Earnhardt Jr., left, and team owner Rick Hendrick during a news conference before the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race at Darlington Raceway on Sunday. — AP

national series drivers undergo preseason neurocognitive baseline testing as part of a comprehensive concussion program. He also joined a growing list of athletes by saying he would donate his brain to science after his death, so it can be studied for signs of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. That will go down as Earnhardt's most lasting impact on the sport, far more important than his two Daytona 500 victories or those other 24 career wins, or even the impressive feat of making a name for himself in a sport still dominated by the towering presence of his late father, a seven-time Cup champion.

Junior certainly sent the right message again when he stepped out of the car after another hard crash at Michigan this summer. He actually managed to compete in the next three races before the concussion symptoms cropped up again. He had missed six races before announcing Friday he was done for the year, meaning he'll miss the final 18 events of 2016.

Dr. Raj K. Narayan, the head of neurosurgery at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, New York, and LJI Medical Center in New Hyde Park, New York, said it's impossible for those on the outside to know exactly what Earnhardt is

going through. But there are some common-sense aspects that should be taken into account when dealing with any head injury. "The science has not gotten to the point yet where we can accurately qualify the amount of brain damage that already occurred, except to say that the more times you get injured and the more injuries you have, it makes total sense that it is likely to affect you more," he said. "I think it's quite clear that repeated, multiple injuries increase your risk of becoming demented with the passage of time."

Of course, it was probably a lot easier for Earnhardt to make peace with sitting out the rest of the year than it would be for him to call it a career, given his potential - if healthy - to race at a high level for several more seasons. He had three victories in 2015, four the previous year. While Earnhardt has never won a season championship, he's been a perennial Chase contender.

Let's just hope when Earnhardt sits down with his doctors, when he talks this over with his family and closest friends, he errs on the side of caution. He's already done so much for the sport. He's certainly made his daddy proud. He deserves to live a long, healthy life. — AP

## MOVE OVER NESSIE: REAL SCOTTISH SEA MONSTER FOUND

PARIS: A toothy, dolphin-like predator which prowled the oceans in the Jurassic era, when dinosaurs roamed the Earth, has been uncovered in a Scottish museum where it lay buried for 50 years, scientists said yesterday.

First discovered in 1966, the fossil has at last been freed from its prehistoric sarcophagus to reveal a chunky, four-meter-long (13 feet) deep-sea killer-its pointed mouth bristling with hundreds of cone-shaped teeth. "It is spectacular," said paleontologist Steve Brusatte of the University of Edinburgh's School of Geosciences, who helped expose the 170 million-year-old remains.

Dubbed the Storr Lochs Monster, the reptile belonged to the ichthyosaur family-scary-looking, finned hunters sometimes called sea dragons that died out shortly before the dinosaurs, to be replaced by dolphins and whales.

Encased in rock, this set of remains was found by an amateur on a beach on the Isle of Skye 50 years ago, and presented to the National Museum of Scotland. "For half a century the museum kept the fossil safe and secure, but there wasn't the expertise to free it from the very dense rock that



EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND: This handout picture released from the University of Edinburgh on September 5, 2016, shows an artist rendering of a Jurassic marine reptile known as ichthyosaur. — AFP

surrounded it, or the expertise to study it," Brusatte told AFP. "But now we finally have that expertise... and have realised that this skeleton is the most complete fossil of a sea reptile ever found in Scotland. The fossil monster will go on display at the museum as the "crown jewel" of Scottish prehistory, the scientist added. Earlier this year,

researchers said prehistoric global warming had wiped out the ichthyosaurs after an impressive 157-million-year deep-sea reign. There had been several sub-species. For Brusatte, these creatures are much more impressive than their fictional Scottish counterpart, the Loch Ness Monster, could ever hope to be. — AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



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## KUWAIT NATIONAL ENGLISH SCHOOL ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/17 STAFF INDUCTION

**M**adam Chantal, Director of Kuwait National English School, welcomed returning staff and many new staff to the school on Sunday 28th of August. The library was packed for her welcome address and there

was a real sense of excitement and purpose as she outlined the School Mission and Vision for the next year and years to come. In addition, there was an update on the building improvements that are taking place in the school. These

include an extended and refurbished high class canteen, continuing the commitment to good healthy food, new classrooms for the additional children that have registered, new ICT facilities and a total refurbishment of the schools won-

derful theatre. This is in addition to getting all classrooms ready for the start of the year.

Staff then joined their own departments for a range of age specific workshops related to the continued improvement of teaching and learning. Staff

were highly engaged in sessions on policy, procedure, assessment, tracking monitoring, lesson planning and after school clubs. This was a great start to the new academic year and staff were excited about the programmed for the rest of the week.



### CLASH OF GIANTS AT 3RD IBAK-KBF GCC INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT

**B**adminton is the second most popular sport in the world, and with the recently concluded Olympics in Rio, badminton has become a craze among badminton playing nations. Indian Badminton Association - Kuwait (IBAK) has been a pioneer of badminton in Kuwait, founded in 2010. IBAK has been on an upward projectile with a national badminton league, an invitational international tournament, an interschool tournament, an interclub tournament and four national tournaments featured in its annual calendar.

IBAK is currently preparing for its most prestigious tournament the 3rd IBAK-KBF GCC international tournament which will be held on the 9th 10th and 11th of September 2016. This year 20+ international players are expected to participate, which includes Rupesh Kumar, a former Indian international whose patronage has been with IBAK for a long time, Shreyansh Jaiswal, a prodigy from India, Imam Adi Kusuma, an Indonesian international player who now is based out of UAE, Heri Setiawan based out of Bahrain and several top ranked players from UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia, Brazil, Philippines and India.

IBAK will field 3 teams this year, the IBAK All Stars, IBAK Challengers and IBAK Commandos. The IBAK teams will be constituted from among the following players: Aneef K Latheef, Bader, Dr Manimara Chozhan, Alen Jose, Sarin Joseph.



### Community interaction with Hon'ble MOS (VKS) on 7 September 2016 at 18:30 hrs at the Indian Embassy Auditorium

Gen (Dr.) V. K. Singh (Retd.), Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs will be on an official visit to Kuwait from 6-7 September 2016.

2. During the visit, an India community interaction has been organized with the visiting dignity on Wednesday, 7 September 2016 at 18:30 pm at the Indian Embassy Auditorium.

The Embassy invites representatives of all registered Indian Associations in Kuwait, representatives of Indian Schools, Indian private sector companies, Public Sector Undertakings and media representatives to attend the above community meet. Light refreshments will be served.



## PROMINENT INDIAN QUIZ MASTER ANCHORED QUIZ EVENT

More than 300 engineers, professionals from management and other disciplines from 5 locations in Kuwait participated in the KNOWLEDGE FEST for the Master Brain Trophy on 2 September 2016 at Mangaf. This contest was held in connection with the Golden Jubilee of UNESCO's International Literacy Day.

This year's event was anchored by the prominent Indian quizzing personality Pani J. Anthony. Most of the competitors are from India, and a few others. Global Village Harmony is the sponsor of the much awaited event. The entries started in June and lasted till Aug 30.

There was thunderous applause at this nearly 2 hour event. This event featured several rounds of competition covering a wide range of topics such as Audio / Video, Memory Events, Rapid Events, Pictures, World History, Sports, Literature, Proverbs, Filling the gap, Basic Science, Politics, UNO, Current Affairs and miscellaneous. Professionals from several disciplines were part of the competing teams, said the organizers while informing that this year's event has attracted considerable attention from different sections as this is the first time Pani J Anthony is anchoring such an event in Kuwait.

He has anchored such well known contests in India for the school and university students in the District, University, State levels. His national level quiz for the schools in Qatar in connection with the United Nations



**Quiz master Pani J Anthony**  
International Day against Drug Abuse is remembered by a considerable number of people. Pani J Anthony's involvement in the 72 hours largest motivational theatrical performance that has entered in the Guinness Book of World Records has earned apprecia-

tion from far and wide. Anthony, breaking the bread with the Presidents, has been appointed as the Goodwill Ambassador for the leading roles he has played in serving the community, and in recognition of his bold endeavors in using his talents to improve the skills of the youngsters. Anthony inspired several drop outs to return to schools, and has been in forefront of creating educational awareness, women's empowerment and environmental issues. His speech Tribute to Nelson Mandela on the UN marked Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July 2014 was recorded from the US ad broadcast worldwide.

The preliminary rounds (written) were held at 2 PM. The final featuring the top 5 teams began at 5 PM. The top 5 scorers in the prelims got the chance of occupying the hot seats on the dais, and finally the 3 engineers who stole the show are Sonu Gopal became the winner; Jinesh (Runner - I) and Aditya Hemchandra (Runner - II)



**Sonu Gopal**  
first place winner



**Jinesh**  
second place winner



**Aditya Hemchandra**  
third place winner



## FAMILIES COME TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE THE JOYOUS FESTIVAL OF EID AL ADHA IN THEIR OWN SPECIAL WAY

Celebrate Eid Al Adha and enjoy a relaxing city escape with your loved ones at the INN & GO Kuwait Plaza Hotel. The Hotel offers a special distinctive package for its citizens and residents, and families visiting from the Gulf during Eid al-Adha. The offers include dis-

counts on rooms, in addition a number of mouthwatering dining options.

The rooms offer includes a delicious buffet breakfast at Al Dallah Restaurant, the restaurant boasts also its luxury buffet feasts during Eid Al Adha for lunch and dinner

where the whole family can enjoy a special buffet serving Eastern and Western dishes. Located in the hotel the Korean restaurant "Arirang", which offers not only Korean dishes but also a great mix of Asian dishes including Chinese, Filipino dishes prepared in a contemporary way.



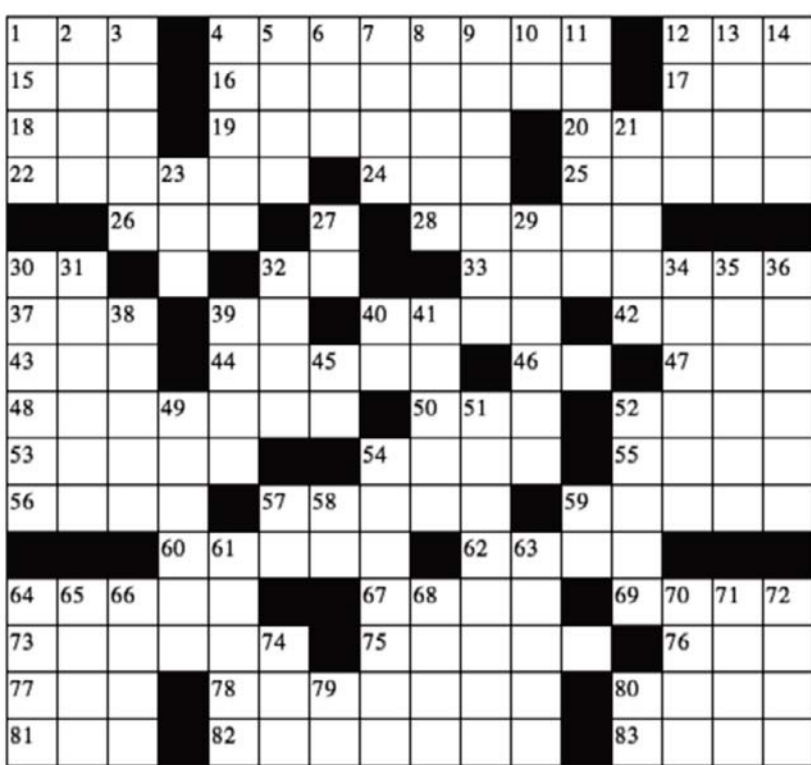
Rawda's Nursery and kindergarten Child's World held their final program of summer activities (the small commander cycle) for the first session in Kuwait to teach children self-leadership skills which included many recreational and educational activities for children such as the playful science games and discoveries, excursions and water sports, the culinary arts and artistic creativity, health, sports, karate Stories marketed games and self-IQ linguistic and mathematical skills and English skills so that these activities for children contribute to occupy their time with everything that is beneficial to the body and the mind and the acquisition of practical skills, scientific and social through sharing with others their peers as part of a fun atmosphere of love and harmony among their friends, also includes valuable strengthen Child with the concept of love, creativity, and self-discovery and gain leadership skills.







CROSSWORD 1365

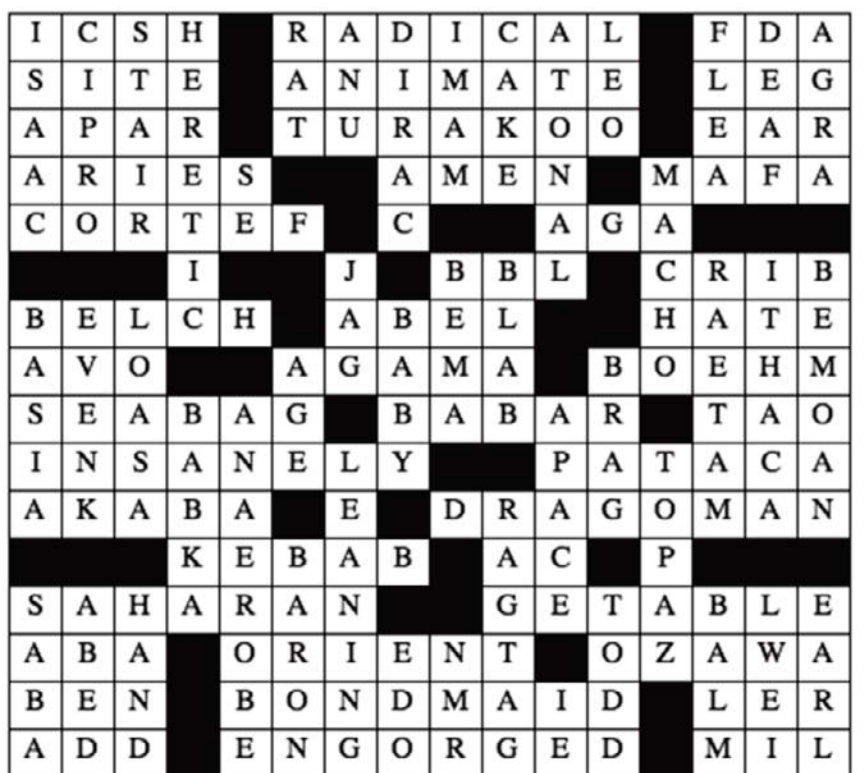


ACROSS

- A young woman making her debut into society.
- Threatening or foreshadowing evil or tragic developments.
- Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
- The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
- A man who is a native or inhabitant of Ireland.
- Extremely pleasing.
- The part of the nervous system of vertebrates that controls involuntary actions of the smooth muscles and heart and glands.
- Large high frilly cap with a full crown.
- Lower in esteem.
- Solid excretory product evacuated from the bowels.
- Step on it.
- Treated with wax.
- Of or relating to a member of the Buddhist people inhabiting the Mekong river in Laos and Thailand.
- Tall perennial herb of tropical Asia with dark green leaves.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- The basic unit of money in Nicaragua.
- Tag the base runner to get him out.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
- United States chemist (1839-1903).
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- A master's degree in library science.
- An infective disease caused by sporozoan parasites that are transmitted through the bite of an infected Anopheles mosquito.
- Being one hundred more than two hundred.
- Jordan's port.
- Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
- A girl or young woman who is unmarried.
- English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
- A lawyer concerned with narcotics violations.
- Relating to or resembling or made of or adorned with pearls or mother-of-pearl.
- Two-masted sailing vessel square-rigged on both masts.
- Type genus of the Alciidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- A motley assortment of things.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- (informal) Of the highest quality.
- A republic in northeastern South America on the Atlantic.
- A doctor's degree in theology.
- A mechanically operated piano that uses a roll of perforated paper to activate the keys.
- Baby bed with high sides.
- A rotary duplicator that uses a stencil through which ink is pressed (trade mark Roneo).
- (Greek mythology) God of love.
- Horny projecting mouth of a bird.
- United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
- A seat for one person, with a support for the back.
- Challenge the honesty or credibility of.
- A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- Relatively small gnawing animals having a single pair of constantly growing incisor teeth specialized for gnawing.
- The second largest city in Tunisia.
- Freedom from difficulty or hardship or effort.
- In bed.
- English monk and scholar (672-735).
- A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
- A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
- A constitutional monarchy in a tiny enclave on the French Riviera.
- United States writer of poems and plays about racial conflict (born in 1934).
- Being three more than fifty.
- The ohmic resistance of a conductor.
- Of or denoting or relating to the Balkan countries or their inhabitants or the Balkan peninsula or the Balkan Mountains.
- Inconsistent with reason or logic or common sense.
- A pale rose-colored variety of the ruby spinel.
- A city in northern India.
- A hemoprotein composed of globin and heme that gives red blood cells their characteristic color.
- (computer science) American Standard Code for Information Interchange.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- Become imbued.
- A person who eats human flesh.
- An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
- A very young lamb.
- Being ten more than one hundred ninety.
- (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
- A soft silver-white or yellowish metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- A fastener (as a buckle or hook) that is used to hold two things together.
- Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
- (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
- Advanced in years.
- A city in western Nevada at the foot of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.
- The habitation of wild animals.
- City in southwestern Colombia in a rich agricultural area.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- A user interface based on graphics (icons and pictures and menus) instead of text.
- An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
- 1,000,000,000 periods per second.

DOWN

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You and a mate may become involved in a conversation on how you will move forward together in pursuing your ideals and dreams for the family. Include the older child in the discussion so that there are no surprises. Children learn to solve problems and set goals, as well as plotting the path to their goals, by watching adults set a good example. Talking and making plans are good now. You and a mate or friend enjoy keeping fit and if you are not involved in a fitness group, today is a good day to join. This could also mean a team is forming and you will want to become a part of it. Your intuitive side is piqued this evening as you think of a friend from the past and that friend calls you. You and your loved one may enjoy talk of psychic experiences.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This is a good time for new beginnings. Guard a secret you have recently discovered and you might be able to sell the idea for lots of money. Emotions are also easier to understand now. Professionally speaking, you are in the lead when it comes to making sales or helping customers find just what they want. New technology may take a little explaining to some folks. This afternoon you have found a new cookie recipe that is unusually healthy and you look forward to sharing the recipe with all your co-worker friends. You have time to prepare some of those cookies to share with your family and set aside some to take to work. Later this evening a book title is something that gains your interest and you enjoy the reading opportunity.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

A new co-worker needs time to adjust and you do not mind lending a helping hand... Perhaps a tour to show this person where things are located would be a good thing. Time spent in explaining some of the equipment, software or merchandise may cause you to stay over to work on your own work for a bit later this afternoon; however, the time is well spent. No matter where you are, events usually point to your seeking a high degree of accomplishment. You seek to use your time to the best of your ability; carefully measuring what and how much is needed. Your neighborhood may be getting ready for a charity parade and you could be on the planning committee this evening. Your block could be recognized for their charitable activity.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Some sort of temporary obstacle may appear to cause you to change your mind about your activities today. Things will work out with only a little effort on your part. You don't mind working through some sensitive problems. You may have flashes of insight and breakthroughs regarding your deepest sense of truth today-you could be psychic. Call it psychology, philosophy, religion or what have you. Perhaps unconventional, you are straightforward about getting to the heart and truth of things, especially when a friend asks you for your guidance. You are most helpful when you guide people in a direction of self-discovery. Communicating is at a high this afternoon. Your timing should be perfect.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You will find success involving contacts with people that are important to your business. It may be time to advertise or make personal appeals. You are driven to create change and inner growth. You possess, at the core, an intensity that burns through superficialities, searching for opportunities to grow and enhance your life. You may be able to help a detective or the police with an important matter in your city. There is some clue that you are able to piece together with some information you heard at an earlier time. Write a short report so that nothing is misunderstood. If you have pictures, add those with your report. Everybody in your family had a busy day and you may have to take a number in order to talk about your day. Be a good listener.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Writing, teaching or speaking will bring financial rewards. Your enthusiasm is strong and you are open and willing when it comes to jumping in to accomplish the work. You like to solve problems and will lend a helping hand to anyone who asks. Plans of the past may become clear and you could find yourself scheduling appointments, calling clients and visiting with co-workers. You put forth a lot of effort, particularly regarding your career. Your drive and ambition works well with whatever management skills and practical ability you have, producing a harmonious environment. This is the start of a new birth year cycle. Why not reserve some time later this day to celebrate and enjoy yourself relax among friends.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Think about your choices before you make them-circumstances could be misleading today. You are coming into a new time that is filled with opportunities to achieve and make a name for yourself. Assimilating information and experience, learning lessons and putting them into practice are the focus as this period unfolds. It's a time for prudence and budgeting, a time to tend to details. You probably already have the inspiring visions: now you must get your hands dirty with the work and use your mind to put it all together. Your intuition is strong and can guide you accurately in making forecasts or decisions. A positive attitude will help you overcome any difficulties now. You have a lot on your mind and feel a strong need to communicate ideas.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Work moves along without a glitch. If you are helping to celebrate a friend's birthday or a newborn child or an upcoming wedding, there may be lots of phone calls to make. You are the type of individual that will follow through on whatever is needed. During breaks, you will be able to be the one that can help pull together a celebration or a party. At home this afternoon you may be typing invitations or purchasing stamps for this upcoming event. No matter how much fun you are having, be careful that you do not overspend or indulge too much. Perhaps another friend or family member will be able to help share expenses. A secret admirer may be revealed later today. This evening you are in a music mood; sit back and enjoy your headphones.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

At this time you could decide a vacation is in order and whether you leave for a trip today or plan one sometime in the near future, you will be sure to plan all sorts of car games. You may decide to rent a van or station wagon for this trip. Car games, singing and fun times together make up an early morning drive. You may be headed home after a long weekend camping trip. This whole last weekend has been a grand time of relaxing with others in some fun times together. You are enjoying the day, whether you report to work or not. Your mind is stimulated with new ideas and new business. A decision to take a better job within your company is a strong possibility. Whatever you do, think about how the choice will help you reach your goals.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself talking easily with an authority figure today. This is a good thing as communicating clearly in a place of business is very important to the productivity of the company. If you are not close, phrase your questions carefully and show that you want what is best for the whole. Do not push, if you do not get clear answers. Radical and inventive ideas may hold the key to some fun, fun times. This could involve the care of a child or some rule for neighborhood safety. This afternoon the young people in the neighborhood may find you involved in a fun activity. This may be a magic demonstration or showing off the latest animal trick that you have taught your animal. Life is fun and relaxed this afternoon.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may be asked to perform a professional favor today. There are no favorites and you know that the request would not be made if you were not needed. There is something about you that others cannot seem to get enough of; yet for all your confidence, you may depend on outside guidance and counsel. This is always a good move as most people sometimes lose sight of the bigger picture. Travel, education and other ways to stretch your horizons open new doors of opportunity. Advice about the next educational adventure in your life would be wise. We never get too old to learn new things and even though it does not seem important, most of the information you receive will help you in your personal life as well as your professional life.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may find yourself handling a problem with young people today. It is up to you to smooth the ruffled feathers-you may be the only adult present. The answer may be in helping them to see that they are really capable of comprehending a simple solution-compromise. Handling a person or a problem is perhaps the key element in your personality make-up. How you manage difficulties, find diplomatic solutions or come up with the right approach is what is built into your abilities. This ability to charm others and be all things to all people solves problems. Always putting others at ease is the key to meeting and coming to know you. At home this afternoon you may want to relax and enjoy a good book. Someone else's story is fun.

WORD SEARCH

Real Estate 2

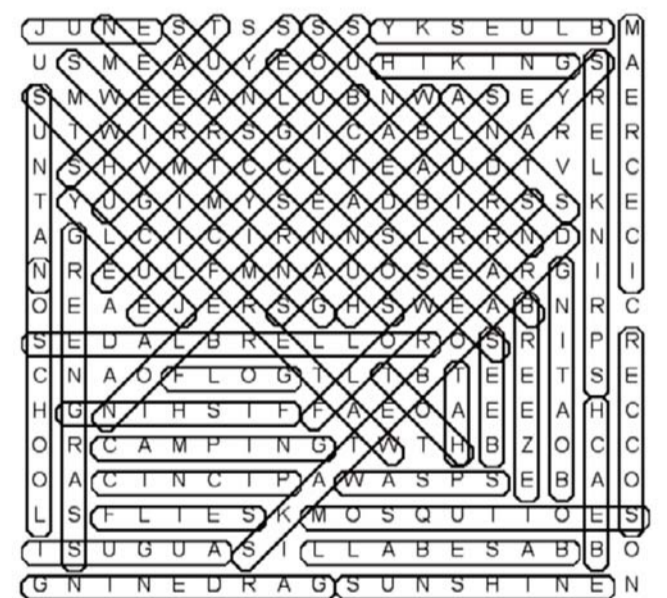
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 22 letters spell a common Real Estate phrase.



- |            |               |                |              |
|------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| ACREAGE    | DEBT          | LANDLORD       | SELLER       |
| AMENITIES  | DEFAULT       | LEASE          | SHOW HOME    |
| APARTMENT  | DOWN PAYMENT  | LISTING        | SOLD SIGN    |
| APPRAISER  | EQUITY        | MARKET         | SUBDIVISION  |
| ASSESSOR   | EVICTION      | MORTGAGE       | SUBLET       |
| BANK       | FLIP          | PARCEL         | SURVEY       |
| BROKER     | FLOOR SPACE   | PHOTOS         | TENANT       |
| BUYER      | FOR SALE SIGN | PRINCIPAL      | TITLE        |
| CLOSING    | FORECLOSURE   | PROPERTY TAX   | TOWNHOUSE    |
| COMMISSION | HIGH RISE     | PUBLIC AUCTION | VALUE        |
| CONDO FEES | INSPECTION    | RENT           | VIRTUAL TOUR |
| CONTRACTOR | INTEREST RATE | ROW HOUSE      | ZONING       |

Yesterday Solution

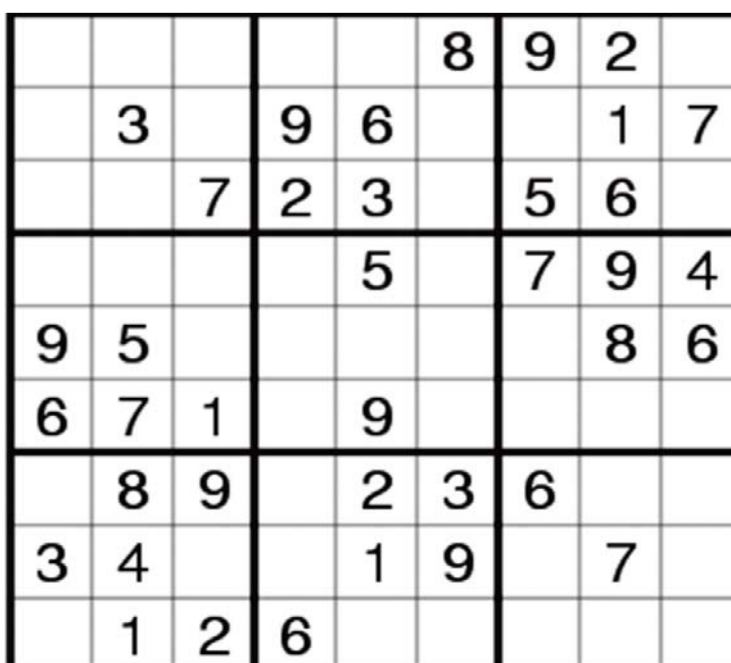
Summer



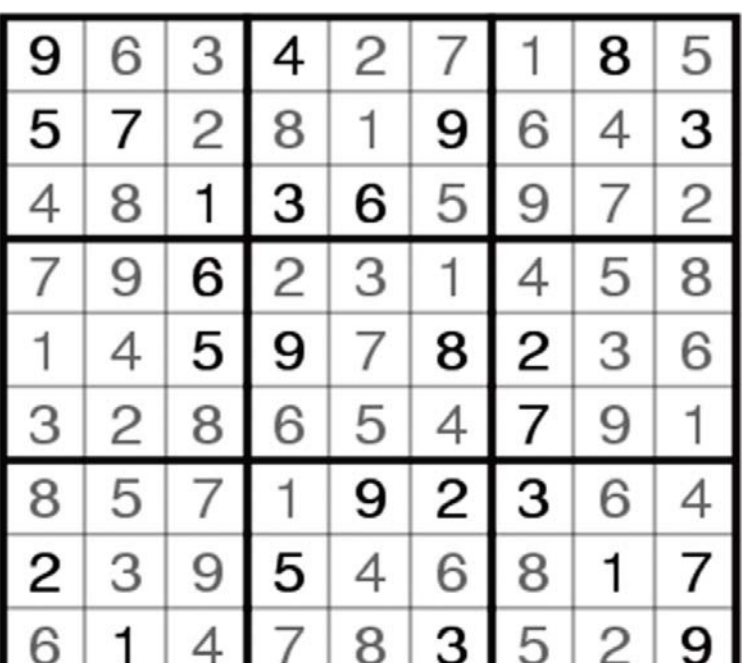
- |          |             |               |              |
|----------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| ANTS     | FISHING     | JULY          | SUNBURN      |
| AUGUST   | FLIES       | JUNE          | SUNGLASSES   |
| BARBECUE | FLOWERS     | MOSQUITOES    | SUNSCREEN    |
| BASEBALL | GARDENING   | NO SCHOOL     | SUNSHINE     |
| BEACH    | GOLF        | PICNIC        | SUNTAN       |
| BEES     | GREEN GRASS | ROLLER BLADES | SWEAT        |
| BICYCLE  | HAT         | SANDALS       | SWIMMING     |
| BLUE SKY | HIKING      | SKATEBOARD    | U V RAYS     |
| BOATING  | HOLIDAYS    | SOCCER        | WASPS        |
| BREEZE   | HOT         | SOLSTICE      | WATER FIGHTS |
| CAMPING  | ICE CREAM   | SPRINKLERS    | WATERMELON   |

The hidden message is: SUMMER VACATION

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution







A young Afghan visitor dressed in camouflage outfit gestures as he looks into an enclosure at Kabul Zoo in Kabul. — AFP photos



Afghan visitors watch an unseen bear inside an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.



An Afghan man and children look on as pigeons fly inside an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.



Burqa-clad Afghan visitors walk past a statue of 'Marjan' the lion once the most famous resident at Kabul Zoo.



An Afghan visitor (left) feeds a jackal in an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.



A deer looks on from an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.



Afghan children touch a statue of 'Marjan'.

## Kabul's once battle-scarred zoo roars back to life

Its scarred lion Marjan was for years a symbol of Afghan survival. Now, more than a decade after his death, Afghanistan remains battered by war but Kabul zoo is buzzing again—a haven for women, children and young lovers in a capital city that has little public space for anyone but men. The carnival of animal life may be a mundane affair compared to other places, but it seems like an anomaly in Kabul, a war-scarred city benighted by post-traumatic stress, which still faces a high risk of insurgent attacks.

Men with children, women in blue burqas, crowds of young students—girls and boys—come to this haven to relax. "My wife and I have come here to take a break and forget our pain and sorrows," explains Mohammad Ali Akbari, a resident of southern Ghazni province, one of the worst hit by the Taliban insurgency. "My wife is a bit sick. I brought her here so she can breathe fresh air and enjoy the normal things of life," he adds, as his wife gazes at a bear inside a cage.

Children peer through a wire mesh fence, amused by monkeys swinging their tails and frolicking from one tree to another, as some of them imitate their whoops and barks. Loud music emanates from the zoo canteen near an aviary with pheasants and other birds, as families huddled in conversation around burgers, fries and canned sodas. Other picnickers seek respite from the scorching afternoon heat under the shade of trees, while enjoying platters of cantaloupe, honeydew and watermelon. Blushing young lovers sit on a bench opposite the gazelle cage, seeking an escape from prying eyes in a city where harassment is otherwise commonplace.

### 'More than a zoo'

The Kabul zoo—the only one in the country—is located in the heart of the Afghan capital, surrounded by a dense warren of muddy flat-topped houses. Before the 1992-1995 civil war, the zoo was home to many exotic animals. But most of them were either killed or escaped as mortar rounds slammed into the zoo during fighting, leaving only a bear with a nose injured by children who jabbed it with a stick, a scattering of monkeys, an assortment of birds of prey and Marjan, the showpiece lion who was blinded by a grenade blast in 1993.

Many of the smaller and tamer animals, such as sheep and goats, were stolen for food. More exotic creatures, such as rare species of birds, were sold on the black market or smuggled out of the country. The zoo has since undergone a slow and painful reconstruction, now housing around 600 animals, many of them gifted by countries such as India and China. "It is now more than a zoo," said Aziz Gul Saqib, who has served



A peacock stands in an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.

as director for more than a decade. "Families feel safe here. They see the zoo as a place for rejuvenation," he told AFP, adding that last year more than 700,000 people visited the zoo, including 50,000 students.

The zoo, he said, earned 17 million Afghanis (\$250,000) last year from ticket sales and other revenues, making it self-sustainable. It is equipped with hi-tech surveillance cameras and loudspeakers—often used to chide those who tease the animals. "It is very important to teach people about wildlife because exotic animals in Afghanistan are on the verge of extinction," Saqib said. Marjan was seen as a symbol of Afghanistan's national survival after living through coups, invasions, the grenade attack which scarred his face and blinded him, civil war and the hardline Taliban era which ended in 2001.

He died in 2002 and is now buried in the zoo, but his bronze statue greets visitors at the entrance with many visitors posing beside it for selfies and photographs. A new Marjan made headlines around the world when AFP found him in 2014, living on the roof of a compound in the upmarket Taimani district of the capital. Government inspectors took him from the owner as the lion's health declined and brought him to the zoo. He did not live—but as the conflict grinds on, the zoo itself has become a symbol of Afghan endurance.— AFP



An Afghan zoo employee (right) feeds a deer in an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.



Afghan visitors watch as a heron stands inside an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.



Afghan visitors look on as deers roam in an enclosure at Kabul Zoo.

## Taboos and ancient traditions help one community protect Kenya's forests

Deep within the Mukogodo forest in central Kenya, a community of traditional hunter-gatherers are working with the government to help expand forests and crack down on illegal logging and poaching using ancient conservation techniques. The Yiaaku are hailed as a model of collaboration with authorities, using traditional knowledge to take care of tree and plant cover while adopting new livelihoods such as keeping bees and livestock to protect animals from hunting.

Kenya Forest Services Director, Emilio Mugo, said legislation to allow co-management of forests was introduced nearly a decade ago but the Yiaaku is the first successful community to do so, with hopes this approach can be replicated across Kenya. "Where this community model is practiced we have seen cases of illegal logging reduce up to 50 percent," Mugo told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Since we integrated the community's indigenous knowledge model of conserving forests into our forest policy... there has been little friction or

tensions with these forest dwellers."

The Kenya Forest Management Act of 2007 aimed to integrate communities into forest management but also led to the abolition of long-standing traditions such as hunting and logging for charcoal to maintain the forests and promote tourism. It came ahead of Kenya setting a target to increase its forest cover to about 10 percent by 2030 from an estimated 7.2 percent, according to the Kenya Forest Service (KFS).

### Old versus the new

Yiaaku leaders say their approach to protecting the forest from illegal loggers and trophy hunters has not only helped defuse conflict with neighboring communities but eased past tensions with government authorities who want to ensure forests and animals are protected to encourage tourism. He said the community's knowledge of the forest meant they knew which trees had medicinal value and need conservation,

could foresee dry spells so water could be conserved and used observation of wildlife—such as bird migration patterns—to warn of drought or dangerous weather events.

He said the Yiaaku, living northeast of Nairobi, also acted as fire fighters during the hot season and monitored the health of seedlings and old trees. "We don't have to fight with the authorities anymore as they have acknowledged our system as a powerful tool in protection and conservation of the forest biodiversity," Simon Napei, a Yiaaku forest scout, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Every activity in the forest is decided by a council of elders. During drought seasons a council of elders sits and decides where and when the livestock should be grazed in the forest." Children are trained and taught by their elders to understand the value of individual trees for the overall health of the forest, he said, and every individual will plant more than 20 trees during each rainy season "The community has strong cultural beliefs and taboos

which are viewed as sacred," he said.

"These taboos are a set of rules and regulations used to bring sanity within the community and anyone who breaks the rules brings a curse to the family."

Mugo said the Yiaaku are now custodians of more than 74,000 acres (29,950 hectares) of forest land and their success has also earned them security and autonomy. He said the government had saved "millions of Kenyan shillings" previously spent on armed personnel to guard forests and reforestation programs, and the government now hopes to replicate this approach in 100 other gazetted forests. "We are targeting communities that are well organized and have a common purpose of conserving forests," he said.— Reuters



TRAVEL



A 90-year-old street vendor Antonio Bauza waits for tourists to sell bananas, next to the village church in Remedios, Cuba. — AP photos



A man carries two children on a bicycle in Remedios, Cuba.

# New air links raise hopes in Washington and Cuba



A man holds a fighting rooster as he talks to a woman in the main square in Remedios, Cuba.



Images of revolutionary icon Ernesto 'Che' Guevara sit next to a wooden statue of Jesus Christ in a carpenters workshop at an old church building in Remedios, Cuba.



A woman walks holding a set of medical x-rays next to the village church in Remedios, Cuba.



A barber shaves a customer's head at a picnic area next to the beach in Caibarien, Cuba.

The first off JetBlue 387 were the TV cameramen, the US secretary of transportation and the airline executives. As the tropical sun beat the tarmac, the VIPs traded congratulations on the arrival of the first commercial flight from the US to Cuba in more than 50 years. Away from the cameras, a small but potentially more important group made its way through Santa Clara's single-terminal airport: a pair of backpackers from Oregon and a book editor from Chicago and his 16-year-old daughter - the first US tourists on the newly reestablished flights.

By December, the four will have a lot of company, with some 300 direct flights a week scheduled from the US to 10 cities across Cuba. America's biggest airlines and the Obama administration hope the planes will carry hundreds of thousands of US travelers, both Cuban-Americans visiting family and sightseers who will turn the largest island in the Caribbean back into a major US vacation destination.

**Leather sandals**

For US airlines it's a chance to move into an untapped market less than an hour's flight from Miami. For Cubans, it means waves of demanding but high-tipping Americans could transform the landscape in cities like Santa Clara that have been off the well-trod tourist track for now. "The best tourist there is, is the American tourist," said 25-year-old Liban Bermudez as he sold 16-year-old Sophia Compton a pair of handmade leather sandals from his stand off Santa Clara's main plaza. "They're the ones that buy the most."

For President Barack Obama, the reestablishment of commercial air links with Cuba is the last major chance to make a key part of his foreign policy legacy irreversible before he leaves office. In the year since the US and Cuba re-established diplomatic relations, government ties have grown quickly, generating a string of bilateral agreements on issues from environmental protection to public health. Commerce remains stalled by the 55-year-old US trade embargo on Cuba, and the difficulty of doing business in the island's largely closed and centrally planned economy.

The restart of commercial flights on Wednesday means 10 US airlines including American Airlines, Delta, United, Southwest and JetBlue suddenly have hundreds of millions of dollars in business due to US-Cuba normalization. The Obama administration finalized the last of the new routes, 20 a day to Havana, the same day Flight 387 touched down in Santa Clara. A requirement that the airlines start service within 90 days means all the new Cuba flights will have to be running a month before Obama leaves office.

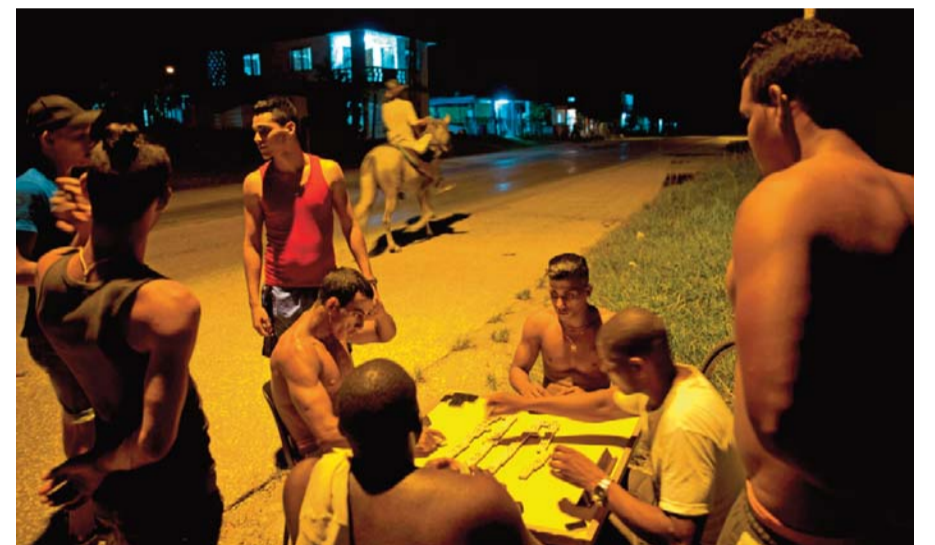
**'people-to-people'**

Pure tourism remains illegal under US regulations that allow 12 categories of travel to Cuba including religious and sports activities and educational travel promoting "people-to-people" contact. For Americans without family ties to Cuba, the most popular form of travel has been on tightly focused educational trips organized in conjunction with the Cuban government. The Obama administration lifted that group requirement in March, leaving Americans free to travel to Cuba as long as they can credibly describe their trips as educational.

As a result, the ban on tourism has become effectively unenforceable, something that many more Americans are likely to realize now that they can instantly book travel on commercial flights instead of expensive, inconvenient charters. The four travelers on Flight 387 without relatives in Cuba paid about \$200 each to fly from Fort Lauderdale to Santa Clara. They spent Wednesday seeing Che Guevara's tomb and sites from Cuba's 1959 revolution. Then Stephen Compton and his daughter Sophia headed to Havana. Keane Daly and Taimairie Locke boarded a bus to the colonial city of Trinidad and the waterfalls and beaches of Cuba's central southern coast.

**Cuban government**

"I've traveled to 30-35 countries and this is probably one of the friendliest places I've been to," Daly, a 25-year-old University of Oregon geology graduate student, said Saturday evening. "I was expecting maybe some hostility but it's actually the opposite. People are really excited about Americans coming to Cuba."



People play dominoes on the edge of the road illuminated under a lamppost while a man on horseback passes by in Santa Clara, Cuba.

Most of the non-official passengers on Flight 387 were Cuban-Americans - among the nearly 400,000 who already visit family in Cuba each year.

The number of US travelers without family ties to Cuba is already on track to at least triple to 300,000 this year. Strapped for cash as subsidized oil from Venezuela dwindles, the Cuban government is welcoming the wave of new visitors and struggling to update infrastructure that's already overwhelmed. It's pushing to build new hotels, but demand will outstrip supply for years to come. The government has also given Aeroports de Paris, the French company that manages Paris' airports, a concession to take over Havana's Jose Marti airport, where passengers can often wait hours to get their checked bags. But renovation of the airport isn't expected to start in earnest until next year, well after commercial flights being arriving there from the US.



The statue of Ernesto 'Che' Guevara is silhouetted at dusk in Santa Clara, Cuba.

Much of the demand is expected to be absorbed by Cuba's growing non-state tourism sector, where tens of thousands of private bed-and-breakfasts and restaurants have emerged across the country in recent years. The start of flights to lesser-known destinations like Santa Clara, Holguin and Camaguey is raising hopes among private business people that they will be able to capture a significant share of the US tourist boom that's been concentrated until now in Havana and a circuit of popular destinations within a few hours' drive. "We have to get ready and raise our standards," said Ger Gar manager of a bed-and-breakfast and restaurant in central Santa Clara. "All of this is above and beyond what everybody was planning." — AP



A horse eats grass in the garden of a residential building in Caibarien, Cuba.



Tourist Stephen Compton from Chicago connects to the internet at the main square in Santa Clara, Cuba.



This file photo shows pewter plates found on the wreck of the Tudor warship Mary Rose on display during a press preview of the new Mary Rose Museum in Portsmouth, Hampshire, southern England. — AFP photos



Detail on a cannon found on the wreck of the Tudor warship Mary Rose on display during a press preview.



The skull of a crew member recovered from the wreck of the Tudor warship Mary Rose.



A cannon found on the wreck of the Tudor warship Mary Rose on display.



Photo shows knife handles recovered from the wreck of the Tudor warship Mary Rose.

# 3D skulls from Henry VIII's doomed warship placed online

British archaeologists yesterday published detailed 3D models of skulls and artefacts found on board English king Henry VIII's warship as part of a digital experiment designed to share knowledge of major historical finds. One skull, reproduced in a fully interactive model, belonged to a carpenter on board the Mary Rose, the flagship of England's navy when it sank in 1545 as heartbroken Henry VIII watched from the shore.

"An abscess in his upper jaw meant he could only chew on the right side," said details on the website. "He also had arthritis in his spine, ribs and left clavicle and a lesion across his right eyebrow which may be the result of an old wound." Relics from the ship, including the carpenter's tools, are also available for fellow archeologists and scientists to study on the website following lengthy work by scientists at Swansea University in Wales. The technique is known as photogrammetry, using high-resolution 2D photographs to produce detailed 3D models.

"This digital resource enables researchers around the world to join the project and study virtual 3D reconstructions," said professor Catherine Fletcher. "Once fully developed, this technology can be applied to many more historic objects, bringing them to an even wider community of researchers while preventing damage to the original remains and artefacts." The researchers captured 1,000 images of 10 skulls found on the ship to create navigable online models, which they hope other researchers will analyse to eventually recreate full skeletons of some of the 500 men who perished.

The Mary Rose fought three wars with the French but mysteriously keeled over and sank off Portsmouth on July 19, 1545, while fighting off a French invasion fleet. After a six-year search, the legendary ship was definitively identified in 1971 and around a third of it was raised in 1982, watched live by millions on television.

The public can view a sample of the objects such

as a mirror, rigging or a leather shoe on the Virtual Tudors website—a collaboration between Swansea University, the Mary Rose Trust and Oxford University. Thousands of other artefacts are on display at the Mary Rose Museum in Portsmouth on England's south coast.

Alex Hildred, head of research and curator of human remains of the Mary Rose Trust said excavating the carpenter's cabin was "like stepping into a deserted workshop". "Finding one of the carpenter's second set of tools on the deck below allows us to look into the face of one of the most important members of the crew; and the ship comes alive," he said, according to the Press Association. — AFP

Photo taken on May 07, 2013 shows restoration staff working on part of the hull of the Tudor warship Mary Rose during a press preview.



Students from the New Model School pose for a photo in front of a work by artist Henri Matisse in Johannesburg.



Visitors look at works of art by Henri Matisse in Johannesburg.

# Africa hosts Henri Matisse exhibit for 1st time: 'Perfect'

The South African schoolgirl leaned close to the Matisse painting. "I like the blue and yellow of the dress the woman is wearing. And then there is the bright red background," she said. "And the drawing of her face is simple but strong." For the first time, Africa is hosting an exhibit devoted to Henri Matisse. The show in Johannesburg features more than 80 works, including a painting that points to how the continent inspired Matisse and his contemporary, Pablo Picasso.

The exhibit of bold line drawings and vibrantly colored stencils also includes one of Matisse's first drawings as a student and one of his final paintings, the portrait described by the student, completed shortly before his death in 1954.

"He collected many African art objects, particularly masks and figurines from Central and West Africa," said Federico Freschi, dean of art at the University of Johannesburg and co-curator of the show that runs through Sept 17, "Henri Matisse: Rhythm and Meaning." "Matisse also collected a number of African textiles. He had a particular interest in textiles. So he collected many Kuba cloths, for example, and also various North African fabrics, particularly the sort of cotton appliqué work that is well-known in Africa. And those things find their way into his work in various ways," Freschi said.

Because this is the first Matisse exhibit in Africa, the show is broad in scope to allow space for learning and engagement, Freschi said. Most of the works were loaned by the Matisse Museum in Le Cateau-Cambresis, the town where the artists grew up. Others came from the Johannesburg Art Gallery, the Matisse Museum in Nice, the Matisse family and private collections. One painting features a small African sculpture, a carved wooden figurine that Matisse bought at a curio shop in Paris in 1906. He brought the sculpture to a lunch at Gertrude Stein's and showed it to Picasso, who was fascinated by it, Stein later recounted. Picasso soon collected African sculptures and masks, and many critics say his interest in African art led to his development of Cubism.

Young artists at the Johannesburg exhibit gathered excitedly around the plates from Matisse's famed Jazz series. "I like many of his paintings ... they are so perfect," said Shaunti Hlongwane, 15, who came with other students from his art

class at New Model School. "The colors, I love all of the colors that he used, so he gave me many ideas when I want to paint." Students are meant to interact with Matisse's works, said Sibusiso Ngwenya, art facilitator at New Model School.

"We want to encourage the students to think about what they feel in response to the art and then in response to create their own artworks and their own performances," Ngwenya said he was especially pleased to expose his students to Matisse. "His use of color, the line work. The students look at it and they see simplicity and purity and it inspires them. They think, 'This is something I can do!'" — AP



Visitors look at works of art by Henri Matisse in Johannesburg.



A replica of 17th-century London on a barge floating on the river Thames burns in an event to mark the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London, in London on September 4, 2016. A giant replica of 17th-century London was set ablaze on the Thames in the city to mark the 350th anniversary of the devastating Great Fire of London. The 1666 inferno destroyed most of the walled inner city dating back to Roman times—a bustling, congested maze of tightly-packed wooden houses. It forced London to rebuild anew from the ashes. — AFP



Director of excavations of Pecs University Erika Hancz presents a stone of the tomb of Ottoman Sultan Suleiman near Szigetvar, Hungary.

## POOR HUNGARY TOWN EYES RICHES OF SULEIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT

The recent discovery of the tomb of Suleiman the Magnificent, considered the greatest Ottoman ruler, has raised hopes of a tourism boom in one of Hungary's most impoverished areas. From hammam baths and crumbling minarets to battle site memorials and ruins of mosques, traces of the country's 150-year-long stretch (1541-1699) in the Ottoman Empire are not hard to find in Hungary. But many Hungarians see them as relics of a dark period during which the country's flourishing renaissance era was extinguished. As a result, few of the Ottoman monuments have so far been promoted by the Hungarian authorities.

Suleiman's case could change that, however. Experts confirmed in July that excavations begun two years ago in the struggling town of Szigetvar, close to the Croatian border, had revealed the tomb of the 16th-century ruler. Suleiman died aged 71 on September 7, 1566, during an epic battle with the mainly Croatian defenders of Szigetvar castle that depleted his forces hoping to quickly advance on Vienna, the capital of the Habsburg Empire. On Wednesday, senior government officials from Hungary, Croatia and Turkey will join thousands of visitors to Szigetvar to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the siege.

yards and orchards four kilometers to the east of Szigetvar castle returned results that set Pap's pulse racing.

"It showed the presence of buildings, just under the grass, matching positions on the medieval maps of Turbek, and all of them pointing very precisely toward Mecca," he said. Excavations gradually uncovered the remains of Turbek: the walls of a mosque, a tomb, dervish monastery cloisters, as well as a wealth of silver coins and fragments of clothing, pottery, glass and metal. The evidence became overwhelming, and by July this year experts in Turkey were also convinced. "Finally we could say for certain that we had found Suleiman's tomb," said Pap.

### 'National icon'

Sleepy Szigetvar with a population of 10,000 has few hotels, but Pap is convinced of the town's long-term potential for tourism given appropriate investment. The only other Ottoman sultan to die outside the Empire's centers of Istanbul and Bursa-Sultan Murad, killed in the 1389 battle of Kosovo Polje draws several thousands of tourists annually to his tomb in modern-day Kosovo. "Suleiman is a national cultural icon in Turkey, and as Szigetvar is easier to get to from both western Europe and Turkey than Kosovo, there is a very good chance that Turkish tourists will come visit the tomb," said Pap.

The town's mayor Peter Vass told AFP that he hopes the number of visitors to Szigetvar will double from the current 25,000 per year. The municipality has already earmarked a site for the construction of higher-end hotels close to the castle. As Pap's team continues to dig for the rest of Turbek including a military barracks and the town's walls as well as Suleiman's heart-buried in a golden urn according to legend-five Turkish descendants of Ottoman princesses will give DNA samples next week in Szigetvar for comparison with samples from the tomb area. "Hungary and Turkey have much in common, a shared cultural heritage," Turkey's ambassador in Budapest Sakir Fakili told AFP. "Many Turks are wealthy, and can afford to travel, so why not to Szigetvar?" — AFP

"This town is dying, young people are leaving or have already left for Germany or London, but Suleiman can bring in jobs, income, and tourists," said Norbert Pap, head of the team of researchers whose excavations uncovered the tomb. "Szigetvar may be on the periphery now, but 450 years ago it was on the main street of European history," Pap, a geographer and historian at nearby Pecs university, told AFP.

### Wiped from the map

Born in 1494, Suleiman, whose reign from 1520 to 1566 was the longest of any sultan, greatly expanded the Ottoman Empire, annexing large swathes of the Balkans, the Middle East and northern Africa. Taken ill before his final battle, Suleiman was found dead in his imperial camp, located an hour's walk east of the castle according to contemporary accounts. His body, later removed to Istanbul, was drained of its internal organs and heart, which were buried and later built over by a tomb. While his body was laid to rest in Istanbul, his heart and other internal organs were buried at the site of his death and later covered by a tomb.

Around the tomb the town of Turbek grew, the only settlement that the Ottomans built from scratch during their reign in Hungary. At the end of the 17th century, however, both the town and the tomb were wiped off the map by the Habsburgs. Until 2012 that is, when Pap secured funding from the Turkish government to use technology to try find them. A few days before Christmas 2014 a geophysics survey of a site nestled beneath vine-



Statues of rival military leaders of 16th century, Ottoman Sultan Suleiman (right) and his opponent Miklos Zrinyi (left), are seen at the Hungarian-Turkish friendship park near Szigetvar. — AFP photos



Joint Research with the University of Pecs for the Preservation and Development of Cultural Diversity, Norbert Papp, speaks close to the tomb of Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, near Szigetvar.



Local workers remove soil on the tomb of Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, near Szigetvar.



Workers remove soil on the tomb of Ottoman Sultan Suleiman, near Szigetvar, Hungary.