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Amir highlights Kuwait's efforts to help refugees

Sheikh Sabah vows to continue humanitarian obligations

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NEW YORK: HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on Tuesday delivered a speech at the Leaders' Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis, hosted by US President Barack Obama on the sidelines of the 71st session of the UN General Assembly. He started by thanking Obama and other co-hosts of the summit for their efforts to lobby for a galvanized global response to the refugee crisis and increased funding for aid programs.

"This important summit sends a kind signal about a global interest in alleviating the suffering of 65 million refugees and migrants worldwide," HH the Amir said, citing UN figures. "We have to appreciate the countries that host huge numbers of refugees despite the mounting economic hardships and the strains put on their abilities to meet their humanitarian and development obligations. We realize the fact that the humanitarian crisis facing the world today requires concerted efforts by the international community to end recurrent armed conflicts, bloodshed and destruction," he stressed."My country discharges its humanitarian duty within the regional and international spheres and works with other parties, bilaterally and multilaterally, to alleviate the toll of disasters, whether natural and man-made," the Amir pointed out.

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NEW YORK: US Vice President Joe Biden speaks with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at the Leaders' Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis during the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday at the UN headquarters. — AP

NEW YORK: Kuwait's Prime Minister HH Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al- Sabah addresses the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly at the UN headquarters yesterday. — AFP

PM: Kuwait rejects all forms of terror

NEW YORK: Kuwait yesterday rejected all forms of terrorism and reaffirmed its active contributions to the international coalition fighting so-called Islamic State (IS). This came in a speech by representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, before the UN General Assembly. Kuwait condemns "terrorist

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Russia, US face off as Aleppo hit

Kerry demands Moscow, Syria ground warplanes

UNITED NATIONS: Russia and the United States faced off at the United Nations over the carnage in Syria yesterday, as air strikes pounded Aleppo for a third straight day following the collapse of a ceasefire. The UN Security Council held crisis talks to try to revive the truce and chart a course towards ending the five-year war in Syria, that has killed 300,000 people. "We are at a make or break moment," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the council, urging world powers to use their influence to help re-start political talks so Syrians can "negotiate a way out of the hell in which they are trapped".

Russia and the United States negotiated the latest ceasefire plan, but Syria ended the truce on Monday following a US-led coalition strike on Syrian soldiers.

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ALEPPO: A Syrian man carries a child after removing him from the rubble of a destroyed building following an air strike in the Qatarji neighborhood of this northern city yesterday. — AFP

Court to rule on legality of gasoline hike

DNA law challenged

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The administrative court yesterday set Sept 28 to issue its verdict in a lawsuit challenging the legality of a government decision that raised the prices of petrol, which came into effect at the start of this month. The move came after the government told the court that the decision was not published in the official Kuwait Al-Youm gazette because it was based on a recommendation to the Cabinet and was not a decision by the council of ministers. The government's defense asked the court to throw out the challenge based on this information.

The lawyers who filed the petition insist that the decision is illegal because it has harmed low-income citizens. The decision increased the prices of all petrol grades by 40 to over 80 percent. It was the first rise in almost two decades. Almost all lawmakers have strongly criticized the decision, especially since it was taken during the absence of the Assembly and that the government failed to provide any compensation to citizens.

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KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Paralympics champion Ahmad Al-Mutairi displays his gold medal at Kuwait International Airport on his arrival yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Paralympic champion returns to accolades

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Paralympic athletics champion Ahmad Al-Mutairi returned to Kuwait yesterday, after winning a gold medal in the 100m wheelchair race at the Paralympics that concluded in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday. Mutairi was received at the VIP lounge of Kuwait International Airport in a reception attended by officials and public dignitaries. He was received by the Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sebeeh.

Also attending the honoring ceremony for the national champion were Head of Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahd Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, MPs, senior officials at the Public Authorities for Youth and Sport, Honorary President of Kuwait Disabled Sports Club Sheikha Sheikha Abdullah Al-Sabah, Chairman of the Club Shafi Al-Hajri and board members, along with sports figures and a large number of citizens. — KUNA

Iran parades weapons amid tensions

TEHRAN: Iran showed off missiles, warplanes, tanks and marching troops yesterday in a display of military strength in the face of growing regional tensions. The Islamic republic used the 36th anniversary of the start of the Iran-Iraq war to parade arms including 16 ballistic missiles through Tehran. A new missile with multiple warheads, called Zolfaghar, was also on show with a threat directed at Iran's arch-rival Israel written on the side of the truck transporting it. "If the leaders of the Zionist regime make one false move, the Islamic republic will destroy Tel Aviv and Haifa," it said, referring to two Israeli cities.

According to the commander of the air wing of the elite Revolutionary Guards, General Amir-Ali Hadjizadeh, the Zolfaghar has a range of 750 km. S-300 missiles delivered by Moscow this year were also on show in the capital. Also on display was the Qadr H missile, which has a range of 2,000 km, according to state TV. Iran's ballistic missile program has been criticized by the West, and the US Treasury imposed sanctions on two Iranian companies in March because of their alleged ties to it.

Other military parades were held elsewhere in the country. A large maritime display involving 500 fast patrol boats and warships, as well as submarines and helicopters, took place in the Arabian Gulf, according to Iranian media. For the first time, Russian-made Sukhoi Su-22 fighter jets flew over the area of Bandar Abbas, a major port on the Gulf coast.

"The recent decision of the American criminals to give military aid to the usurper Zionist regime (Israel), reinforces our determination to increase our defense capabilities," said General Mohammad Bagheri, chief of staff of Iran's armed forces. The United States and Israel in September signed a record $38 billion 10-year military aid deal, despite increased disagreement over the Middle East peace process. "The ultimate objective of the United States, the Zionist regime and those who support terrorist groups... is to destroy the infrastructure of Syria and Iraq in favor" of Israel, Bagheri said.

Tehran has advisers on the ground in Iraq and also in Syria to help the military in both countries battle armed groups fighting the national governments. Iran also has fraught relations with its Gulf Arab neighbors, particularly Saudi Arabia. The two countries support opposing sides in the conflicts in Syria and Yemen. Bagheri declared that Iran wanted peace. But he said Iran's lessons in the 1980-88 war against Iraq now served as a guide for "our brothers in faith" in Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and Bahrain, countries where Iran has political, religious or military allies.

"We tell the Americans that it's better that the capital and wealth of the American people should not be wasted on their inappropriate and detrimental presence in the...Gulf," said Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Tasnim news site quoted him as saying: "If they want to extend their reach and engage in adventurism they should go to the Bay of Pigs" - a reference to the location of a botched US attempt to overthrow Cuban leader Fidel Castro in 1961. — Agencies

TEHRAN: An Iranian military truck carries parts of the S300 missile system yesterday during the annual military parade marking the anniversary of the start of Iran's 1980-1988 war with Iraq. — AP

Kuwait GDP exceeds KD 34 billion

Growth rate of total labor force hits 4.8%

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exceeded KD 34 billion in 2015, declining some 25 percent compared to the previous year, according to the Central Bank of Kuwait. The GDP at current prices amounted to KD 34,314.6 million during 2015 (ie a decline of 25.9% compared to 2014). Inflation rate, measured by the relative change in the General Consumer Price Index (CPI), was 3.3% during 2015 against 2.9% during 2014, the CBK said in its annual economic report for 2015, publicized yesterday.

Available statistics indicate a deceleration in the growth rate of Kuwaiti population to 2.5% during 2015 compared to 2.7% during 2014, while the growth rate of non-Kuwaiti population increased to 4.1% from 3.4% during 2014. Furthermore, the growth rate of total labor force in Kuwait reached to 4.8% during 2015, while the growth rate of Kuwaiti labor force increased to 3.2% from 2.9% during 2014. Moreover, the statistics indicate an increase in non-oil GDP at current prices during 2015 by 3%, while oil GDP recorded a decline of 46.2%.

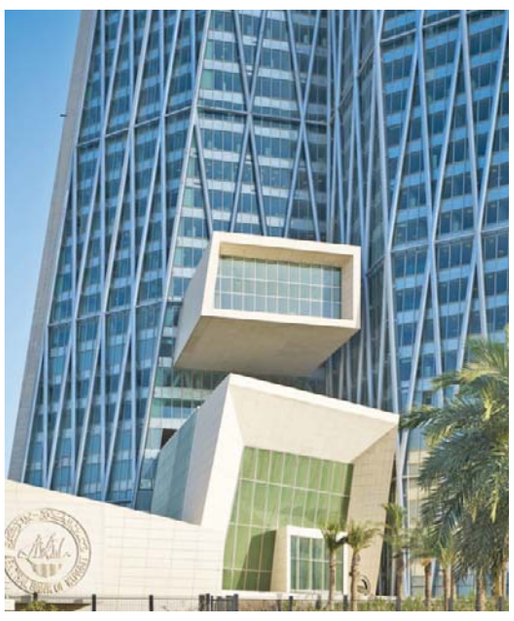
The report noted a sustained relative stability in the KD exchange rate against major currencies during 2015, as part of the prevailing exchange rate policy, pegging the KD to an undisclosed special weighted basket of currencies of countries that have significant trade and financial relations with the State of Kuwait. On the other hand, Money supply in its broad definition (M2) and the resident private sector deposits with local banks realized a slower pace of growth of 1.2% and 1.3% respectively at the end of 2015.

Moreover, the CBK continued its efforts in managing domestic liquidity levels during 2015 using its available monetary policy instruments, mainly accepting deposits from local banks, issuing CBK bonds and managing public debt instruments on behalf of the Ministry of Finance. Local banks' claims on the CBK witnessed a noticeable decline of 18.7% to KD 4,695.8 million at the end of 2015.

Banking supervision

In the area of banking supervision and oversight efforts - aimed at enhancing the financial position and maintaining financial stability of the financial sector - the CBK continued its efforts during 2015 through issuing and overseeing the implementation of its directives particularly those related to the latest Basel III regulations issued by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision. These regulations strengthened and enhanced the quality and quantity of regulatory capital, liquidity framework through the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) and Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR), leverage D-SIBs, and the disclosure and transparency enhancements. Within this context, the CBK has also issued Consumer Protection Guide instructions in light of the growing interest in recent years in the issue of consumer protection in financial services industry, particularly with the steady expansion of electronic services and the increasing chances of transferring risks to clients in various sectors. The CBK continued its efforts in managing domestic liquidity levels during 2015 using its available monetary policy instruments, mainly accepting deposits from local banks, issuing CBK bonds and managing public debt instruments on behalf of the Ministry of Finance. Local banks' claims on the CBK witnessed a noticeable decline of 18.7% to KD 4,695.8 million at the end of 2015.

The report points out developments in the financial indicators of the banking and financial system, in light of data on aggregate financial statements of various banking and financial units supervised by the CBK, including local banks, finance companies and exchange companies. Within this framework, the aggregate balance sheet of local banks amounted to KD 58,595.1 million at the end of 2015, realizing a growth of 5.7% as compared to KD 55452.3 million at the end of the previous year. On the other hand, the aggregate balance sheet of local investment companies totaled KD 9,827.5 million at the end of 2015,



KUWAIT: Photo shows the entrance of Central Bank of Kuwait in Kuwait City. — KUNA

recording a decrease of 6.1% from KD 10465.3 million at the end of 2014. In addition, the aggregate balance sheet of local exchange companies registered with, and supervised by, the CBK amounted to KD 153.7 million at the end of 2015 with a decrease of 0.1% from KD 153.9 million at the end of the previous year.

State public finance

The report highlights developments in the State's public finance, whereas the general budget recorded an actual surplus of KD 3,510.5 million during FY2014/2015, ie a noticeable decrease of 72.8% compared to the previous fiscal year, before the deduction of allocations for the Reserve Fund for Future Generations (RFFG). The fourth part of the Report highlights developments in the State's public finance, whereas the general budget recorded an actual surplus of KD 3,510.5 million during FY2014/2015, ie a noticeable decrease of 72.8% compared to the previous fiscal year, before the deduction of allocations for the Reserve Fund for Future Generations (RFFG).

The fifth part of the Report reviews the developments in the trade and financial relations of the State of Kuwait with other economies as reflected in the statistics on the foreign trade and the Balance of Payments (BOP) of the State of Kuwait during 2015. The realised surplus in the balance on goods witnessed a decline of KD 13,639.7 million or 61.8% during 2015. Likewise, the current account surplus decreased by KD 13,682.0 million or 88.4%. As a result, the overall position of the BOP realized a total deficit of KD 885.9 million in 2015.

Surplus decreased

The report covers the developments witnessed in the performance of the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) during 2015 as reflected in the key trading indicators, price movements and the factors affecting the KSE's performance. The realized surplus in the balance on goods witnessed a decline of KD 13,639.7 million or 61.8% during 2015. Likewise, the current account surplus decreased by KD 13,682.0 million or 88.4%. As a result, the overall position of the BOP realized a total deficit of KD 885.9 million in 2015.

Lastly, the report covers the developments witnessed in the performance of the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) during 2015 as reflected in the key trading indicators, price movements and the factors affecting the KSE's performance. In this context, the KSE Price Index (PI) closed at a decline of 14.09% at the end of 2015 compared to the closing of 2014. In addition, the KSE Weighted Price Index (WI) recorded a decrease of 13.03% at the end of 2015 compared to 2014. — KUNA

GCC stock meeting

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The committee of GCC stock markets' chairmen is due to meet at the GCC Secretariat General's headquarters in Riyadh on Sunday. The committee will discuss a number of issues including GCC stock markets' integration and a project including a full study to do so.

Disability allowances

Director of the Public Authority for the Disabled Dr Tareq Al-Shatti said the fatwa and legislation department agreed to pay allowances for educational disability that were suspended from April 1 to Aug 31, 2016. Shatti explained that 1,694 cases deserved the allowance and that the amount would be deposited in beneficiaries' bank accounts.

KOTC wins award

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) has won an award for its role in molding and producing maritime industry leadership on both regional and international levels. In a statement obtained by KUNA yesterday, the marine transport company said that it won the award during the Maritime Academic Conference and Expo (MARACAD 2016) held in the Dubai World Trade Center. The conference, which concluded yesterday and featured participation of international leaders and experts of the maritime industry, tackled the biggest challenges facing the industry as well as efforts to prop up the maritime industry in the region. KOTC'S delegation to the conference included its Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Fleet Operations Ali Shahab, along with other officials. — KUNA

FM meets with Iraqi, Maltese counterparts

NEW YORK: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met with Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari in New York yesterday. During the meeting held on the sidelines of the 71st UN General Assembly, both ministers discussed Kuwaiti-Iraqi relations and the latest regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister and the First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister's Office Chief Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah and Kuwait's permanent delegate at the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi. Aslo, Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah held talks with Maltese Foreign Minister George Vella on promotion of relations, and issues of common interest. — Agencies

Sports suspension should be resolved soon: Official

KUWAIT: Sports suspension in the country is considered a great challenge that should be resolved as soon as possible, a Kuwait Football Association (KFA) official said. This remark was made by member of KFAís Council and head of the financial and marketing committee Saleh Al-Hasawi during a press conference held for Kuwait Super Cup sponsors. Al-Hasawi said in the conference that 'sports suspension in Kuwait is unfair' and all concerned institutes in the country should combine their effort to re-simulate sports. He added that Kuwait Super Cup has been set up in a short notice, pointing out that admission to the game will be free of charge. The Kuwait Super Cup is an annual one-match association football competition in Kuwait organized by KFA. This one-match will take place at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium over the weekend between Kuwait Sports Club and Al-Qadisya Sports Club. — KUNA

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Kuwait takes part in Silk Road International Cultural Expo

Assistant Secretary-General of the NCCAL Dr Bader Al-Duwaish

DUNHUANG: The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) took part in the 1st Silk Road International Cultural Expo in Dunhuang, China.

Assistant Secretary-General of the NCCAL Dr Bader Al-Duwaish said in a phone call with KUNA yesterday, that Kuwait's participation in the event comes under the guidance of NCCAL Chairman Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, also the Minister of Information and the Minister of State for Youth Affairs. The first Silk Road International Cultural Expo opened Tuesday in Dunhuang. Delegates from 85 countries, five international organizations and 66 overseas institutions gathered in the city to offer suggestions on cultural exchange and intergovernmental cooperation during the two-day event. Al-Duwaish affirmed Kuwait's support of the Silk Road project. — KUNA

Kuwait trade surplus with Japan shrinks 52.8 percent

TOKYO: Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan shrank 52.8 percent from a year earlier to JPY 25.2 billion ($248 million) in August, falling for the 15th month in a row - reflecting weak exports, the Japanese Finance Ministry said yesterday. But Kuwait maintained monthly black ink with Japan for eight years and seven months, the ministry said in a preliminary report. Kuwaiti overall exports to Japan plunged 40.7 percent year-on-year to JPY 40.2 billion ($396 million) for the 15th straight monthly drop, while imports from Japan rose 4.0 percent to JPY 15.0 billion ($148 million), for the first time in three months.

Middle East's trade surplus with Japan also narrowed by 35.1 percent to JPY 393.1 billion ($3.9 billion) last month, with Japan-bound exports tumbling 29.5 percent from a year earlier. Crude oil, refined products, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other natural resources, which accounted for 95.9 percent of the region's total exports to Japan, slid 29.8 percent. The region's overall imports from Japan declined 14.8 percent, as shipments of automobile, steel and electric equipment slowed. The world's third-biggest economy logged a global deficit of JPY 18.7 billion ($184 million) in August, slipping back into the red for the first time in three months, as a stronger yen pushed down the value of exports. Exports fell 9.6 percent from the year before due to sluggish shipment of such products as vehicles, steel and chemicals. Imports tumbled 17.3 percent, with value of crude oil falling 35.7 percent due to low prices. Deficit with China, Japan's biggest trade partner, shrank 29.7 percent to JPY 298.0 billion ($2.9 billion). Japan's currency strengthened against the US dollar by 16.8 percent from a year earlier to an average JPY 103.24, according to the ministry. The trade data are measured on a customs-cleared basis before adjustment for seasonal factors.

Oil price

Meanwhile, the price of Kuwaiti crude oil went down $46 cents to $39.57 per barrel after it was at $40.03 pb on the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) yesterday said. The price of the Brent crude went down Monday 7 cents to $45.88 per barrel. The West Texas Intermediate followed suit going up 14 cents to $43.43,44 pb. — Agencies

News in Brief

Kazakh embassy honors Kuwaiti poet for his literary contributions. — KUNA

Kazakh Embassy honors Kuwaiti poet Al-Babtain

KUWAIT: The embassy of Kazakhstan yesterday honored famed Kuwaiti poet Abdulaziz Al-Babtain - presenting him with an honorary gold medal for his contributions to Arabic literature. The gold medal is a token of appreciation for a man who helped develop Arabic literature and was instrumental to the betterment of Kuwait's ties with the central Asian nation, Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Kuwait Almas Abdramanov said in a speech during a ceremony to honor Al-Babtain. Moreover, Abdramanov added that the Kuwaiti poet helped educate Kazakh pupils in a number of academic institutions. Meanwhile, speaking on the medal, the Kazakh Ambassador said that it is given to notable figures who have made indelible and remarkable contributions in their respective fields. In a speech of his own, Al-Babtain said that he is elated to have been honored by the Kazakh embassy, noting that his efforts over the years are acknowledged and appreciated.

GCC's Health Ministers seek more cooperation

RIYADH: The Executive Board of the GCC Health Ministers held its 85th meeting in Riyadh yesterday, seeking more cooperation and coordination among Gulf health authorities. During the meeting, the board discussed bids pertinent to pharmaceutical products, media equipment and appliances, in addition to the mechanism of the unified purchase program, the board director Suleiman Al-Dakhil said in a press release. Al-Dakhil added that the meeting also handled central medicine registration, medicine prices, smoking control, elderly care, health promotion and nurse care. Preparations for the GCC Health Ministers' 80th Board meeting were also discussed during the meeting, he pointed out.

Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with British Defense Secretary Michael Fallon. — KUNA

Kuwait seeking closer cooperation with UK

KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said that it is necessary to further promote Kuwaiti-British cooperation, especially in the military field. Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled made the remark during a meeting with visiting British Defense Secretary Michael Fallon, the Interior Ministry's public relations department said in a statement. During the meeting, they discussed different issues of mutual interest and the latest Arab, regional and international developments, it added. It quoted the acting premier as lauding historic relations between Kuwait and Britain in various domains. On his part, the British defense secretary appreciated Kuwait's support to the international anti-terrorism coalition, and its distinguished efforts to fight terrorism, it said. Fallon also hailed security cooperation between Kuwait and Britain, it added.

Two detained for smuggling narcotics into Central Prison

KUWAIT: The law-enforcers arrested two persons who tried to use a small unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) to smuggle narcotics into the Central Prison, the Ministry of Interior said. Operatives from the General Department of Criminal Investigations, in collaboration with their peers from the General Department of Criminal Evidence arrested Mubarak Al-Helail - a foreign resident, and Abdul-Karim Ayed a Kuwaiti national, while using the UAV, according to a statement by the Ministry's Public Relations and Security Media Dept. Preliminary investigations by the General Department of Criminal Evidence show that the fingerprints of first defendant were found on the UAV in question; he was tasked with attaching some 300 gm of the narcotic material to the vehicle. The second defendant was tasked with procuring the UAV and leading it into the prison, the statement added.

Egypt leader rejects foreign interference in Arab affairs

NEW YORK: Egyptian President Abdelfatah El-Sisi has reiterated his country's rejection of any foreign interference in Arab affairs. Speaking before the UN General Assembly, the Egyptian leader affirmed commitment to principle of good neighborliness, stressing Egypt's solidarity with Arab states in facing foreign interventions, in light of the link between Arab security, including the security of the Arab Gulf states, and Egyptian national security. "The majority of these Arab crises are a reflection of a global state of conflict," he said. El-Sisi underlined in his speech the importance of resisting any attempts to foment sectarian strife in the Arab world. While the Middle East continues to suffer from bloody conflicts, Egypt has managed to preserve its stability in the midst of a highly unstable region, he said. El-Sisi urged the international community to acknowledge that Egypt would continue to be an anchor of stability in the Middle East. Speaking of Middle East and stability, the Egyptian leader refused the bloodletting in Syria and the absence of any prospects on the horizon.

Kuwait is 'determined to destroy terrorism'

Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah delivers his speech. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait military and security personnel take part in a special martial arts competition yesterday to display their prowess and capabilities. — Photos by Hanan Saadoun

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait has vowed to "confront and destroy terrorism," Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday. Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled made those remarks in a speech to open a special martial arts competition featuring military and security personnel. The Acting Prime Minister lauded the people of Kuwait for their support of security forces in their efforts to safeguard the nation's security and stability.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister of Interior said that it is an opportunity for security personnel to display their prowess and capabilities, adding that he is highly impressed by the performances of the contestants. He also underscored that the Ministry of Interior is a proponent of such contests that instill a competitive spirit in the participants, which ultimately helps equip security guards with the dexterity needed to protect the nation. — KUNA

Limak to complete Kuwait Airport project in 4 years

Turkey lures Kuwaiti investments with promotional program

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh said yesterday that the Turkish Limak Construction Co has agreed to complete the expansion of Kuwait International Airport (KWI) in four years instead of six. The construction company made the commitment to finalize the project two years ahead of schedule based on the cooperation shown by the Kuwaiti authorities - notably the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD), she said.

Al-Sabeeh made the comments after her talks with Turkish Minister of Development Lutfi Elvan, now on a visit to Kuwait, and the delegation accompanying him. She affirmed that the Kuwaiti leadership, represented by His Highness the Amir, and the SCPD attach great importance to this mega project.

"The project is of strategic importance, this is why all competent authorities worked together to facilitate its implementation," she said, noting that the construction company was satisfied with the procedures adopted in the recent period.

On her talks with Elvan and his party, the minister said they discussed the bilateral ties and cooperation in various fields. She welcomed the Turkish companies willing to tap into the promising investment opportunities in Kuwait, adding that Kuwait's five-year development offers great opportunities for investors from friendly countries, notably Turkey. On his part, Elvan expressed gratitude to Kuwait for its support to legitimacy in Turkey in the wake of the failed coup. He also commended Kuwait for awarding the contract of the airport project to Limak, noting that the airport will be able to handle more than 25 million passengers a year after the completion of its expansion.

KUWAIT: Turkish delegation takes a group photo with the officials at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry. —KUNA

Promotional program

Meanwhile, Turkey has set a promotional program to encourage foreign investments, especially from Kuwait, Turkish Exporters Assembly Chairman Mehmet Buyukeksi said on Tuesday. Buyukeksi's remark was carried by Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the fringes of his visit to Kuwait. The purpose of this visit is to promote economic ties and encourage Kuwaiti investments in Turkey. Buyukeksi pointed out that there are many construction companies working on huge projects in Kuwait, most importantly Kuwait's new international airport.

He added that a significant exhibition will be held soon in the Gulf country to promote Turkey as the biggest economic destination. The Turkish delegation to Kuwait includes most prominent Turkish economic bodies. During his visit, Buyukeksi discussed with Deputy Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry increasing the volume of trade and investments between Kuwait and Turkey. Turkish Exporters Assembly is the highest organization of the private sector part of Turkey's export and represents exporters in and outside Turkey. — Agencies

Saudi Embassy celebrates 86th National Day

KUWAIT: "September 23 will forever remain a historic day for all Saudi citizens," said Saudi Ambassador to Kuwait Dr Abdul Aziz bin Ibrahim Al-Fayez in a press release. Fayez hailed this unforgettable day when the whole of Saudi Arabia was united into one larger and stronger nation under the late King Abdul Aziz bin Abdurrahman Al Saud in 1932. "Commemorating this glorious day, all Saudi citizens remember the sacrifices of the late leaders and senior officials who all contributed to establishing its huge nation, giving us all motives to preserve it along with the gains it achieved thanks to the wisdom of its leaders and the hard work of its faithful children," Fayez said.

"One can never think of this historic day without remembering and mentioning the Arabian Peninsula hero and Saudi Arabia's founder King Abdul Aziz, who managed through his wisdom, determination, persistence and the help of his loyal followers to unite various regions under one flag," said Fayez, reminding of the great development and progress that has been achieved ever since by King Abdul Aziz's loyal late sons Saud, Faisal, Khalid, Fahd and Abdullah, who devotedly spent their lives developing the kingdom, while at the same time defending and serving Islam.

Develop and modernize

"Saudi Arabia continues to develop and modernize in all fields under the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud," highlighted Fayez, noting that Saudi Arabia is currently going through a phase of prosperity, welfare and determination to maintain ongoing constructions in order to provide all kinds of welfare for its citizens. Fayez also noted that King Salman commenced his kingship by developing the kingdom's administrative structure, which helped place Saudi Arabia on the right path towards more welfare. "The custodian of the two holy mosques is very keen on investing in all national assets for the benefit of the nation and its citizens," Fayez added, noting that the Vision 2030 strategy was launched a few months ago, marking a new phase of the kingdom's economic development through diversifying sources of income, improving government performance and achieving welfare and prosperity for all citizens. He added that the new strategy shows Saudi Arabia's potential and promising future.

"With his great experience in politics and administration, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz managed to achieve substantial development in various fields despite recent regional and international developments and complications," Fayez reiterated, noting that this helped Saudi Arabia maintain its ranking as one of the world's most politically and economically effective 20 countries.

Fayez added that under King Salman, Saudi Arabia continues to defend Arab and Muslims' causes and has a special place in the hearts and minds of Arabs and Muslims, thanks to its wise leadership and principles derived from the teachings of Islam, as well as genuine Arab traditions in dealing with national issues with its active diplomacy and regional and international efforts to maintain peace and security for the region as well as for the entire world.

"With King Salman's succession, Saudi Arabia started a new phase by confronting regional and international projects to subject the region to foreign dominance," added Fayez, noting that this was behind responding to calls from Yemen's legitimate power to lead an Arab alliance in the Decisive Storm operation to fight armed outlaw groups that aim at controlling Yemen and its institutions to turn it into a base of foreign influence. He added that this was followed by an operation to return hope to the brotherly Yemeni people.

Dr Abdul Aziz bin Ibrahim Al-Fayez

"Ever since its foundation, Saudi leaders have been keen on taking good care of the two holy mosques," said Fayez, noting that the Grand Mosque in Makkah and the Prophet's (PBUH) Mosque in Madinah have witnessed the largest expansions in their history, and that King Salman launched the first phase of the expansions meant to help pilgrims perform their rituals more easily and comfortably.

"More efforts are ongoing to complete the King Abdul Aziz International Airport project in Jeddah, the custodian of the two holy mosques' train and many other infrastructure projects," Fayez explained, adding that as a result of such sincere efforts, this year's hajj season was very successful and that the success was the best answer to people questioning Saudi Arabia's ability to organize the hajj ritual.

Humanitarian obligations

Fayez added that Saudi Arabia's commitment to its religious and humanitarian obligations made it generously contribute to development worldwide. "Saudi Arabia has presented $139 billion in development aid over the past four decades," he highlighted, noting such efforts were topped by establishing the King Salman Humanitarian and Relief Center.

"Saudi Arabia has been domestically, regionally and internationally playing a major role in maintaining security and stability," added Fayez, noting that being one of the first countries to suffer from terrorism and lose a number of martyrs in terrorist strikes, Saudi Arabia continues to fight it. "Thanks to its wise leadership and security efforts, Saudi Arabia managed to foil many terrorist schemes and that out of recognition of the importance of combining international efforts to fight terrorism, Saudi Arabia organized the first international conference to combat terrorism because it realized that terrorism knows no boundaries and poses a threat to all mankind.

With reference to Saudi-Kuwaiti relations, Fayez noted that they had always been ones of brotherhood, neighborhood and friendship, and that constant communication between the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and HH the Amir reflect how deep-rooted and strong both countries' official and public relations are.

"On this occasion, it gives me great honor to extend heartiest felicitations to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, his Crown Prince, Deputy PM and Interior Minister HRH Prince Mohammed bin Nayef bin Abdul Aziz, Deputy Crown Prince, Second Deputy PM and Minister Of Defense HRH Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz, the royal family and the Saudi people, asking Almighty Allah for many happy returns of the day and to bestow security, stability and prosperity on Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and all Arab and Muslim countries," Fayez concluded.

KRCS distributes 500 school bags to students

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has distributed 500 school bags to students of the needy families on the occasion of the new academic year. This donation was part of the society's strategic objectives to promote community partnership and provide support and care for the children of the needy families, Director of Public Relations Khlaed Al-Zaid said. Speaking to KUNA, Al-Zaid said this project, which is implemented by KRCS periodically, brings the smiles and joy to the hearts of children of needy families.

He added that KRCS is also in the process of establishing a number of projects to help needy families in addition to the students, referring to the campaign dubbed (Give Them a Chance) aimed to pay tuition costs for children of needy families in Kuwait. He said the goal of the distribution of school bags is to provide assistance to needy families and provide them with school supplies, pointing out that the school bag contains books and crayons. — KUNA

Mexico celebrates 206th Anniversary of the Independence Day

Speech by **HE Miguel Angel Isidro,** Ambassador of Mexico to Kuwait

Dear Friends,

Before anything else, I take this special opportunity to convey to His Highness The Amir and People of Kuwait, the warmest congratulations from the President and People of Mexico for selecting Kuwait City as the Capital of Islamic Culture 2016. This is very important and well deserved recognition of Kuwait's efforts and keenness on presenting the true image of Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance.

This year also marks forty one years of diplomatic relations between Kuwait and Mexico. Over these years, bilateral dialogue became more dynamic and contacts between our people grew closer. However, our countries have not yet fully exploited mutually beneficial opportunities of economic cooperation. I strongly hope that in the next few years of our diplomatic relations we will develop an increasingly open dialogue.

I know that the celebration of Mexico's national day is always remembered for Mariachi music and the great food prepared by the Mexican Chef Soffa Rangel who travelled from Mexico to be here with us tonight. Thank you, friends of Mexico, shukran, for making the effort to share this evening with us here at Badriah Hall. If you really enjoy mariachi music, there will be a free-entrance concert on Thursday, evening at 8pm, in Abdul Hussein Abdel Redha Theatre. Ya as-jab, ash kur kum ala ju duru kum. Fa dalu. Viva Kuwait. Viva Mexico.

KUWAIT: The Mexican Ambassador to Kuwait Miguel Angel Isidro held a reception on the occasion of the National Day of his country. It was attended by a large number of diplomats and other dignitaries. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

KUWAIT: Mexicans dance Mariachi as they celebrate 206th Anniversary of the Independence Day.

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Rate of Alzheimer's growing

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Head of MoH's Media Office Dr Ghaliya Al-Mutairi said the rate of Alzheimer's is growing in Kuwait due to the growing number of elderly people and longer lifespans. She also noted that elderly citizens receive outstanding healthcare both physically and psychologically. Speaking at a ceremony held to celebrate World Alzheimer's Day under the auspices of MoH Undersecretary Dr Khaled Al-Sahlawi and in the presence of Sheikha Aneesa Al-Sabah, Mutairi said that according to WHO reports in 2015, 46.8 million people suffer from dementia worldwide and that the number is expected to jump to 74.7 million by 2030. Mutairi also noted that Alzheimer's usually affects people older than 65. "However, a number of people develop early-onset Alzheimer's, which can affect people from around 40 years of age," she said.

KFSD tours schools

KFSD's PR and Media Department said a prevention team toured some public and private schools to make sure they all adhere to safety codes. In another development, MoE's private education director Abdullah Hamad Al-Ajmi yesterday met a number of private school directors to discuss new regulations for the new school year, including times when teachers can do transactions at the department, school building conditions, chain of command and assessment reports. Ajmi also stressed banning the collection of any cash donations in schools and warned that violators would be referred for legal investigations.

Charities in Hawally

Municipal council member and head of Hawally committee Yousef Al-Ghareeb suggested allocating a piece of land for charities in Hawally in order to help organize these charities' works.

MOI LAUNCHES BACK TO SCHOOL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: As part of the Interior Ministry's relations and security media department's awareness campaign about road safety on commencing the new school year under the title of 'Good to Have Them Back', a Security Media Team and traffic police yesterday distributed awareness brochures and special gifts to kids starting school yesterday.

STUDY SHOWS SIGNIFICANT USE OF STEROIDS AMONG KUWAITI MALES

KUWAIT: A recently published local study examining the use of Anabolic-Androgenic Steroid (AAS) amongst gym users in Kuwait found there to be significant use of AAS amongst Kuwaiti male gym-goers. The study, which was published in the International Journal of Men's Health, was carried out by a research team at Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute (FSRI) and funded by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).

The study analyzed data collected and collated from 200 individuals of different gender, age, and nationality from across six gyms in Kuwait, amongst which 35% reported usage of AAS. The main findings listed age, smoking and nationality as the top predictors for AAS use; younger adults were significantly more likely to be AAS users, as are smokers and Kuwaiti males - both of whom are more than three times likely to be users of AAS than non-smokers and non-Kuwaitis, respectively.

Dr Elham Al-Hamdan, President and Medical Director of FSRI, and one of the authors of the study commented: "The literature on AAS use in Kuwait is still fairly limited, and with our latest research we are hoping to build upon this and help shed light on the gravity and prevalence of this issue in Kuwait. One of the pillars of the Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute is research and education, and in the past we have published a range of studyies focusing on health issues that impact the lives of people in our local community. AAS has become a prevalent issue amongst the large gym-going population in Kuwait, and hence has become a topic that needs to be studied and researched further."

Due to the harmful effects that AAS use can have on the body, the study suggests that health policy and institutional reforms are needed in order to tackle the issue before it spreads. Although the complete elimination of AAS is not realistic, the study poses that reforms, public awareness and controlled distribution and administration of steroids are important steps to negate the harmful effects and draw attention to AAS use. Dr Al-Hamdan further added: "We will be publishing a follow-up paper that explores the psychological and emotional impact AAS use can have on individuals, further strengthening the framework we have set out to provide education and insight into AAS use in Kuwait."

CBK SPONSORS RUMAITHIYA CO-OP SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently contributed to funding the social, charity, humanitarian, cultural, educational and sports activities organized by Rumathiya Co-op for area residents. CBK's Individual Banking Services Manager Bedoor Bo Khamseen presented the contribution cheque to Rumaithiya co-op board chairman Mohammed Al-Rumaidhi.

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- Kuwait driver's license
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Crime Report

Employees face prosecution

KUWAIT: Following administrative investigations, several employees at the Capital municipality were referred to the prosecution over charges of forgery.

Stolen car

A citizen reported that his vehicle was stolen. The man added that a security camera outside his house had taped the thief breaking the window and starting the vehicle.

Asian killed

An Asian was killed and two others injured when a fire destroyed their apartment in Mahboula, said security sources.

Arab expats arrested

An Arab expat was arrested for forging the signature of a female compatriot on a contract to purchase electronic devices worth KD 500. In another development, a Kuwaiti and a Jordanian were arrested for forgery, said security sources, noting that the Jordanian had been out of the country for nine months. He was arrested at Salmi land border exit with fake departure and entry stamps on his and his family members' passports, as his residency was canceled because he was out of the country for over six months. The citizen forged the stamps works at the airport and had access to immigration systems.

Bedoons acquitted

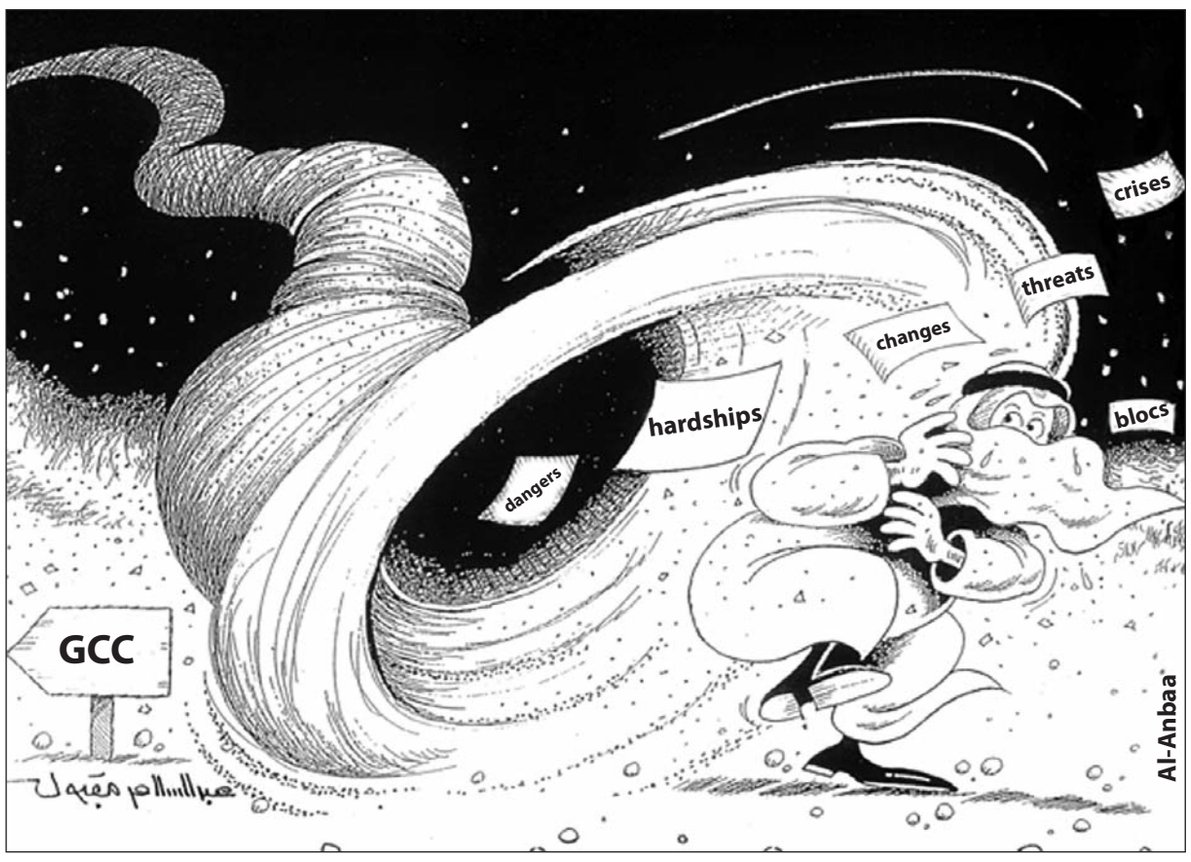
The Court of Misdemeanor has acquitted three bedoons arrested over charges of possessing 600 whiskey bottles for trading purposes.

Asian with HIV

An Asian was rushed to the infectious diseases hospital's quarantine when doctors treating him at Jahra Hospital after a suicide attempt in which he cut his veins found that he was HIV positive. Further investigations are in progress to investigate whether he infected anyone else.

Filipina attempts to flee

A Filipina was rushed to hospital with several bone fractures she sustained when she fell during an attempt to flee her sponsor's house in Saad Al-Abdullah. —Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa



Al-Anbaa

IS in short

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

To fairly evaluate IS or Al-Qaeda, one has to ask himself why none of these two dangerous, armed, radical organizations have carried out any attacks or operations against Israel? A more important question would also be: "Why neither of them lists jihad in occupied Palestinian territories as a priority? None of their militias have ideas about attacking Israel, though many of them managed to infiltrate into several other countries and carry out terrorist attacks in them, which proves that they can do the same in Israel, but this never happened.

By doing enough research about IS, one will never find a speech made by any of its leaders calling directly for attacking Israel or declaring jihad in occupied Palestinian territories. They would instead call for such operations in Arab and Muslim countries.

The same applies to Al-Qaeda when its founder, Abdullah Azzam (a Palestinian who only left Palestine by the beginning of the 1970s), only called for jihad in Afghanistan in the 1980s and never called for it in Palestine. After Russian troops were routed out of Afghanistan, he was killed by a landmine shortly after he started urging Arab mujahideen to go to Palestine, and thus Al-Qaeda considers US and other Arab countries as its prime enemies instead of Israel.

They are both identical in their readiness to strike and fight everywhere in Iraq, Syria, Somalia or Mali, while Israel remains always out of their targets. Saying this, I am not implying anything or accusing anybody because it would be foolish to do so without any solid proof. But reviewing all incidents takes us all to one big fat question: "Why have none of the terrorist organizations originating in Arab countries ever conducted a simple operation in Israel?"

— Translated by Kuwait Times

Al-Rai

The 'image is frozen in time'

By Dr Khalid Al-Saleh

The most fitting description I heard was the saying the "image is frozen in time". We need this idiom to understand Arab arguments about the 11th G20 summit that was held on Sept 4 and 5 in Hangzhou in China. Many Arabs were busy with the summit's group picture, instead of the summit and what it achieved, as well as its reflection on the world economy. Talk shows focused all efforts on examining images and presenting lengthy analyses about those inside the frozen frame - this president seems to be sleeping, that leader is pointing his finger in the face of another, while this leader is waiting to shake a hand - analyses, imaginations and stories were made up from the images.

Many were not busy discussing the goals of the meeting or its agenda, and talk shows did not discuss its results. No one thought about orienting us with the city where the meeting was held, which is located in southern China on the River Qiantang. This beautiful city is in Zhejiang province, famous for its nature and cultural heritage.

Back to the frozen picture. We should ask ourselves - does the Arab need psychologists to find why he pays attention to the frozen picture and forgets the truth? What we saw in the past days calls for psychiatrists and not only analysts. The Arab media with its current faces is a true expression of the stalemate that hit our history since the 14th century. We were placed in the freezer during that century, while the world was going through renaissance, and were locked inside the freezer in the 17th century, and are still there.

If you only follow talk shows, you will be shocked by how trivial and silly those who present them are. They were busy with the picture and created relations through them between countries, and sometimes they drew up the future of the region and future relations - is there anything more silly than this? Pictures are frozen frames that mean nothing, and all what comes from them is what you see in the living eyes. Let us put the frozen picture aside, and let us read the living minds, so we may understand what is going on around the world, and participate with them with our share of life in order to break the ice in which we have been for a long time.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

VIVA welcomes Kuwait to the world of 'more'

KUWAIT: Promising new levels of value to customers in every conceivable way, VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, has announced that it will be bringing the true essence of 'more' to life across all its consumer touch points. Promising a brand experience not before seen in Kuwait, VIVA's 'more' platform is built on the belief that while life can be enjoyable and rewarding, consumers are always seeking that little bit extra enrichment as they go about their daily lives. It is this 'yearning for more' that VIVA will aim to satisfy.

Consumers and existing customers will soon experience 'more' through new Al-Deewan service for elite customers, a broad selection of the latest smartphone handsets and packages give more customer freedom, new partnerships with leading brands open the door to incredible experiences, new enterprise services and solutions for businesses.

In addition to an expanded reach and extended network, alongside greater signal strength and quality has improved data speeds to enable customers to share content and conversations like never before, and impactful CSR initiatives to give back to those in greater need. Andrew Hanna, CCO at VIVA, said: "We have seen extensive and rapid growth of VIVA in Kuwait in recent years and our new 'more' campaign and company ethos is our way of not only giving back to our customers, but gives them something we know they always are on the lookout for: more."

This new, refreshed character for VIVA will encompass a visual identity that is human, warm and conversational in nature. Consumers will soon be able to experience 'more' through an expansive communications campaign, and in person across all major customer touch points. Andrew Hanna added: "Even in the happiest moments, there can always be a little more joy and delight to be found, making life that little bit richer and more rewarding. At VIVA and through our new brand avatar, we will deliver on this promise to customers, each and every time they reach for that little bit more."

Photo of the day

Kuwait Times
International
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

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NEW YORK: Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton is seen during a meeting with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko (L) at the Intercontinental Hotel on September 19, 2016. —AFP

Clinton steps up drive to court young voters

A key demographic

WASHINGTON: Hillary Clinton is revving up her drive to woo young people, a key demographic that is resisting her as she battles Donald Trump tooth and nail for the White House.

The polling numbers are alarming for the Democrat as she seeks to become the first female president of America. As recently as August, among millennials aged 18-34 Clinton held a 24-point lead over the Republican Trump in a four-way race including two alternative candidates. But in September this margin had dwindled to five points, according to a Quinnipiac poll.

The breakdown now looks like this: Clinton at 31 percent, Trump at 26 percent, Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson up from 16 percent in August to 29 percent in September, and Green Party candidate Jill Stein at 15 percent, according to this poll.

A total of 62 percent of those questioned said they were willing to vote for a candidate other than Clinton or Trump. Some 90 percent said they consider Clinton to be intelligent and 77 percent find her experienced. But 77 percent said they do not think she is honest, a score that is worse than Trump's at 68 percent, according to the Quinnipiac survey.

A CBS/New York Times poll gave Clinton 48 percent support among millennials, compared to 29 percent for Trump. But 21 percent said they will either not vote or cast their ballot for someone other than Clinton or Trump.

Without the support of young Americans, Clinton could lose in the battleground states of North Carolina, Florida and Ohio, experts say. Millennials were a huge part of the coalition that brought Barack Obama to power in 2008 and to a lesser extent in 2012 when he won re-election, said Jeanne Zaino, a professor of political science at Iona College outside New York City. "The millennials are the biggest generation in American history, surpassing now the baby boomers," said Zaino, adding that the group contains 69 million potential voters and Clinton needs their support.

"Unfortunately for Hillary Clinton, she has not been doing well with millennials. They are deserting her for people like Gary Johnson and Jill Stein," she added. "She has really got to work hard to call them back into the fold and then get them out to vote in November," Zaino said.

Polls show young people feel Clinton does not put priority on issues that affect them, and that she is an establishment politician who will not bring about change. What is more, some millennials were born while Bill Clinton was president, from 1993 to 2001, and have only vague familiarity with that period. And what they do know centers mostly on scandals of the Clinton era, Zaino said.

'Huge generational gap'

And when young people learn, for example, that Mrs. Clinton used to be against same-sex marriage, "they cannot fathom it." "There is a huge generational gap," said Zaino.

Clinton's former rival Bernie Sanders, who electrified young Americans with his pledge to fight income inequality and Wall Street excess and provide free university education, may be older but he spoke to young people in a way that Clinton cannot, Zaino said. In a bid to remedy all this, the Clinton campaign announced Monday that she would intensify her outreach to young people through round table talks, live discussions on Facebook, events designed to get them to register to vote and sending heavyweight substitutes out on the campaign trail to court them.

Obama, his wife Michelle, Sanders, liberal Senator Elizabeth Warren and Clinton's running mate Tim Kaine all campaigned last week to try win over young people.

In a speech Monday at Temple University in Philadelphia, Clinton spoke about what she called the values that drive her and her early days as a young lawyer working to help poor children.

She also discussed other issues that are important to young people: climate change, sexual violence on US university campuses, and the problem of students having to take out huge loans to pay for college.

She appealed to students to register to vote and then get out and cast their ballots on November 8. "I need you," Clinton said. "This is going to be close." The crowd applauded politely. Clinton also published an open letter on Mic, a website that targets millennials, addressing what she has learned from this group of Americans. "Your generation is the most open, diverse and entrepreneurial generation in our country's history," Clinton wrote.

She vowed to work with young people to lift what she described as barriers blocking them from realizing their full potential. "If I'm fortunate enough to be elected, you will always have a champion in the White House," Clinton wrote. —AFP

Migrant boat capsizes off Egypt, killing at least 29

CAIRO: A boat carrying African migrants headed to Europe capsized off the Mediterranean coast near the Egyptian city of Alexandria on yesterday, killing at least 29 people, Egyptian authorities said.

Health Ministry spokesman Khaled Megahed said that the total number of dead was still unknown. Local official Alaa Osman from Beheira province said the migrants were from several African countries. He said 155 people have been rescued so far but that bodies are still being pulled from the water.

Egypt's official news agency MENA said the boat was carrying 600 people when it sank near the coast, some 180 kilometers (112 miles) north of the capital, Cairo. Osman said the boat had likely come from Kafr el-Sheik province, further to the east.

Thousands of illegal migrants have made the dangerous sea voyage across the Mediterranean in recent years fleeing war and poverty, mostly via lawless Libya. Thousands have drowned. The number of migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea from Egypt to Europe has increased significantly in the past year, EU border agency Frontex said earlier this month. More than 12,000 migrants arrived in Italy from Egypt between January and September, compared to 7,000 in the same period last year, it said.

What experts say

Experts say smugglers in Egypt mostly use old fishing vessels, stuffed way beyond capacity both below and above deck. New and more dangerous smuggling practices and attempts to reach Europe by riskier routes have led to a spike in the number of migrants dying as they attempt to cross the Mediterranean, the International Organization for Migration said in a report last month.

It said newer routes, particularly from Egypt, are longer and riskier, leading to search and rescue efforts often being carried out farther away from land. It said 2,901 people died or disappeared crossing the Mediterranean in the first six months of 2016, a 37 percent increase over the first six months of last year.

Last May, hundreds of migrants died after a wooden boat coming from Libya capsized, even as the Italian navy rushed to the rescue. European rescue boats, including naval vessels, often patrol off the Libyan coast to prevent such disasters.

The migrant crisis has proven deeply divisive in Europe, which has struggled to come up with a unified response. Right-wing nationalist parties opposed to taking in more migrants and refugees have made gains, including in Germany, which has accepted more migrants than any other European country. —AP

Canada police say schools closed in province after bomb threat

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND: Canadian police evacuated all schools in the eastern province of Prince Edward Island due to a bomb threat and said similar threats were made yesterday against schools in Nova Scotia and the United States.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said no explosive device had been found at the PEI schools. About 19,000 students at 62 schools were taken to safe locations in their communities around the island, which is off Canada's Atlantic coast and is the country's smallest province with a population of approximately 146,000.

"The message stated that the bombs had been placed in a number of schools and would be detonated today but it did not specify the time," said RCMP Sergeant Kevin Bailey at a press conference. "There is an active investigation to identify the person or persons responsible." Bailey said the warning came by fax to the RCMP in Ottawa. "We like to err on the side of caution," he said. Bailey noted that similar threats had been received in the nearby province of Nova Scotia as well as at one school in the United States, without offering any detail on the US threat.

The University of Prince Edward Island said it was closed for the day, "given the situation happening across the province." "They didn't say there was a bomb threat or any specific threat; they just told us that school had been suspended for the rest of the day," said Charlottetown student Peter Keedwell, 17. "It was pretty calm ... people weren't running out of school or anything."

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND: Royal Canadian Mounted Police Staff Sergeant Kevin A. Baillie speaks to reporters outside the provincial RCMP headquarters yesterday. —AP

Police in Nova Scotia closed some college and university campuses. A Nova Scotia Community College campus in Halifax was evacuated after an anonymous threat, Halifax Regional Police said in a press release.

It said an explosive disposal unit went to the scene but found that a suspicious package was only garbage and reopened streets in the area. The college's Marconi campus in Sydney, Nova Scotia also shut down. Cape Breton University, also in Sydney, said on its website that it was closing. —Reuters

Knife attacker shot outside Israeli embassy in Ankara

No casualties, failed to enter Embassy

ANKARA: A mentally disturbed Turkish man wielding a knife tried to storm the Israeli embassy in Ankara yesterday but was shot by police before reaching the building, Turkish and Israeli officials said.

The man, armed with a 30-centimetre (12-inch) knife, ran towards the embassy shouting slogans and was shot in the leg, the governor's office in the Turkish capital said in a statement. It said initial investigations showed that the man, named as Osman Nuri Caliskan, "appeared to be mentally disturbed" and had no record of links with any militant group.

Suat Gencer, a florist working nearby, said he heard four shots and then ran to the embassy to see what had happened. "I saw a man who had been shot in the leg. I didn't see a knife but other witnesses said he had a knife and he would set a bomb off," he told AFP at the scene. Video footage showed the man sitting in the road in agony with a wounded leg after being shot, with drops of blood on the tarmac and a policeman pointing a gun at him before he was detained.

Embassies on high alert

Israeli foreign ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nahshon said in a statement all its embassy staff were safe and the man reached only the "outer perimeter" of the embassy. The Israeli embassy said on its Facebook page that the man had been shot by a Turkish police officer stationed outside the mission, thanking the local police for their "professional performance".

The incident came with foreign missions in Turkey on a state of high alert following a spate of attacks across the country this year blamed on jihadists and Kurdish militants. The British embassy in the Turkish capital Ankara was closed on Friday over security concerns while the German embassy offered only limited services.

Three months ago, Turkey and Israel signed a deal to restore their ties which hit an all-time low after the 2010 raid by Israeli commandos on a Gaza-bound aid ship that left 10 Turks dead. Under the deal, they are to begin the process of exchanging ambassadors to fully restore their diplomatic ties, although this has yet to formally take place.

Despite the crisis, the Israeli embassy in Ankara and consulate in Istanbul have carried on working in the last years, under heavy security. Israel had already offered compensation and an apology over the raid. With the agreement Ankara has been able to resume delivery of humanitarian aid to the Palestinians through Israel.

'Change the Middle East!'

Turkey's NTV television said employees of the embassy took refuge in a shelter during the incident on Wednesday. The Hurriyet daily said the man had shouted "I will change the Middle East!" when advancing on the embassy building.

In a statement to police later, the suspect added: "I did it to stop the bloodshed in the Middle East," the paper said. Three Israelis and an Iranian were killed in March in a bombing in central Istanbul blamed on Islamic State (IS) jihadists. Israel subsequently upgraded its security advice for Turkey, encouraging citizens to leave.

Israel was quick to give its support to the Turkish government in the aftermath of a July 15 coup bid, condemning it while repeating its faith in the reconciliation process.

Turkey appears to be moving back to its previous "zero problems with neighbours" foreign policy after the country also normalised relations with Moscow damaged after Turkey shot down a Russian jet in November last year.

Turkey's Prime Minister Binali Yildirim has also indicated interest in improving relations with Egypt-damaged after the ousting of pro-Ankara president Mohamed Morsi-and even Syria amid the five year civil war. — AFP

ANKARA: Police special forces patrol in front of the Israeli Embassy yesterday. — AFP

Cuban President Raul Castro's statement at the Non-Aligned Movement Summit

MARGARITA ISLAND, Venezuela: Esteemed comrade Nicolas Maduro Moros, constitutional President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Heads of State and Government, Esteemed ministers, delegates and guests, Ladies and gentlemen, We are 120 Non-Aligned States which adhere not only to the Bandung Principles, but also to the Declaration of the Non Aligned Movement on Purposes, Principles and the its Role in the Current International Juncture approved at the 14th NAM Summit in Havana. Our enormous strength cannot be underestimated when we proceed in a concerted fashion.

In the 14th NAM Summit held in Havana in 2006, we rejected any attempt at 'regime change' and appealed to all countries to abstain from resorting to aggression or to the use of force.

Also in Havana, in January 2014, the heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) signed the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace thus reaffirming our commitment to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and International Law as well as to the peaceful settlement of disputes and full respect for the inalienable right of every State to choose its political, economic, social and cultural system, as an essential premise to ensure coexistence among nations.

However, we are witnessing increasing attacks on Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination. Cuba reaffirms its unconditional support to the Venezuelan Government and people, to the civic-military union and to constitutional President Nicolas Maduro Moros.

We strongly repudiate the judicial-parliamentary coup d'Ètat engineered against President Dilma Rouseff, for it is an act of contempt against the sovereign will of the people who elected her with more than 53 million votes.

Our sister nation of Colombia may count on the full support of Cuba as it moves forward along the challenging path of the implementation of the Agreement, and the consolidation of the stable, fair and lasting peace that Colombians deserve. We express our confidence in the people of the Arab Republic of Syria for we know that they are capable of resolving their differences by themselves without foreign interference aimed at promoting 'regime change'.

Comrade President,

It is unacceptable that the Palestinian people are still victims of occupation and violence, and that the occupying power continues preventing the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with its capital in East Jerusalem.

Every attempt to secure the self-determination of the abused Saharawi people has failed, thus the international community needs to apply itself to resolving this issue. We affirm our solidarity with the historical demand of the Puerto Rican people for self-determination and independence.

We also uphold our solidarity with the claim of the Republic of Argentina over the Falklands, South Sandwich and South Georgia Islands.

Esteemed comrade Maduro, to Cuba, non-alignment means to struggle for the radical modification of an international economic order imposed by the big powers, the same that has made possible for 360 persons to accumulate an annual wealth exceeding the income of 45% of the world population. The gap between the rich and the poor keeps widening. Technology transfer from the North to the South countries remains an elusive goal while globalization basically privileges a special group of industrial nations. Meanwhile, the debt of the South countries, which never ceases to multiply, now amounts to over 1.7 trillion dollars.

At the moment, 2.9 billion people are forced into unemployment and extreme poverty, and millions of children perish every year from hunger and preventable diseases; nearly 800 million people remain illiterate while more than 1.7 trillion dollars are destined to military expenses. Non-alignment also means to struggle for the reduction of the knowledge gap, and for the possibility to use information and communication technologies for development and cooperation. We reject the growing militarization of these technologies and their aggressive use against other countries.

Climate change continues to aggravate while in the developed countries irrational production and consumption patterns persist that threaten the conditions required for the survival of our species.

On the other hand, the realization of human rights remains a dream for millions of people all over the world. The United States and Europe resort to manipulation, double standards, selective criteria and the politization of this issue while waves of refugees concentrate at European borders, waiting a for just, stable and permanent solution that can protect their lives and dignity.

Esteemed President Maduro, twenty-one months have passed since our simultaneous announcement with President Barack Obama of the decision to reestablish diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States.

There have been some progress, mostly in the diplomatic area and cooperation on issues of common interest, but the same cannot be said of the economic and commercial sectors due to the limited, albeit positive, scope of the measures so far adopted by the US Administration.

Cuba will persevere on its demand to have the economic, commercial and financial blockade lifted, a blockade that brings so much damage and hardship to our people, and which also has a negative impact on many other countries due to its extraterritorial implementation. By the same token, Cuba will continue urging the return to our sovereignty of the territory illegally occupied by the United States Naval Base in Guantanamo.

There will not be normal relations before that issue is resolved and other policies harmful to Cuba's sovereignty still in force are terminated, such as interventionist and subversive programs.

We reaffirm our disposition to engage the United States Government in a civilized relationship, but Cuba will neither renounce any of its principles nor compromise on its sovereignty and independence. Cuba will not cease defending its revolutionary and anti-imperialist ideals or supporting the self-determination of all peoples. Comrade Maduro, We wish our sister Republic of Venezuela full success in the leadership of the Non-Aligned countries. At the same time, we congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran on its good work during this past term at the head of the Movement.

The only alternative to the enormous dangers and challenges lying ahead is unity and solidarity in defense of our common objectives and interests.

Thank you, very much.

President Raul Castro Ruz at the 17th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement. Margarita Island, Venezuela, September 17th, 2016.

Egypt's Coptic church criticized over el-Sissi rallies at UN

CAIRO: Egypt's Coptic Christian church is facing criticism over its role in organizing rallies in support of President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi during his visit to the UN General Assembly.

Egypt's Christian minority has strongly supported el-Sissi since he came to power following the military's overthrow of an Islamist president in 2013. But this week dozens of prominent Christians released a statement expressing concern about the church's deepening involvement in politics.

El-Sissi traveled to New York with a large delegation of loyal parliamentarians and media figures. The visit is partially aimed at improving Egypt's image after it has come under criticism from rights groups and Western nations over a sweeping crackdown on dissent. El-Sissi conferred on the sidelines with foreign leaders as well as US presidential nominees Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. — AP

Italy sets trial for suspected African human-smuggling boss

PALERMO, Italy: A Sicilian judge yesterday ordered a trial for an Eritrean man accused of running a people smuggling network that sent thousands of migrants to Europe and many to their deaths during dangerous sea voyages to the continent.

Judge Alessia Geraci said Medhanie Tesfamariam Berhean would stand trial in Palermo, capital of Italy's southern island of Sicily, on Nov. 16 on charges of abetting illegal immigration and engaging in human trafficking.

Medhanie was arrested in May in Sudan and extradited to Italy, the European entry point for many migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea in rickety boats from North Africa. It was the first time a suspected trafficking kingpin was tracked down in Africa and brought to face justice in Italy since Europe's migration crisis started almost three years ago.

However, friends and family of Medhanie say it is a case of mistaken identity, arguing that he was an impoverished 29-year-old refugee with no criminal background, who was living quietly in Khartoum and seeking to join his siblings in the United States when he was arrested in a rundown cafe.

Medhanie denies all the charges.

His arrest was coordinated by Italy and Britain's National Crime Agency. They maintain they have the right man, but acknowledged that they initially got his name wrong and put out the photograph of another man. More than 300,000 migrants and refugees have crossed the Mediterranean this year looking to reach Europe, according to the UN refugee agency. Some 3,210 migrants are reported to have died or gone missing while attempting the journey since Jan. 1.— Reuters

Finnish neo-Nazi held for killing passer-by at protest

HELSINKI: A Finnish court yesterday remanded in custody a well-known neo-Nazi leader suspected of killing a passer-by during an anti-immigration protest in Helsinki earlier this month.

Jesse Torniainen, 26, is accused of kicking 28-year-old passer-by Jimi Karttunen, who spat in the direction of the protesters, in the chest. Karttunen fell and hit his head on the ground, dying a week later of a cerebral haemorrhage. Torniainen, a central figure in the violent far-right Finnish Resistance Movement according to police, is suspected of assault and aggravated involuntary manslaughter.

The suspect, who has a long record of previous assaults and other crimes, publicly boasted about the attack on social media, until his victim died on September 16. In court on yesterday, Torniainen denied any responsibility in Karttunen's death.

Finnish politicians, including Prime Minister Juha Sipila, have condemned the attack. Politically-motivated violence is rare in the Nordic country, but far-right groups have become more active since a record 32,500 migrants sought asylum there in 2015. Last year, volunteer street patrols calling themselves the Soldiers of Odin, with links to neo-Nazis, appeared on the streets of several Finnish towns.

In 2013, members of the Finnish Resistance Movement stabbed and injured one person at the Jyvaskyla city library in central Finland, during the launch of a book entitled "The Far Right in Finland", written by young leftist politicians. — AFP

South African police clash with university students

JOHANNESBURG: South African police yesterday set off stun grenades and threw tear gas at stone-throwing students from a leading university who were demonstrating for free education.

The chaos in the streets around the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg followed violent protests on the campus on Tuesday that forced the university's closure for the rest of the week. Several students were injured in the latest unrest, South African media reported. The University of the Witwatersrand said it is identifying those who participated in Tuesday's campus violence and will take action against them. Protesters threw stones at security guards outside a main campus building, smashing some windows. Some guards threw projectiles back at the students.

Classes were also suspended yesterday at the University of Cape Town because of security concerns. Stellenbosch University said it obtained a court order requiring 30 protesters to leave a campus building they had occupied, or face removal by the police.

The demonstrators have been reacting to a government announcement that universities can increase fees by up to 8 percent next year. The government made a concession to student protesters last year, agreeing to freeze fee increases for this year.

The government has promised to pay about $180 million to cover the costs of poor students. Blade Nzimande, the South African education minister, has condemned violent student protests, saying the government has "gone a long way" to financially support poor students and that students with resources should pay fees to help cover rising university costs. — AP

JOHANNESBURG: A female student is arrested as police fired stun grenades and rubber bullets in an attempt to disperse them during a protest yesterday. — AP

Trump slams 'Trojan horse' migrants, son sparks outrage

CLEVELAND, OHIO: Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump (right) and running mate Mike Pence (L) stand as pastor Darrell Scott (not seen) speaks during the Midwest Vision and Values Pastors and Leadership Conference at the New Spirit Revival Center on September 21, 2016. — AFP

NEW YORK: Donald Trump's hard line stance on immigration after two bombings in the New York area again sparked debate on the White House campaign trail Tuesday, as his son sparked a firestorm by comparing Syrian refugees to lethal candies. The Republican presidential hopefuls uncompromising position on illegal migrants-even calling them a dangerous "Trojan horse" who enter the country with the aim of doing harm-is inextricably linked with his meteoric political rise.

Most Republicans approve of his tough talk, with polls showing that a majority of party members agreed with his call last December to bar Muslims from entering the United States. Since then, Trump has refrained from specifically targeting Muslims, but he has championed police profiling of suspects and promised to bar immigrants and travelers from certain countries deemed dangerous, like Syria.

The candidate has repeatedly warned of the risks posed by Syrian refugees, citing the arrival in Europe of Islamic State operatives disguised as simple refugees, and says US immigration officials are not properly screening new arrivals. But immigration is nevertheless not one of the major issues on the minds of voters, placing only fourth according to a recent CBS/New York Times poll, making it unclear if Trump, 70, can use it to persuade those who are still undecided. But national security and the anti-terror fight are number two on that list, and with less than 50 days to go before Election Day on November 8, Trump is attempting to blur the lines between the two issues.

"This is a question of qualify of life," Trump told a rally in key swing state Florida on Monday. "We want to make sure we are only admitting people in our country who love our country."

Syrians and Skittles

Trump's son Donald Jr, one of his surrogates on the campaign trail, has meanwhile courted controversy with a tweet comparing Syrian refugees to a bowl of multi-colored Skittles candy-some of them lethal, but not to the naked eye. "This image says it all," he said on Twitter, with a picture of a white bowl filled with the popular sweets.

Written above the image is: "If I had a bowl of skittles and I told you just three would kill you. Would you take a handful? That's our Syria refugee problem." Trump Jr thus argued that it is too dangerous to welcome migrants when a tiny number of them could later launch attacks. The man accused of planting bombs in both downtown Manhattan and near a race in New Jersey is a naturalized American of Afghan descent. — AFP

Violent protests over latest fatal US police shooting

CHARLOTTE: Protests and looting rocked a North Carolina city early yesterday, following the fatal police shooting of a black man, with a dozen officers and several demonstrators injured in the violence.

Media reported that several hundred people gathered to protest the shooting of 43-year-old Keith Lamont Scott, who was African-American, as was the officer who killed him. The shooting was the latest in a string involving black men killed at the hands of police, which has fueled outrage nationwide.

Demonstrations began late Tuesday and grew through much of the night near an apartment complex in the city of Charlotte, where the shooting occurred. As news of the shooting spread, protesters gathered, carrying signs that read "Black Lives Matter" and chanting "No justice, no peace!"

Later in the night, some protesters in Charlotte set fires blocking a major road, and others set trucks ablaze, according to news reports. A local television station reported that looters attempted to break into a Walmart store-some throwing rocks and shattering glass doors-and were held back at the entrance by officers.

Series of shootings

The violence comes just days after another police shooting, captured on video, of an unarmed black man in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Together, they are the latest in a series of recent police shootings-from Baton Rouge, Louisiana to Dallas, Texas-that have left the African American community demanding law enforcement reforms and greater accountability from public officials. News reports said the officer in Tuesday's shooting, Brentley Vinson, has been put on paid leave. WSOC-TV reported that the Charlotte shooting occurred as Vinson and other officers were searching for a suspect on an outstanding arrest warrant.

Police encountered Scott-who was not the person they were seeking-in a car parked at the building. "At this point, all we know (is) they were in the apartment complex parking lot," Charlotte-Mecklenberg Police Chief Kerr Putney told reporters late Tuesday. "This subject gets out with a weapon. They engage him, and one of the officers felt a lethal threat and fired his weapon because of that."

Police said Scott had a firearm, which is legal under local law "open carry" gun laws. His relatives told local media, however, that he was not carrying a gun, but had a book in his hands when he was gunned down.

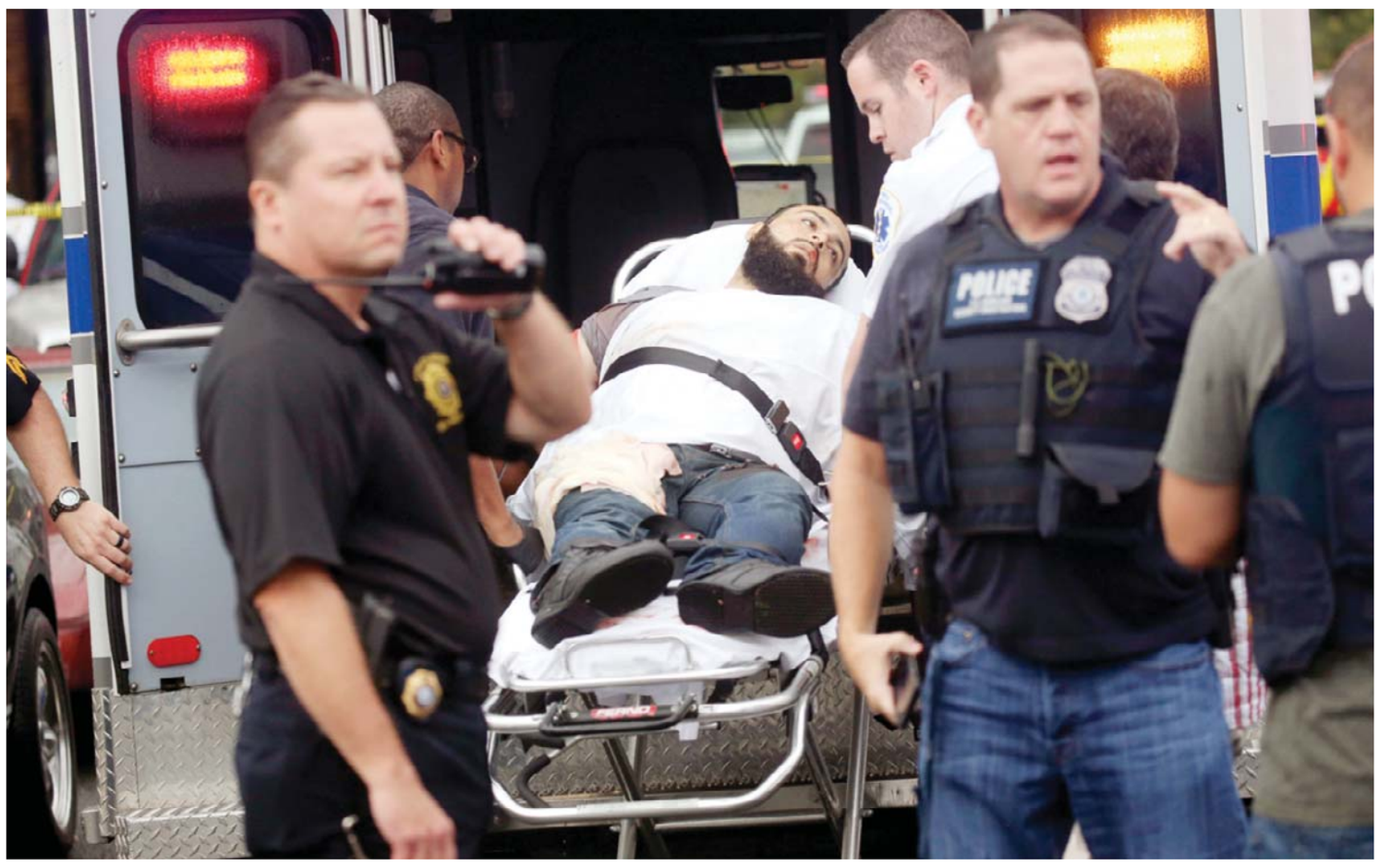
Charlotte police donned riot gear and used tear gas as they tried to subdue the angry crowd, which authorities said attacked and damaged several police cars over the course of the night. The police department said on Twitter that "approximately 12 officers injured. One officer hit in face with a rock." A separate police department tweet said the wounded officers were "injured tonight working to protect our community during demonstration."

Appeal for calm

Meanwhile, Charlotte Mayor Jennifer Roberts appealed for calm. "The community deserves answers and full investigation will ensue," she wrote on Twitter. "Will be reaching out to community leaders to work together." The fatal shooting in Tulsa last Friday of Terence Crutcher was recorded by police car dashboard cameras and a police helicopter camera.

Tulsa Police Chief Chuck Jordan, in releasing the footage to the public Monday, called it disturbing and "very difficult to watch." In the video, the 40-year-old Crutcher is seen with his hands up, appearing to comply with police officers and leaning against his car. He is then shot once by officer Betty Shelby, and falls to the ground. Another officer fires his stun gun. "We will achieve justice in this case," the Tulsa police chief told a news conference. "We will do the right thing. We will not cover anything up." — AFP

CHARLOTTE: Police officers face off with protestors on the I-85 (Interstate 85) during protests following the death of a man shot by a police officer yesterday. — AFP



LINDEN, NEW JERSEY: Ahmad Khan Rahami is taken into custody after a shootout with police Monday, Sept. 19, 2016. — AP

Ahmad Khan Rahami: What's known about the NYC bombing suspect

Remains hospitalized

NEW YORK: Ahmad Khan Rahami, a US citizen born in Afghanistan, was charged by federal officials in two states Tuesday with planting bombs in New York, and at a military charity run and train station in New Jersey.

He remains hospitalized after a shootout with police Monday, hours after investigators say he dumped a package with bombs in a trash can near a train station. Investigators are looking into his previous overseas travel and other run-ins with the law.

Here's what's known about Rahami:
Stabbing charge

Rahami was accused of stabbing one of his brothers in 2014, but a grand jury declined to indict him, despite a warning from the arresting officer that Rahami likely was "a danger to himself or others," court records show. He also was accused of violating a domestic-violence restraining order in 2012.

Rahami has a child with a woman he dated while attending high school in Edison, New Jersey, but the two have since had a tumultuous relationship. Rahami often was hundreds of dollars in arrears in child support, and their custody case was called before a family court judge six times in five years, records show.

A judge on Tuesday granted her request for temporary full custody of the child after she went to court, citing the terror investigation.

In 2011, the woman went to court to stop Rahami's overnight visits with the child, but a judge found she hadn't provided evidence to show that their child was in danger of being taken out of the country. A judge approved a visitation agreement between the two in May 2014, ordering that the child spend Christmas and Thanksgiving with her - and the Muslim holy days Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha with Rahami.

Investigated by fbi

Following the 2014 stabbing, the FBI looked into Rahami after his father expressed concern his son might be a terrorist, law enforcement officials said Tuesday. During the inquiry, the father backed away from talk of terrorism and told investigators that he simply meant his son was hanging out with the wrong crowd and acting like a thug, the officials said.

Rahami's father told reporters Tuesday that he called the FBI at the time because Rahami "was doing real bad." William Sweeney, the FBI's assistant director in New York, said Monday that that at the time of the bombing, Rahami apparently was not on the FBI's radar.

Where he worked

Federal investigators said that Rahami purchased components for the bombs on eBay, and had them shipped to a business where he worked in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. They said he worked there until Sept. 12, but didn't identify the store. Rahami had worked as an unarmed night guard for two months in 2011 at an Associated Press administrative technology office in New Jersey. At the time, he was employed by Summit Security, a private contractor.

AP global security chief Danny Spriggs said Rahami worked night shifts and often engaged colleagues in long political discussions, expressing sympathy for the Taliban and disdain for US military action in Afghanistan. Rahami left that job in 2011 because he wanted to take a trip to Afghanistan, Spriggs said. Customers at a fried chicken restaurant owned by Rahami's father where he had worked said his demeanor changed after taking trips overseas and he started wearing more ethnic clothing.

A wife from pakistan

Rahami has made five trips overseas over the last six years, according to Republican Rep. Tom MacArthur, who was briefed by the FBI on Tuesday. MacArthur represents the district including Seaside Park.

On a trip to Pakistan in 2014, Rahami emailed his local congressman seeking help because his pregnant wife had an expired passport.

Democratic New Jersey Rep. Albio Sires said his office wrote a letter to the US embassy in Pakistan to check on the status of the case and the woman received a visa. — AP

Tulsa shooting victim was turning his life around

TULSA: The unarmed black man shot dead in the middle of a Tulsa street last week by a white police officer had run-ins with the law dating back to his teenage years and had recently served a four-year stint in prison. But those closest to Terence Crutcher described him as a church-going father who was beginning to turn his life around. After marking his 40th birthday with his twin sister last month, Crutcher sent her a text that read, "I'm gonna show you, I'm gonna make you all proud."

Crutcher was due to start a music appreciation class at a local community college on Friday, the day he was fatally shot by Tulsa police officer Betty Shelby after she responded to a report of a stalled vehicle.

The shooting was captured in graphic detail by a police helicopter and a cruiser dashcam, though it's not clear from that footage what led Shelby to draw her gun or what orders officers gave Crutcher. An attorney representing Crutcher's family says Crutcher committed no crime and gave officers no reason to shoot. Shelby was put on paid administrative leave while local and federal officials investigate the shooting. Crutcher's criminal history includes a 1995 arrest in nearby Osage County in which officers reported they saw him fire his weapon out a vehicle window. Records obtained by The Associated Press on Tuesday show that when Crutcher was ordered to exit the vehicle for a pat-down search, he began making a movement to his right ankle before an officer managed to get control of Crutcher. A .25-caliber pistol was found in his right sock, the arresting officer wrote in an affidavit.

Crutcher eventually entered a no-contest plea to charges of carrying a weapon and resisting an officer and received suspended sentences, court records show. Oklahoma prison officials confirmed Tuesday that Crutcher also served four years in prison from 2007 to 2011 on a Tulsa County drug trafficking conviction.

Crutcher's family could not be reached for comment on his criminal record. But an attorney for his family, Melvin Hall, said those details were not known by police at the scene. "Nobody claimed that he was a perfect individual. Who is perfect? But that night he was not a criminal," Hall said. "He did not have any warrants. He had not done anything wrong. He had a malfunctioning vehicle, and he should have been treated accordingly."

Saying "we're a family of faith," Tiffany Crutcher told CNN's "New Day" early yesterday that she hopes something positive can come of her family's loss. "We're hoping that America will open their eyes, everybody, and see there's an issue, a systemic issue, that needs to be solved. And we're pleading with the leadership of this country, everyone, to just see that and let's put some systems in place to prevent this from happening again," she said.

Terence Crutcher was scheduled to begin the music class at Tulsa Community College on the day he was shot, and TCC President Leigh Goodson said in a statement that Crutcher had talked with staff about his desire to be successful in college. "He brought to TCC his talents, hopes and dreams of creating a successful life by dedicating himself to completing a degree," Goodson said.

On Friday, two 911 calls describing an SUV that had been abandoned in the middle of the road preceded the fatal encounter between Crutcher and the police. One unidentified caller said the driver of the stalled vehicle was acting strangely, adding, "I think he's smoking something." — AP

TULSA: People hold signs at a "protest for justice" over Friday's shooting death of Terence Crutcher, sponsored by We the People Oklahoma. — AP

Germany arrests Syrian teen suspected of planning bomb attack

BERLIN: A 16-year-old Syrian refugee has been arrested in Germany on suspicion of planning a bomb attack in the name of the Islamic State jihadist group, officials said yesterday.

The youngster, thought to have been radicalized only recently, was detained in a special forces operation late Tuesday at a shelter for asylum-seekers in the western city of Cologne, police and prosecutors said. Initial information gathered from the teenager's mobile phone showed that he had expressed an "unmistakeable willingness" to carry out an attack, Klaus-Stephan Becker of the Cologne police told reporters.

Investigators had found a series of online chat messages that contained "concrete instructions for building explosive devices" as well as tips on how to cause maximum damage, added local prosecutor Ulf Willuhn at the same news conference. It was not immediately clear how far the plans for an attack had progressed, he said. According to an earlier statement by police and prosecutors, conversations found on the teenager's phone had indicated he was in touch with a person abroad who had ties to IS and "wanted to recruit the young Syrian for Islamist activities".

German security authorities described the suspect as a "serious threat" and have assigned a 35-strong team of investigators to the case. The youngster is understood to have arrived in Germany with his family last year. He had already been brought to the attention of police twice before, after fellow residents and employees at his asylum-seekers' shelter voiced concerns that he had been radicalized. But police said there was not enough information to take action.

It was only after a mosque expressed similar suspicions that police were able to arrest him, Becker said. The case comes a week after German police detained three men with forged Syrian passports accused of being IS militants and labelled a possible "sleeper cell" with links to the assailants behind the November attacks in Paris.

Germany is on edge after suffering two attacks claimed by IS in July-an axe rampage on a train in Wuerzburg that injured five and a suicide bombing in Ansbach that left 15 wounded. Both were carried out by asylum seekers.

The attacks rattled Germans' sense of security and fuelled concerns over the country's record influx of migrants and refugees last year. German police say they have identified 523 people who pose a security threat to the country, around half of whom are known to be currently in Germany. —AFP

DRESDEN, SAXONY, GERMANY: This file photo taken on April 18, 2016 shows supporters of the PEGIDA movement (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident) holding a poster reading 'Immigration quota- yes or no- by referendum' during a rally. —AFP

Xenophobia 'a threat' to peace in eastern Germany: Berlin

Society must speak out

BERLIN: Growing xenophobia and rightwing extremism could threaten peace in eastern Germany, the government warned yesterday, voicing fears over the impact of a series of attacks on refugees in the region.

In a report urging mainstream society to take a stronger stand against anti-migrant action, it highlighted a worrying trend-that in many demonstrations against asylum seekers, the line between popular protest and far-right agitation was becoming blurred. "Rightwing extremism in all forms poses a very serious threat to the societal and economic development" of eastern Germany, said Iris Gleicke, who is the government's point person for national unity.

"Determined action from the government, the states, communes and civil societies is necessary to ensure peace in eastern Germany," she told reporters as she presented the latest report examining progress since German reunification in 1990.

The annual report had in previous years been largely focused on industrial regeneration for the region, which has lagged behind the west economically, and experienced a wave of depopulation as mostly younger people left for the west for jobs. But rising xenophobia has emerged as a key concern this year, as anger over the arrival of around a million asylum seekers in Germany in 2015 is running high in many eastern states such as Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

It has also fuelled a surge in support for the rightwing populist AfD party, which has run an anti-migrant and Islamophobic campaign. Eastern states have been required to take in relatively few new arrivals compared to western states, under a quota system calculated by the size of the state's population and income.

Society must speak out

But arson attacks on accommodation for asylum seekers and assaults on refugees have shot up dramatically in the region, Gleicke said. "I am disturbed by this rising far-right and xenophobic violence. It is more than an alarm bell if the attacks and violence are backed by or quietly accepted by mainstream society," she said, noting that the incidents had sparked global outrage.

Former communist eastern Germany has been the scene of several ugly incidents in which far-right extremists have targeted asylum seekers. Clashes broke out last week between dozens of asylum seekers and far-right extremists in the eastern city of Bautzen, forcing police to call in reinforcements to quell the violence.

In February, a cheering crowd was seen outside a burning asylum shelter in the same town, clapping and shouting: "Good, that's up in flames." That same weekend, a video emerged of far-right thugs intimidating refugees including crying children-and preventing them from getting off a bus to enter another shelter in the eastern town of Clausnitz. Gleicke insisted it was not only up to churches or politicians to take a stand against such violence. "Mainstream society must also do its part. It's definitely uncomfortable. I know what it is to have to fight against neo-Nazis. But I expect companies, too, to give greater support to civil society on this front," she said.

An economic toll

Beyond the potential toll at home, the poisoned atmosphere also risks tarnishing the region's reputation abroad, hurting prospects not just for tourism but also for investment. Gleicke said that on recent trips to the United States and Japan where she sought to promote eastern Germany as a location for business start-ups, she was asked: "What is the situation when an engineer, who is of color, wants to come?" "It's extremely clear that a place that is not open to the world or which is not open to immigration will be disadvantaged economically," she warned.

Germany's top economists echoed the concerns. Marcel Fratzscher, who heads German Institute for Economic Research (DIW), told Handelsblatt business daily that the lurch towards the far-right could drive away companies or highly-qualified workers from the region. "The increasing radicalization and intolerance will severely weaken parts of eastern Germany's economy," he said. —AFP

Paris climate accord closer after UN meeting

UNITED NATIONS: The landmark Paris agreement on climate change moved closer to reality yesterday after 31 countries joined during the United Nations General Assembly.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced confidence that the accord, through which countries commit to take action to stem the planet's rising temperatures, would come into force by the end of the year. "The momentum is remarkable," said the outgoing UN chief, who convened a meeting on the Paris accord during the annual UN gathering of leaders. "When the Paris agreement enters into force this year, it will be a major step forward on our journey for a more secure, more equitable and more prosperous future," Ban said.

The countries that joined the accord on yesterday included Latin American powerhouses Argentina, Brazil and Mexico as well as major fossil fuel powers Brunei and the United Arab Emirates.

To come into force, the Paris agreement needs ratification from 55 countries that account for at least 55 percent of the planet's greenhouse gas emissions responsible for climate change. With Wednesday's event, in which leaders ceremonially ratified the accord, a total of 60 countries have joined the Paris accord but they account for less than 48 percent of global emissions.

Calls for more ambition

The accord requires all countries to devise plans to achieve the goal of keeping the rise of temperatures within two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels. But Edgar Gutierrez, the environment and energy minister of Costa Rica, said that the level was not ambitious enough in light of evidence of worse-than-feared climate change, with last month yet again setting a record for the hottest month ever.

Gutierrez called for countries to aim for 1.5 Celsius and warned that even a one-year delay in implementing the Paris accord could be too late for the planet. "Climate change is already dangerous, it has already exceeded the capacity of many countries to adapt to it, we have already lost lives, we are losing species and we have lost lands and buildings," said Gutierrez, speaking on behalf of a troika of climate-vulnerable nations including Ethiopia and the Philippines.

Mattlan Zackhras, a senior official from the Marshall Islands, warned that despite pledges under the Paris accord the planet still looked on track for a rise of three degrees. "This will wipe out my country and many island-states in the Pacific," he told reporters.

Europe set to seal accord

Ban's office said that 14 other countries accounting for 12.58 percent of emissions had signaled they would ratify the accord this year, meaning the agreement is virtually certain to come into force, barring a widespread change of heart.

The European Union will enter the agreement "in the next weeks," Miguel Arias Canete, the 28-member bloc's commissioner for climate action and energy, told reporters.

Adriano Campolina, chief executive of the charity ActionAid, was puzzled why the European Union-the champions of the earlier Kyoto Protocol-had not moved earlier. "In order to reclaim its role as a true climate leader it must take early action, before 2020, to ensure that keeping the world below 1.5 degree warming is not an elusive dream," he said.

China and the United States, the two largest emitters, gave a major boost to the accord when they signed on during a summit earlier this month between Presidents Xi Jinping and Barack Obama.

French Environment Minister Segolene Royal, who heads the body behind the Paris accord, told AFP earlier in the week that she hoped it would come into force before the next UN climate meeting on November 7 in Marrakesh, Morocco.

That conference opens one day before the presidential election in the United States, in which Republican candidate Donald Trump has dismissed mainstream science on climate change and vowed to tear up the Paris accord if elected. —AFP

UN HEADQUARTERS: United States Secretary of State John Kerry speaks during a ceremony to mark more signatories to the Paris climate accords yesterday. —AFP

Hungarian inmates working around the clock on border fence

MARIANOSZTRA, Hungary: Hungarian prison inmates are ramping up their production of razor wire, working around the clock as Hungary prepares to build a second fence on the border with Serbia to keep out refugees and other migrants.

The razor wire manufacturing at the prison in Marianosztra, northern Hungary, has increased from two shifts earlier this year, to three. Besides its domestic use, Hungary has also sold or donated fence elements, including wire and steel posts, to other countries in the region, including Slovenia and Macedonia.

"The inmates are manufacturing razor wire in three shifts a day, with 13 inmates in each shift producing the wire," Lt. Tamas Szep, the prison's press officer, said Wednesday. "The capacity of the plant is around 100 wire spools per day, which is heavily influenced by the fact that most of the work is done by hand."

Hungarian soldiers, front, and police officers patrol the transit zone at Hungary's southern border with Serbia near Tompa, 169 km southeast of Budapest, Hungary yesterday. —AP

Human rights

Human rights organizations consider Hungary's fences erected last year as the first step in efforts by Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government to dismantle the country's asylum system.

Hungary's Helsinki Committee says the fence, the closure of asylum centers and other measures are destroying the asylum system. "The asylum system, over the past year, has been basically emptied of its capacity to provide protection," said Helsinki Committee co-chair Marta Pardavi. "There is a clear policy of zero migration, of zero refugees coming to Hungary."

Other steps taken by Hungary in recent months to destroy its asylum system include the closure of refugee reception centers, the elimination or reduction of subsidies to assist the integration of people granted asylum, the deterioration of legal safeguards for refuges and new measures which allow the summary return across the fence of migrants caught near the border.

While the fence could serve legitimate defense needs, criticism of the barrier is exacerbated by the very small number of refugees - up to 15 per day - who are allowed to file asylum claims at a couple of makeshift "transit zones" set up by Hungary on the Serbian border. Hundreds have been waiting, sometimes for months, in deplorable conditions. "Hungary is closing its territory with a fence with the aim of keeping out of the European Union those who need protection from terror, persecution and torture," said Gabor Gyulai, director of the Helsinki Committee's refugee program. "A functioning asylum system has been willingly destroyed by the government for political reasons."

Orban's anti-migrant policies have been building toward a referendum to be held Oct. 2 in which the prime minister hopes to gather political support for his opposition to any future EU plan to resettle migrants among its member states.

Separately, Hungary is also challenging the EU in court, hoping to prevent having to temporarily take in 1,294 refugees until their asylum claims are decided.

The government's relentless referendum campaign includes a ubiquitous galaxy of anti-migrant posters, television ads, multiple daily statements and forums held by government officials and from Orban's Fidesz party, as well as a pamphlet distributed to voters warning about the alleged risks of migration.

One of the claims is that there are hundreds of "no-go" zones which "authorities are incapable of keeping under control" in cities of countries with large numbers of immigrants like Britain, France, Germany, Sweden and Denmark. According to the pamphlet, "the written and unwritten norms of the host societies do not apply" in those areas.

In its own way, the Hungarian government has already achieved its goal, as many of the few hundred refugees a year granted asylum in the country prefer to leave. —AP

European human rights group warns on Azerbaijan constitution

PARIS: A European law and human rights commission yesterday criticized proposed constitutional changes in Azerbaijan that would extend the president's term, a conclusion that drew an angry response from the ex-Soviet nation.

The Venice Commission, a watchdog body of constitutional law experts based in France, released a preliminary report saying that extending the presidential mandate "cannot be justified" and that other proposed legal changes would upset the balance of powers.

The commission expressed concern about a measure limiting public gatherings and said a measure giving the president power to dissolve parliament would weaken political dissent. Azerbaijan is to hold a referendum Monday on the changes. Hundreds of demonstrators gathered in the capital of Azerbaijan Saturday to protest against them.

Some critics characterize the oil-rich Caspian Sea nation as effectively a dynasty as President Ilham Aliyev is the son of the previous president and see the proposed measures as a mechanism for extending his rule.

The Venice Commission experts are part of the Council of Europe, a rights authority whose 47 members - including Azerbaijan - have signed the European Convention on Human Rights. The commission also complained that Azerbaijan rushed these reforms through without enough parliamentary and public debate, and said it regrets that Azerbaijan didn't consult the commission.

Shahin Aliyev, the head of the legal department in Azerbaijan's presidential administration, shrugged off the Venice Commission's criticism as hasty and unfounded. "We are seeing that hasty conclusion, which has many flaws, as politically driven," he said at a briefing in the capital Baku. "They speak to us in a language of ultimatums."

The presidential aide voiced surprise that the commission hadn't asked Azerbaijan for any explanation or clarification before issuing its verdict. He rebuffed the criticism and argued that the proposed constitutional changes are intended to streamline the government structure in order to help conduct political and economic reforms.

Aliyev, in office since succeeding his father in 2003, has firmly allied the Shia Muslim nation with the West, helping secure its energy and security interests and offset Russia's influence in the strategic Caspian region. At the same time, his government has long faced criticism in the West for showing little tolerance for dissent and holding elections that fall below democratic standards. —AP

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Taiwan asks Google to blur images showing new S China Sea facilities

TAIPEI: Taiwan's defense ministry said yesterday it is asking Google to blur satellite images showing what experts say appear to be new military installations on Itu Aba, Taipei's sole holding in the disputed South China Sea.

The revelation of new military-related construction could raise tensions in the contested waterway, where China's building of airstrips and other facilities has worried other claimants and the United States.

The images seen on Google Earth show four three-pronged structures sitting in a semi-circle just off the northwestern shoreline of Itu Aba, across from an upgraded airstrip and recently constructed port that can dock 3,000-ton frigates. "Under the pre-condition of protecting military secrets and security, we have requested Google blur images of important military facilities," Taiwan Defense Ministry spokesman Chen Chung-chi said on Wednesday, after local media published the images on Itu Aba.

The United States has urged against the militarization of the South China Sea, following the rapid land reclamation by China on several disputed reefs through dredging, and building air fields and port facilities.

Taiwan's defense ministry and coast guard, which directly oversees Itu Aba, said details about the structures are confidential and have not commented on their nature. Google, a unit of Alphabet Inc, did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the request. Defense experts in Taiwan said that based on the imagery of the structures and their semi-circular layout, the structures were likely related to defense and could be part of an artillery foundation. "I think definitely it will be for military purposes, but I cannot tell if it is for defending, attacking or monitoring," said Dustin Wang, a scholar and a former government advisor who has regularly visited Itu Aba.

Wang said given the structures' location which faces the main seaborne traffic, they may relate to surveillance. China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei claim parts or all of the South China Sea, through which trillions of dollars in trade passes.

In July, an international court ruled against China in a case brought by the Philippines that rejected China's claim to a vast swathes of the disputed maritime area. Both China and Taiwan, which China views as a renegade province, vehemently rejected the court ruling. — Reuters

HONG KONG: Leaders of Hong Kong's "Umbrella Revolution" Alex Chow (L), newly elected lawmaker Nathan Law (C) and Joshua Wong (R) shout slogans as they arrive at the Eastern Court in Hong Kong yesterday — AFP

Hong Kong protest leaders avoid jail after failed court bid

'Umbrella Revolution'

HONG KONG: Three young Hong Kong activists who led the city's massive "Umbrella Revolution" pro-democracy protests walked free from court yesterday after a renewed bid by prosecutors to jail them.

It comes as tensions remain high in the semi-autonomous city with fears growing that China is tightening its grip, sparking a growing independence movement.

Nathan Law, 23, who was recently voted in as the city's youngest lawmaker and wants self-determination for Hong Kong, was one of the trio in court and slammed yesterday's hearing as a political move. "The Department of Justice and the government are basically hunting those (who took part in) civil disobedience and those who uphold democratic values," he told reporters.

Law, Joshua Wong and Alex Chow were all convicted in August for taking part in, or inciting others to take part in, a protest that led up to the major pro-democracy demonstrations of 2014 calling for fully free elections of the city's leader.

Expressing their views

They were given community service or suspended sentences after the magistrate said she believed they had been "genuinely expressing their views" during the protest, which saw students climb over a fence into the Hong Kong government complex.

But prosecutors sought a sentence review in court Wednesday, asking for jail terms for the three. They argued the protest they led was large-scale and that the defendants had not shown genuine remorse.

Magistrate June Cheung, who also handed down the original verdict and sentencing, dismissed the review case. "During sentencing, I already took into account carefully the seriousness of the case, thus imposing community service as well as a suspended sentence-which can legally replace jail terms-to the three, who are first offenders," Cheung said.

It is not clear whether prosecutors will try to appeal further. Law said prosecutors must have come under "huge political pressure" to bring the review. Chow, 25, said it had been brought "to suppress those who oppose the government and ask for universal suffrage through the legal system". Wong, 19, who became the face of the Umbrella Movement, urged supporters to continue civil disobedience as a way to campaign for freedoms and rights.

Hong Kong has been governed under a "one country, two systems" deal since it was handed back by Britain to China in 1997. The agreement is designed to protect Hong Kong's freedoms for 50 years, but there are concerns those liberties are already being eroded.

Law and Wong have together set up a new political party calling for Hong Kongers to have a choice over their sovereignty when the handover deal expires in 2047. Wong is still too young to stand for parliament as the minimum age for candidates is 21. — AFP

UN expert urges more aid for North Korea after typhoon

GENEVA: A UN expert is calling on the world community to do more to help North Korea cope with fallout from deadly Typhoon Lionrock and says officials in the reclusive country should allow access to those in need.

Tomas Ojea Quintana, the UN special reporter on human rights in North Korea, pointed to UN estimates that more than 140,000 people require assistance after the typhoon that killed at least 138 people in the northeastern part of the country. The UN human rights office said in a statement Wednesday that Ojea Quintana called on the international community to "increase support for ongoing humanitarian efforts on the ground," citing national reconstruction efforts underway. He noted that sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council exclude humanitarian assistance, the statement said. — AP

New Zealand again gives approval for first extradition to China

WELLINGTON: New Zealand will go ahead with its first extradition of a resident to China, New Zealand's justice minister said yesterday, after reconsidering its position at the behest of the High Court and maintaining the man should be sent to China.

New Zealand agreed in December to extradite South Korean Kyung Yup Kim, who is a New Zealand resident, to China to face charges for the murder of a woman in Shanghai. The High Court later ordered the government to reconsider its decision because of concern Kim might not be protected from ill-treatment and given the right to silence before a trial.

Justice Minister Amy Adams said via an email from her spokesman that she had considered the High Court's ruling and had decided that Kim should be surrendered to China. Kim denies the murder charge, according to court documents, and his lawyer, Tony Ellis, told the High Court this week that Kim intended to keep fighting the case up to the Supreme Court.

The drawn-out case and the possibility of more court reviews has highlighted the hurdles China faces as it seeks to drum up international cooperation in a campaign to track down corruption suspects who have fled overseas.

That was further underscored on Tuesday when Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sidestepped questions on extraditions to China, saying Canada would stick to high standards when deciding whether to return Chinese citizens.

China's foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a daily briefing on Wednesday that Kim's extradition "serves the common interests of China, New Zealand and other countries that cooperate with China in this way". "We hope and are confident that on the basis of mutual respect we will continue to cooperate in the administration and enforcement of the law," Kang said.

China has pushed for an extradition treaty with New Zealand since 2014. In April, on a visit to Beijing, Prime Minister John Key said an extradition treaty was "possible", as long as people did not face torture or the death penalty.

The High Court also ruled on Wednesday that Kim, who has spent the past five years in an Auckland prison while the extradition proceedings went on, should be allowed out on bail. —Reuters

DAVAO, PHILIPPINES: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte (R) speaks while peace adviser Jesus Dureza looks on during the courtesy call of freed Norwegian national Kjartan Sekkingstad on September 18, 2016 — -AFP

Philippines' crime war a risk for economy

MANILA: President Rodrigo Duterte's deadly war on crime is threatening the Philippines' economy and endangering its democratic institutions, international credit rating agency Standard and Poor's warned yesterday.

S&P maintained its stable outlook for the Philippines, but highlighted a range of "weaknesses" under the new Duterte administration that also included his foreign policy and national security statements. "The president has a strong focus on improving 'law and order', which has allegedly resulted in numerous extrajudicial killings since he came to power," S&P said. "This could undermine respect for the rule of law and human rights through the direct challenges it presents to the legitimacy of the judiciary, media and other democratic institutions. "When combined with the president's policy pronouncements elsewhere on foreign policy and national security, we believe that the stability and predictability of policy-making has diminished somewhat."

Duterte won elections in a landslide in May after vowing an unprecedented crackdown on illegal drugs in which 100,000 people would die. About 3,000 people have been killed since he took office on June 30. About a third of the victims were shot dead by police and the rest murdered by unidentified attackers, according to official statistics.

Duterte, 71, has vowed to ignore a wave of international condemnation over the killing spree, with US President Barack Obama, the European Parliament and the United Nations among the many critics. He has typically used abusive language in responding to the criticism, branding Obama a "son of a whore" and UN chief Ban Ki-moon a "fool", and lifting his middle finger while saying "fuck you" to the European Parliament.

Duterte has also sought to loosen the Philippines' decades-old alliance with the United States, such as by saying he wanted to kick out US troops who are in the country for anti-terrorism efforts, while courting Chinese investment.

Nevertheless, the charismatic 71-year-old remains wildly popular as many Filipinos embrace his promise of a quick solution to the deep-rooted crime problem. The Philippines enjoyed strong economic growth during the previous administration of Benigno Aquino, who was required by the constitution to stand down after a single six-year term.

S&P, as well as competitors Moody's and Fitch rating agencies, in 2013 all raised the Philippines to investment-grade level for the first time, indicating a lower risk to investors.

In maintaining the stable outlook, S&P said Wednesday it believed the Duterte administration would "broadly continue" the Aquino administration's macro-economic policies. But it highlighted "rising uncertainties surrounding the stability, predictability and accountability" under Duterte's leadership.

Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez welcomed the decision to maintain the stable outlook, saying it affirmed the new government was on the right path. — AFP

South Korea questions 'serial offender' N Korea's UN membership

UNITED NATIONS: North Korea's repeated flouting of UN Security Council resolutions by conducting nuclear and missile tests calls into question its suitability for membership of the world body, South Korea's top diplomat has told The Associated Press.

Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se stopped short of calling for Pyongyang's expulsion from the UN but said its authoritarian government was violating the terms under which both the Koreas had been admitted 25 years ago. He said the North had "broken records" in its violation of global norms: It is the only nation to have conducted nuclear tests in the 21st century and is already subject to five Security Council resolutions over its weapons testing.

"I think all members of the UN have to ask themselves whether North Korea is really qualified as a member of the UN," Yun said in an interview late Tuesday said on the sidelines of the annual gathering of world leaders at its headquarters in New York.

Loopholes

Calling North Korea a "serial offender," he said the Security Council, the UN's top decision-making body, needs to close loopholes in existing sanctions and impose tough new measures in response to the North's fifth and most recent atomic test. He said that the "Hiroshima-sized explosion" Sept. 9 made clear that Pyongyang poses an "existential threat" to its US-allied southern neighbor and a growing menace to the world.

"This latest test is a very sobering reminder (that) the danger and the threat from North Korea is now reaching a very, very dangerous stage. For many years we have been talking about the development of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles, and now we may be reaching a stage where we have to worry about the deployment of nuclear-tipped missiles," Yun said.

"If that day comes, that's not just a threat to South Koreans or to Japanese, it's a threat to the United States and almost all members of the international community," Yun said. He described the ongoing negotiations over a new Security Council resolution as a "last chance ... to check this fanatic behavior" of young leader Kim Jong Un.

In a fresh sign of defiance, Kim oversaw a ground test of a new rocket engine and ordered a satellite launch preparation, North Korean state media said Tuesday, an indication the country might soon conduct a prohibited long-range rocket launch - possibly to coincide with the 71st founding anniversary of the ruling Workers' Party which falls Oct. 10. Commercial satellite imagery confirmed activity consistent with preparations for such an engine test.

UN HEADQUARTERS: South Korea's Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se listens during the Leader's Summit on Refugees at the 71st session of the General Assembly, Tuesday Sept. 20, 2016. — AP

The United Nations and others view the North's space launch development project as a cover for tests of missile technology, as ballistic missiles and rockets in satellite launches share similar bodies, engines and other technology. The North has conducted more than 20 launches of various types of missile this year. Yun also voiced concern that the North was accelerating its accumulation of fissile material with a view to mass producing nuclear bombs.

North Korea has said it needs nuclear weapons and missiles to cope with US military threats. About 28,500 US troops are stationed in South Korea, a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War which ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

Yun dismissed repeated North Korean calls for the US and South Korea to scrap annual military exercises, which it describes as a preparation for invasion. Some experts argue that could provide a diplomatic opening. Aid-for-disarmament talks have been stalled since 2008, and Washington says they can restart only if the North recommits to denuclearization. Yun said the North uses its argument over military exercises as an excuse as it pursues weapons development.

"We should not play their game," he said.

Yun welcomed a meeting Monday between President Barack Obama and Premier Li Keqiang of China - the North's main trading partner and traditional ally, in which both countries condemned the recent nuclear test and pledged closer coordination on addressing the nuclear threat from Pyongyang.

China is critical not only for enforcement of sanctions but agreeing to tougher measures, as it is a veto-wielding member of the Security Council. — AP

FUJAIRAH: An Emirati official takes a selfie as an oil tanker approaches the new jetty during the launch of the $650 million supertanker facility yesterday. The port enables the UAE to export most of the oil it ships from an alternative to the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran has threatened to close in case of a major regional conflict. — AP

Court to rule on legality of gasoline hike

Continued from Page 1

A number of MPs have submitted a motion calling to convene an emergency session of the Assembly to debate the hike, but only 31 MPs signed the motion, two short of the required constitutional number necessary to force the meeting. MP Faisal Al-Kandari has said that he will file a request to grill the finance minister over the hike and the minister has welcomed the grilling as an opportunity to explain the benefits of the hike to the national economy.

Meanwhile, lawyer Adel Abdulhadi yesterday filed a lawsuit asking the court to abolish the controversial DNA test law that was passed by the National Assembly several months ago and gives authorities the power to take DNA information of all residents of Kuwait. The lawyer said that the law is in breach of the constitution and Islamic sharia. The court has not set a date to start hearing the arguments over the challenge.

Separately, MP Saleh Ashour yesterday sent a series of questions to Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane about why stateless people or bedoons were banned from travelling to Saudi Arabia to perform the hajj. Ashour asked if the ministry contacted the Saudi embassy in Kuwait to inquire about the reasons why bedoons were not issued the necessary visas for the pilgrimage. He also asked if the ministry asked the foreign ministry to follow up the issue with the Saudi foreign ministry to resolve the problem.

Russia, US face off as Aleppo hit

Continued from Page 1

Shortly after the truce ended, a UN aid convoy was hit in an air strike that US officials have blamed on Russia. Yesterday, heavy bombardment pummeled Aleppo city and the wider province, key battlegrounds in Syria's conflict, and a raid hit a medical team late Tuesday.

Addressing the council, US Secretary of State John Kerry demanded that Russia force Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad to ground its air force, blamed for targeting hospitals and barrel-bombing civilians. "I believe that to restore credibility to the process we must move forward to try to immediately ground all aircraft flying in those key areas in order to de-escalate the situation and to give a chance for humanitarian assistance to flow unimpeded," Kerry said.

An impassioned Kerry faced off with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in an unusually heated televised showdown, saying the bombing of the aid convoy in Syria raised "profound doubt whether Russia and the Assad regime can or will live up to" ceasefire obligations. Listening to Lavrov made him feel like he was living in a "parallel universe", Kerry said.

Moscow denies that Russian or Syrian planes carried out the strike on Monday on the aid convoy that killed 20 people, and a military spokesman said a coalition drone was in the area when it was destroyed. Ban told the council he was looking at "options for vigorously investigating" the attack. Lavrov told the council that there would be "no more unilateral pauses" by Assad's government forces, arguing that opposition fighters on the ground had used those ceasefires in the past to re-group.

The Russian foreign minister insisted that all sides must rein in rebel groups on the ground to ensure they comply with the ceasefire and said a list of terror groups not covered by the truce should be reviewed. Only the Islamic State and the Al-Qaeda-linked Nusra Front are not covered by the ceasefire, but Russia, Syria's ally, has long argued that other groups are fighting alongside those jihadists. "If we can agree on this kind of comprehensive approach, an integrated multi-faced approach, the chances of a cessation of hostilities surviving and being successful will be better," Lavrov said.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said dozens of raids hit the city's east overnight, as regime troops advanced on rebels in Aleppo's southwestern outskirts. At least 11 civilians, including two children, were killed, the highest single-day toll since the truce collapsed this week, said the Observatory. The Union of Syrian Medical Relief Organisations (UOSSM) said two of its ambulances were hit in Khan Tuman, a village south of Aleppo city, as workers evacuated victims from a previous strike. Two nurses and two ambulance drivers were killed and another nurse was critically wounded.

It was a sleepless night for many Aleppo residents, AFP's correspondent in the city said yesterday, with bombardment continuing until rain broke out over the city at dawn. Civil defense workers in the Qadi Askar neighborhood weaved through rubble in search of wounded residents in a row of buildings hit by air strikes Wednesday. In the rebel-held neighborhood of Sukkari, Abu Ahmad cleared rubble and shattered glass from his doorstep after bombardment levelled the six-story building next door, killing his neighbors. He had tea with the two brothers who lived in the building late the previous night. "Just an hour after I left, a missile destroyed their whole building and they both died under the rubble," Abu Ahmad said.

Syrian state media reported that the city's government-held west had come under rebel shelling, which killed two people. The United States holds Russia responsible for the attack on the aid convoy, with a US official saying two Russian SU-24 ground attack jets were operating in the area where it was struck. "The best evaluation we have is that the Russians carried out the strike," he added, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Russian foreign ministry said the "unsubstantiated, hasty accusations" seemed designed to "distract attention from the strange 'error' of coalition pilots". Dozens of Syrian troops were killed in the strike on Saturday by the US-led coalition fighting Islamic State, an attack which Washington said was a mistake. Russia said the attack endangered a deal reached with Washington that provides for a ceasefire, humanitarian aid deliveries and cooperation between Moscow and Washington in battling IS and other extremist groups. — Agencies

PM: Kuwait rejects all forms of terror

Continued from Page 1

acts in all their forms and manifestations, as well as its total rejection of all acts of violence and extremism, that do not only contravene international laws and norms, but also the teachings of the true religion of Islam, and all other divine religions, in addition to cultural and human values," he said.

Sheikh Jaber said terrorism was thriving in conflict zones because of failure to solve these conflicts. "It is therefore, incumbent upon us to recognize that combating this odious phenomenon is an international responsibility, and no one country by itself, no matter how much it tries, can confront or eliminate it," he said. The prime minister noted that it was morally impermissible to link this phenomenon to any nationality, religion or civilization. As part of Kuwait's efforts to fighting the menace of terrorism, noted his country contributed effectively to providing support to international efforts to combat IS in Iraq.

The PM reiterated Kuwait's commitment to a UN-brokered political solution in Yemen in line with the GCC initiative and its implementation mechanism, UN resolution 2216 and national dialogue outcome. "We reaffirm our support for the political solution under the UN sponsorship and line with the outcome of the national dialogue, the initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and its implementation mechanism, and UN Security Council resolution 2216," Sheikh Jaber said.

He noted that Kuwait hosted UN-brokered talks among the Yemeni parties between April and August this year with the aim of restoring security and stability in Yemen. Kuwait's hosting of the talks, said Sheikh Jaber, was out of keenness in the independence, sovereignty and territorial unity of Yemen to ultimately reach a political solution.

The PM strongly condemned the intentional targeting of populated areas, civil and medical facilities, as well as indiscriminate bombardment and dropping of barrel bombs on the Syrian people. Sheikh Jaber said Kuwait also demanded all those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity be brought to international justice. "We follow with concern the continuing crisis, with worsening conditions all over the country," he said, noting the deteriorating humanitarian situation led to displacement of 13 million Syrians, inside and outside the country, making the Syrian people the largest refugee community in the world.

HH Sheikh Jaber said Kuwait rushed to help the needy Syrian people and hosted three international donor conferences, where combined pledges exceeded $7 billion, of which Kuwait contributed $1.3 billion. The bulk of the Kuwaiti contributions went to specialized UN agencies, inter-governmental and NGOs helping the Syrian people inside the country or in refugee camps in other nations.

The PM also urged UN Security Council to keep pressure on Israel to solve the Palestinian cause, saying it would host an international conference to highlight suffering of Palestinian children. He said the international community's inability to find a permanent and comprehensive solution to the Middle East conflict was threatening peace and security in the region more than ever.

Sheikh Jaber said this failure to address the Palestinian cause was coupled with oppressive practices of the Israeli occupation forces, and Israel's consistent and unjustifiable use of excessive force against the Palestinian people, in flagrant violation of resolutions of international legitimacy, and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. Israel was continuing its aggressive policies because it is "immune to any international accountability, except from any prosecution, and protected from any criticism or condemnations by the international organizations," said HH the Prime Minister.

He urged UNSC to live up to its responsibilities and keep pressure on Israel to compel it to implement relevant UN resolutions in order to help the Palestinian people achieve their legitimate political rights and recognize their independent state over the June 4, 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, in line with Arab peace initiative and land-for-peace principle. The Kuwaiti official also praised France's initiative and its effort to revive the Middle East peace process, hosting an international conference last June that reflected the French interest in launching the process, with a view to its leading to a just and comprehensive solutions in the region.

Sheikh Jaber welcomed the decision of the president council in Libya to form a government of national accord, an important step towards the implementation of the Libyan political agreements. Kuwait, he said, hoped this step would help the Libyan people overcome the present challenges in order to preserve unity and independence of Libya.

Sheikh Jaber also said he looks forward to relations of friendship and cooperation with Iran with mutual respect and understanding. The premier emphasized in his speech the importance of creating the appropriate conditions for any constructive dialogue to take place, in accordance with the rules and norms of international law, relating to the principle of good neighborly relations, respect of sovereignty of states, and non-interference in their internal affairs.

Refraining from any practices that contravene international conventions and norms that threaten the security and stability of the region, Sheikh Jaber called for the need to end the occupation of the three Emirati islands, and responding to the endeavors of the sisterly United Arab Emirates, to resolve this question through direct negotiations or resorting to the International Court of Justice.

Sheikh Jaber Mubarak emphasized Kuwait's commitment to principles and purposes of UN Charter during its membership of the Security Council. He thanked all member states of the Asia-Pacific Group for their endorsement of Kuwait's candidature to the seat in the Security Council for 2018-19. His Highness the Prime Minister told the General Assembly that Kuwait looks forward to the support of all the member states of the UN in the upcoming elections that would be held in June next year. He said Kuwait will contribute to finding solutions by consensus to the various global challenges, for the maintenance of international peace and security by peaceful ways and means. Kuwait occupied a UN seat previously in 1978-79.

Sheikh Jaber said Kuwait has attained a prestigious position among donors of humanitarian assistance, as a result of its initiatives and continued response to appeals launched by UN for alleviating suffering of affected peoples and countries. He said that since Kuwait's independence in 1961, it has set for itself a consistent approach, to stand by Developing and Least Developed Countries.

This comes from its firm belief in the need to assist countries afflicted by natural disasters, and to lend a helping hand to those suffering from the scourges of war, in a manner that would ensure the enhancement of its relations with the countries and peoples of the world, he said. HH Sheikh Jaber affirmed that Kuwait is also eager to reach a world wherein justice and equality would prevail in support of human values, and wherein the "haves" would give the deserving "have nots" without conditions.

According to UN statistics for 2015, Kuwait has held the first place in providing humanitarian assistance as a ratio of its gross domestic income. Sheikh Jaber told the General Assembly that "while Kuwait takes pride in such recognition, the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development continues its pioneering role of providing soft loans and grants to fund development programs that have benefitted 105 countries in various parts of the world, which amounted to almost $20 billion."

In this connection, Kuwait welcomed the two historic agreements on climate change signed by Kuwait in April, and on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The prime minister hoped that the agreements would lead to the realization of objectives and purposes, inclusive by their character. "We also pledge to exert all efforts in contributing effectively; within the framework of an international partnership, to fully implement the Sustainable Development Goals during the coming fourteen years," he added. — KUNA

Amir highlights Kuwait's efforts to help...

Continued from Page 1

"We coordinate with crisis-hit countries directly or through the UN aid agencies to organize and host donor conferences. The total volume of donations contributed by Kuwait to the refugee-oriented aid program over the last five years hit $5 billion, including $300 million committed at the Supporting Syria Conference (held in London in early Feb 2016). This funding helped finance educational and healthcare programs for child refugees in refugee hosting countries," he said, noting that the Kuwait allocated $5 million of the donations to UNRWA's educational programs.

"Besides, Kuwait donated $167 million to Kuwaiti and UN aid agencies to finance health and educational programs for Iraqi refugees and internally-displaced persons. Kuwait's response to the humanitarian needs of our brothers in Syria exceeded the material assistance with the hosting of more than 130,000 Syrian refugees since the outbreak of the crisis. This figure, representing nearly 10 percent of the total population of Kuwaitis at 1.3 million people, enabled family reunions between the Syrian refugees and their family members residing in Kuwait," HH the Amir said.

"Kuwait will continue this approach to alleviating the suffering of the brotherly people of Syria. It doubled its annual voluntary contributions to UN aid agencies, thus dominating the first place in terms of the ratio of aid to GDP," the Amir vowed. "I'd like to reaffirm my country's commitment to continue its humanitarian obligations and galvanize the global response to humanitarian disasters," he stressed. Concluding, Sheikh Sabah wished the summit success in reaching its targets and increasing funding for humanitarian appeals.— KUNA

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Issues

Wash Post takes heat for Snowden prosecution call

By Rob Lever

A Washington Post editorial arguing for the prosecution of intelligence leaker Edward Snowden has sparked an outcry in the media community - including from some of the newspaper's own journalists. The weekend editorial provoked a heated response, with some pointing out the irony that the newspaper was calling for criminal charges against a source who helped it win a 2014 Pulitzer Prize for public service reporting.

The editorial board "has no say on news, and just showed why," said a tweet from Barton Gellman, the Post reporter who led the team that shared the Pulitzer with The Guardian for the reporting on global surveillance based on Snowden's leaks of National Security Agency documents. Gellman added that Snowden's "disclosures served the public. WP journalists are proud of our role."

Jane Kirtley, a professor of media ethics and law at the University of Minnesota, said the Post's editorial view comes as a shock to the media community even if there is a separation of the opinion and reporting units. "It does seem to me that any news organization that is going to rely on a source and potentially imperil that source, really needs to stand by that source," Kirtley told AFP. "I personally think Snowden should come back and face charges, but I didn't take Snowden's leaks and put them all over my newspaper."

Kirtley noted that prosecuting sources for leaks should be troubling for the world of journalism. "It is my belief that going after sources for leaks using the Espionage Act is a prelude to going after the journalists who receive that information," she said. "It hasn't happened yet, but it is possible." Washington Post media columnist Margaret Sullivan also broke with the editorial board, calling for Snowden to be pardoned. "Snowden did an important - and brave - service for the American public," Sullivan wrote in a column Tuesday. "Without his decision to bring the information to journalists, it is very unlikely that we would know what we do about mass surveillance in the post-9/11 world."

'Ignominious Feat'

A more blunt response came from Glenn Greenwald, a member of the Guardian team that met with Snowden and now an editor at the online news site The Intercept. "The Washington Post has achieved an ignominious feat in US media history: The first-ever paper to explicitly editorialize for the criminal prosecution of its own source - one on whose back the paper won and eagerly accepted a Pulitzer Prize for Public Service," Greenwald wrote.

The debate comes amid increasing calls for a pardon for Snowden, who has been living in Moscow out of the reach of US law enforcement. The Post editorial argued that not only should Snowden not be pardoned, but that he should return to face charges and argue his defense "before a jury of his peers". The editorial acknowledged that Snowden justifiably exposed violations of law by the National Security Agency which helped lead to reforms. But it added that Snowden also "leaked details of basically defensible international intelligence operations" and "disrupted lawful intelligence-gathering, causing possibly 'tremendous damage' to national security."

But Fortune magazine media writer Matthew Ingram said it was troubling to see the comments from the Post, which has a tradition of investigative journalism which dates back to leaks in the Watergate scandal and Pentagon Papers case. "Attacking and undermining the source that helped the company win a Pulitzer Prize looks hypocritical at best and craven at worst, and is almost certain to make future Snowdens think twice or even three times about going to the newspaper with a leak or a classified tip," Ingram wrote. —AFP

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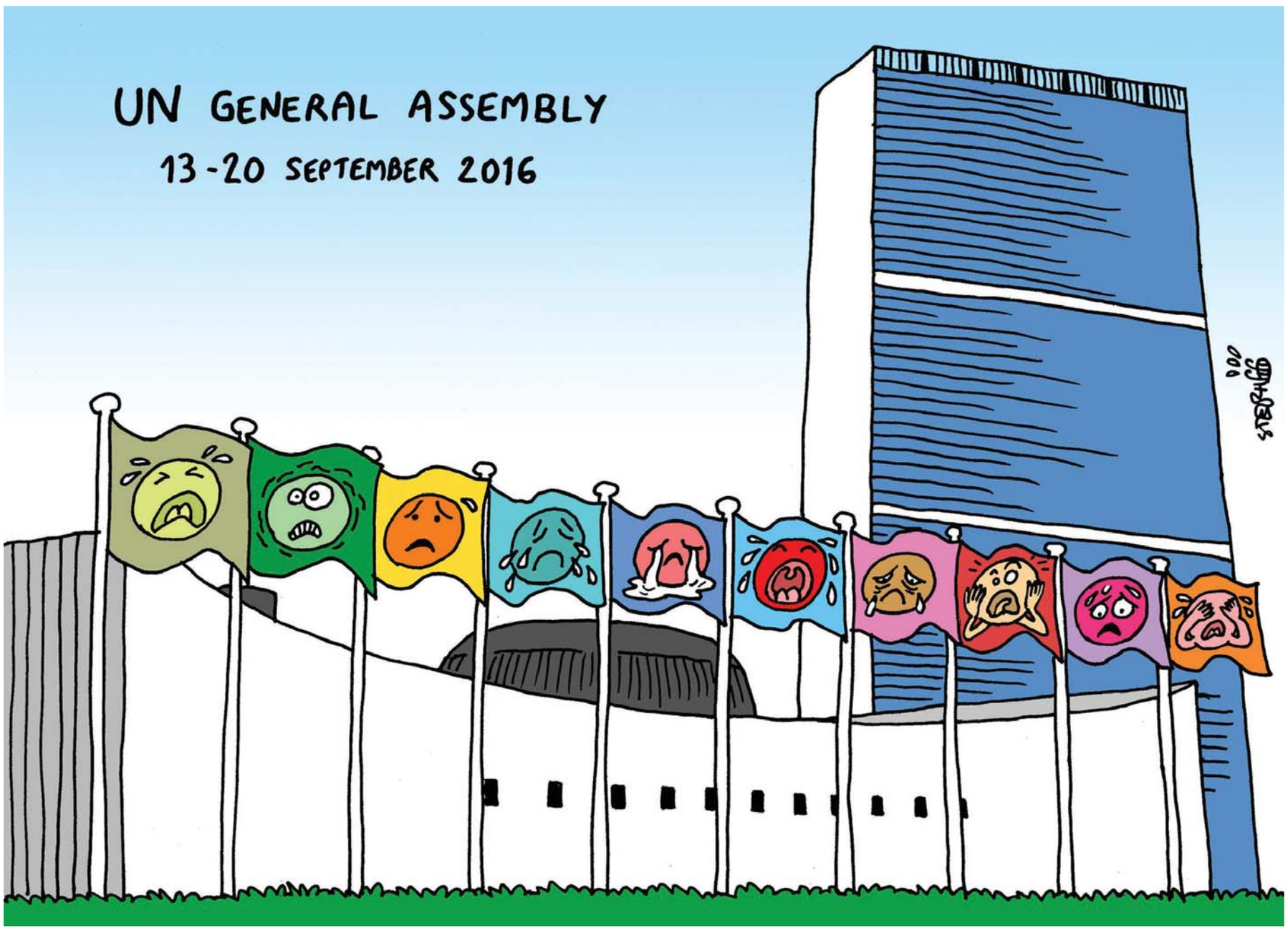


'Brangelina': Hollywood couple like no other

By Thomas Urbain

Everything about Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt - from their unparalleled glamor to their brood of six kids - made them stand out in Hollywood for a decade and see their every move watched closely the world over. Contributing to this mega-star status was the way they met, their good looks, offbeat lifestyle, demanding and successful careers and humanitarian work. Indeed, the way the couple formed is the stuff of legend in Hollywood - and any gossip press reporter's dream come true.

In 2004, Jolie, then 28, met Pitt, 40 and married to Jennifer Aniston, while filming "Mr & Mrs Smith", an action film in which they played a couple. Rumors quickly started to fly and in March 2005, Pitt and Aniston divorced. Jolie, who won an Oscar in 2000 and was seen as one of showbiz's sexiest women, then teamed up with another Hollywood giant in Pitt.

Weeks later, they appeared as a couple in an atmospheric photo shoot in the magazine W, in a throwback series evoking 1950s marital life - complete with five children. And the myth was born. On Tuesday it emerged that Jolie has filed for divorce from Pitt, spelling the end of a couple that came to be known simply as "Brangelina".

Over the course of their joint stardom, Pitt and Jolie maintained a carefully tended relationship with Hollywood and the news media, feeding them as necessary but also keeping them at arm's length. On one hand there was all the red carpet glitz of the Oscars and such, and a few blockbuster films and the occasional interview. But they also lived like wealthy nomads, far away from Hollywood, and dabbled in arthouse cinema. A good example of their unique relationship with fame is this: the couple sold photos of their three newborn biological children to several publications for a fortune. Then they donated the money to charity. They did the same thing when they finally married in 2014. They also have three adopted kids.

Off-Screen Work

The couple's aura only grew as they got involved in non-acting projects, either individually or as a couple. Pitt won an Oscar for best picture in 2014 as a producer of "12 Years A Slave". He also got into design and photography. Jolie started directing movies, to relative critical acclaim. Her best known film was "Unbroken", which came out in 2014. The couple also made wine on a property in southern France which they started renting in 2008 and finally bought in 2012.

Although they were known as "Brangelina", it was Jolie who seemed to be in charge in this duo, one like few others in the world and with access to the highest spheres of power. Jolie also got involved in humanitarian work, while Pitt tended to be a bit more low profile. She acted as goodwill ambassador and then special envoy for the UN refugee agency, became an outspoken activist against sexual violence in war zones and also worked to protect threatened animal species.

One of the world's most visible symbols in the battle against cancer, she underwent a double mastectomy in 2013 and later the removal of her ovaries and fallopian tubes to prevent an aggressive form of the disease that killed her mother, grandmother and aunt. Two years later she signed an op-ed piece in The New York Times in which she discussed her ovarian surgery and urged women to take preventive action against the disease as she did, saying "knowledge is power". And to the end, the image of Jolie as leader of the couple remained: It was she, not Pitt, who filed for divorce and sought sole custody of the kids. —AFP

Jolie: Rebel beauty with toughness to match

By Frankie Taggart

Tattooed rebel, red carpet queen, goodwill ambassador and anti-cancer warrior: Angelina Jolie is a silver screen beauty with convictions to match, and a record of taking tough decisions without looking back. After a decade in the Hollywood spotlight as one half of the "Brangelina" celebrity couple, the 41-year-old filed this week for divorce from Brad Pitt, it emerged Tuesday. The split opens a new chapter for the thrice-married mother of six - whose rollercoaster life has taken her from movie star glory to refugee camps in Africa, to a role as an outspoken champion of women's health.

Jolie was propelled to stardom with her role in 1999's "Girl, Interrupted," taking home a best supporting actress Oscar for her portrayal of a rebellious woman in a mental institution. She went on to play everything from a fairy tale villain ("Maleficent") to a sexy video game heroine ("Lara Croft: Tomb Raider") to the widow of murdered American journalist Daniel Pearl ("A Mighty Heart").

Jolie once flaunted a decidedly punk sensibility, scandalizing the public with declarations of bisexuality and quirky behavior such as wearing a vial of actor Billy Bob Thornton's blood around her neck during their 2000-2003 marriage. Her relationship with Pitt became the stuff of speculation in 2004 after they were seen looking cozy on the set of "Mr & Mrs Smith." Pitt announced his split from "Friends" star Jennifer Aniston the following year - and "Brangelina" was born.

The megastars married in France in Aug 2014 after living together for several years, and have six children together, three of whom are adopted. But Jolie is now better known for her humanitarian work than her tabloid-ready comments. For several years she served as a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In 2012, she was promoted to special envoy and has visited refugees around the world, from Syria to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda.

Made an honorary dame by Queen Elizabeth II, she has been a vocal advocate for victims of sexual violence in war zones, co-hosting a global summit on conflict rape in London. Jolie is also one of the world's most visible advocates in the battle against cancer, having undergone a double mastectomy and removal of her ovaries and fallopian tubes to prevent an aggressive form of the disease that killed her mother, grandmother and aunt.

Decision to Go Public

In both cases, Jolie publicized her surgeries, triggering a global discussion about the pros and cons of the procedures as a preventative measure. Jolie said she made the decision to go public so that other women could learn from her story. It was with her children in mind that Jolie decided to undergo the surgeries. "I can tell my children they don't need to fear they will lose me to breast cancer," the actress wrote in the Times after her mastectomy in 2013. "They know that I love them and will do anything to be with them as long as I can."

Her father is Oscar winner Jon Voight, hailed as one of the finest actors of his generation, who rose to fame after bravura performances in now classic movies like "Midnight Cowboy", "Deliverance" and the Vietnam drama "Coming Home", for which he won his Academy Award. Her mother was an actress who appeared in US television series, but abandoned her film career to raise her two children. On the other side of the camera lens, Jolie made her directorial debut in 2011 with "In the Land of Blood and Honey," an unflinching drama about rape as a weapon in wartime Bosnia, saying she hoped to use cinema as a force for reconciliation. Jolie was married twice before, to actors Jonny Lee Miller and Thornton. —AFP

Pitt: Eye-candy turned Hollywood heavyweight

By Veronique Dupont

From a screen debut as a bare-chested pretty boy to the Hollywood top table, with a name that can carry an indie flick or a blockbuster, Brad Pitt has come a long way. Pitt came into the public eye 25 years ago with a much-talked-about debut as eye-candy in the hit movie "Thelma and Louise" - and went on to become a household name. A three-time Oscar nominee for his acting - also twice named the "sexiest man alive" by People magazine - Pitt took home a golden statuette for best picture in 2014 as a producer of "12 Years A Slave".

And as half of one of the world's most famous celebrity couples - known to fans simply as "Brangelina" - he was never far from the gossip pages, up until Tuesday when it emerged that Angelina Jolie had filed for divorce. The Hollywood glory is all a far cry from Pitt's early days. Born 52 years ago in a middle-class family in Oklahoma, William Bradley Pitt studied journalism and advertising at the University of Missouri before following thousands of young Americans and heading to Hollywood. Pitt supported himself with a series of part-time jobs, including as a chauffeur, removal man and even dressing up in a chicken suit to advertise a fast-food chain. But from 1987 the work started to trickle in, with bit parts in television series "Dallas" and "21 Jump Street" and a few low-budget movies. It was in "Thelma and Louise" (1991) that Pitt got his break, displaying his talent - and swoon-worthy body - as the two-bit thief who seduces Geena Davis. Secondary roles followed in "Kalifornia" (1993) and "True Romance" (1994) and he finally made it as a headliner later that year alongside Tom Cruise in "Interview with a Vampire," and Anthony Hopkins in "Legends of the Fall."

If Pitt needed any further affirmation of his talent, he got it with "Seven," the acclaimed 1995 thriller in which he played a policemen spun along by a serial killer. The success continued the following year as Terry Gilliam's "Twelve Monkeys" saw Pitt nominated for an Oscar as best supporting actor. The high from that accolade did not last long, however, being followed by two commercial flops in 1997, "Seven Years in Tibet" and "The Devil's Own" with Harrison Ford. The critics were also less than impressed with his pairing with Julia Roberts in "The Mexican" and Robert Redford in "Spy Game," both in 2001.

But the actor won a new legion of fans alongside Edward Norton in "Fight Club" (1999), and hit the commercial big time two years later as part of a star-studded cast led by George Clooney with the remake of "Ocean's Eleven."

World's Sexiest Stars

Pitt's position as a Hollywood golden boy was now assured, and his commercial clout was only strengthened by his 2000 marriage to "Friends" star Jennifer Aniston, which made them one of the hottest couples in the world. If the symbolism of his playing the unstoppable Achilles in Wolfgang Petersen's "Troy" (2004) was not clear enough, he starred in another box office smash that year ("Ocean's Twelve") before 2005's "Mr and Mrs Smith."

It was while filming the latter movie that Pitt encountered Jolie. The match-up of two of the world's sexiest stars was commercial dynamite but did little for his marriage to Aniston. They announced their split in early 2005. "Brangelina," as they were quickly dubbed by the media, were soon an item and in May 2006 Jolie gave birth to their first biological child, a girl named Shiloh. The couple have six children, three of whom are adopted.The actor scored another hit in "Babel" (2007) and earned his second Oscar nomination in 2009 for "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button".

In recent years Pitt has stepped behind the camera, and successfully tried his hand at producing - taking home a golden statuette for best picture in 2014 as a producer of "12 Years A Slave". Through his firm Plan B, he was also involved in Martin Scorsese's Oscar-winner "The Departed" (2006) and "A Mighty Heart" starring Jolie, released the following year. —AFP

UEFA president hopeful of Champions League U-turn

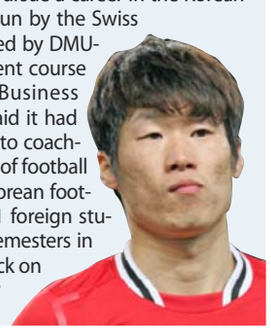
LONDON: Newly elected UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin yesterday reiterated his belief that it may be possible to block planned changes to the format of the Champions League. The European governing body announced last month that England, Spain, Italy and Germany will each be guaranteed four berths for their clubs in the tournament between 2018 and 2021. The move was criticised by smaller European nations and although it has been ratified by UEFA's executive committee, Ceferin suggested the changes may not be set in stone. When it was put to him that it will be impossible to change the format of the Champions League before 2021, he replied: "I don't necessarily agree with you, so let's see. "Of course it's not good for the small and mid-size associations. But as I told you, it was my first day yesterday. I have to check what were pluses and minuses about that decision. "There were certainly pluses and minuses and I will look on it and act. Everything can change." — AFP

Stop fantasising about Dominguez's sacking

TOULON: Toulon president Mourad Boudjellal insisted yesterday that under-fire coach Diego Dominguez was not in his crosshairs after a poor start to the Top 14 season. The three-time former European champions, beaten in last year's domestic final by Parisian arch-rivals Racing 92, currently stand eighth on 11 points, with just two wins from their five outings so far. Last weekend, Toulon were hammered by Racing 41-30, two late tries giving a gloss to the final score of a match in which they were comprehensively outplayed for large periods. "You need to stop fantasising about the sacking of Diego Dominguez," Boudjellal said of the ex-Italy fly-half, with his side due to play in-form league leaders Clermont on Sunday. "Diego Dominguez is not a target today," he said, adding: "If we lose 95-0, that reopens the debate, but that's the case for every coach." Boudjellal, who made his fortune from the comic book publishing business, continued: "Diego's not under pressure. Toulon are not playing well because we don't have the players" due to a raft of injuries. Toulon have Australian wing Drew Mitchell and South African Bryan Habana away on international duty, while the likes of captain Duane Vermeulen, playmaker Matt Giteau, flanker Juanne Smith, wingers Vincent Clerc and James O'Connor, and prop Jean-Charles Orioli are all out injured. — AFP

Back to school for Korean icon Park

LONDON: Retired South Korean football great Park Ji-Sung is embarking on a new challenge on a top sports management course at De Montfort University (DMU) in Leicester, England. The 35-year-old former Manchester United midfielder-who won the Champions League and four Premier League titles with the club from 2005-12 — said he saw it as the best avenue for him to potentially pursue a career in the Korean football league administration afterwards. The course-run by the Swiss Centre International d'Etude du Sport (CIES) and delivered by DMU-was last year named as Europe's best sports management course and the year before that claimed top spot in SportBusiness International's world rankings. "One of my colleagues said it had been a great experience and though many players go into coaching or management, I wanted to improve my knowledge of football around the pitch and then perhaps work in the South Korean football league," Park told the DMU website. Park, one of 31 foreign students taking the year-long course which also includes semesters in Milan, Italy and Neuchatel in Switzerland, said looking back on his career there was one clear standout campaign. — AFP



SA recall 'rusty but ready' Lambie

JOHANNESBURG: Fit-again fly-half Patrick Lambie was recalled by South Africa coach Allister Coetzee yesterday for Rugby Championship Tests against Australia and New Zealand next month. The 25-year-old playmaker was badly concussed during a June Test loss to Ireland in Cape Town and returned to action only last Saturday for Sharks in the Currie Cup.

"Rusty but ready," was the verdict of Sharks coach and former Springboks scrum-half Robert du Preez after Lambie kicked two conversions in less than 20 minutes on the pitch.

However, Coetzee cautioned against assuming that Lambie would replace off-form Elton Jantjies against Australia on October 1 at Loftus Versfeld stadium in Pretoria.

"We want to ascertain his readiness and confidence for international rugby or whether he rather needs to play another match in the Currie Cup for the Sharks," he said. "Patrick has been included in our squad so that our medical and conditioning team can get first-hand feedback."

Fullback Willie le Roux, axed after poor performances in a fortunate 2-1 series win over Ireland, is also back in a 31-man squad comprising 16 forwards and 15 backs.

Tighthead prop Julian Redelinghuys and lock Lood de Jager have recovered from injuries and were included. Utility prop Lourens Adriaanse is the only Springbok dropped from the previous squad as South Africa seek to snap a run of three consecutive Rugby Championship losses. After a last-gasp home win over Argentina, they lost away to the South Americans, Australia and world champions New Zealand. Coetzee resisted calls from former Springbok players and coaches and pundits for wholesale changes amid widespread social media unhappiness with his team selections.

The coach, who succeeded Heyneke Meyer last April on a four-year contract, had heightened expectations of a clean-out when he said "there would be repercussions" after three straight losses. Target number one has been Jantjies, who replaced Lambie in Cape Town but has struggled during six subsequent starts to replicate the form that took Golden Lions to the 2016 Super Rugby final.

"Flaky as a croissant," was how one New Zealand pundit described a 26-year-old fly-half whose handling error led to the first All Blacks try in a 41-13 Christchurch rout last Saturday. After a bright start to his Test career this season, scrum-half Faf de Klerk is also battling to recapture excellent Super Rugby form with the Lions. There have also been calls for full-back Johan Goosen, centre Juan de Jongh, prop Tendai 'The Beast' Mtawarira and flankers Francois Louw and Teboho 'Oupa' Mohoje to be dumped.

Squad

Forwards (16): Willem Alberts, Eben Etzebeth, Lood de Jager, Steven Kitshoff, Vincent Koch, Jaco Kriel, Francois Louw, Bongi Mbonambi, Oupa Mohoje, Franco Mostert, Tendai Mtawarira, Trevor Nyakane, Julian Redelinghuys, Adriaan Strauss (capt), Pieter-Steph du Toit, Warren Whiteley

Backs (15): Damian de Allende, Johan Goosen, Bryan Habana, Francois Hougaard, Elton Jantjies, Juan de Jongh, Faf de Klerk, Jesse Kriel, Patrick Lambie, Lionel Mapoe, Malcolm Marx, Lwazi Mvovo, Rudy Paige, Willie le Roux, Morne Steyn. — AFP

Patrick Lambie

Cheick Sallah Cisse

Ivorian hero Cisse targets Tokyo 2020 after Rio gold

ABIDJAN: Cheick Sallah Cisse has gone from obscurity to national hero after winning the Ivory Coast's first Olympic gold, but insists his celebrity status won't distract him from his taekwondo title defence in Tokyo. "People look at me differently now, I've become a national symbol. I can't walk in the street without being recognised, I'm a star," the 23-year-old told AFP.

Cisse clinched the men's under-80kg taekwondo title with a dramatic last-second move in Rio and was honoured for his exploits on his return home, receiving a new house and a 50 million CFA franc (75,000 euro, $84,000) cash bonus. Before Rio, the Ivory Coast had only one medal to its name-the men's 400m silver picked up by Gabriel Tiacoh at the Los Angeles Games in 1984. That all changed when Cisse stunned third seed Lutalo Muhammad of Great Britain with a four-point score right at the death to win 8-6. Rio proved a breakthrough for the African nation with Ruth Gbagbi becoming the first Ivorian women's medallist with bronze, also in taekwondo.

Both were honoured by Ivorian head of state Alassane Ouattara on their return home. Cisse pleaded for an improvement in conditions and training for athletes, and Ouattara promised to examine what could be done. "We were supported. The Government did what it could...but we need new laws passed so that athletes can live off their sports," declared Cisse. The majority of Ivorian athletes train in difficult conditions and find it hard to raise funds to meet their costs.

"We have talented boys and girls in taekwondo ... we have to help them," insisted Cisse. "I want to tell my little brothers to believe in their dreams. "I've gone from nothing to become someone, without any help."

Claiming a coveted Olympic gold has been a dream come true for Cisse who was born to a modest family in the central city of Bouake. He took up martial arts at the age of eight, beginning with shotokan, moving on to dedicate long hours to taekwondo despite the opposition of his father who wanted him to focus on his studies.

His passion saw him crowned African champion in 2014, drawing inspiration from the Iranian teaching method "for the spirit, the strength of character of their fighters".

"I like everything they do. They highlight the qualities of a good taekwondist namely the heart, courage." He insists that despite his new-found fame his feet are firmly on the ground. "The greatest motivation (to win again) is to relive once again (the honours on returning home). "People approach you, they congratulate you, it's nice, touching, all this gives me strength to achieve even more." —AFP

NBA star Tony Parker plays at the Top of Europe

The NBA star and European Basketball Champion Tony Parker played on September 14, 2016 on the Jungfraujoch. He was faced with a team of Swiss basket players and demonstrated his speed and agility at 3454 meters above sea level.

For the occasion, a big basketball court of 33.55m by 20.78m was put in place in order for the classic 5X5 game to take place on the Aletsch glacier. Faced with the fresh yet thin air of the mountain, the great athlete did not sway. Tony Parker has earned his reputation as one of the fastest and best players in the world. He was quick to pass the ball to his teammates and passed by his adversaries with agility at the Top of Europe.

After the basketball game Tony Parker took time to answer the media's questions. He said: "I'm always up for new challenges, so when Tissot, my long-term partner suggested I play a match at the Top of Europe I thought it was a great opportunity to do something exceptional. We don't often get to play in such extreme conditions." Over 100 journalists from Asia, Europe, Australia, America and Switzerland were there to witness this exceptional event. A very special guest also took part in the event, Tissot's Swiss Moto2 ambassador Thomas L¸thi.

The fact that Tony Parker, Tissot's ambassador, came to the Jungfraujoch is no coincidence. Tissot and the Jungfrau Railways have a great relationship. Their renewed partnership emphasizes their long-standing and successful alliance, which was initiated for the commemoration of the centenary of the construction of the railway's tunnel. Last year, the CEO of Jungfrau Railways, Urs Kessler and Tissot President Francois Thiebaudtook it to the next level by inaugurating the summit attraction" the First Cliff Walk" and a Tissot shop on First, above Grindelwald.

President of Tissot, Francois Thibaud commented: "We are very proud of our partnerships. It is an honour and great pleasure for us to be able to share the beauty of such an extraordinary place as the Jungfraubahn, with the Swiss Alpsand the fresh air of Switzerland with our loyal ambassador Tony Paker, and the talent of our ambassador, with our partner Jungfraubahn. At Tissot we are a big family and we love bringing everyone together, as we have done today."

At the Jungfraujoch, several sports events have already taken place with world famous athletes. The basketball game with NBA star Tony Parker is the tenth edition of the event series. "It is always a challenge to bring internationally renowned Sport personalities to the Aletsch Glacier. We were delighted that our partner Tissot and their ambassador Tony Parker wanted to take part" the CEO of Jungfrau Railways, Urs Kessler said. After the event, he added: "After football, tennis, boxing, cricket and basketball, I can't wait to see what world sport will be the next."

Tony Parker is one of the most successful basketball players in history. He is a French professional basketball player currently with the San Antonio Spurs of the National Basketball Association (NBA).Parker has helped the Spurs win four NBA championships in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2014.

Employing his pace and high field goal percentage to great effect, Parker has been named to six NBA All-Star games, three All-NBA Second Teams, and an All-NBA Third Team. Parker was also the star of the French national basketball team until he resigned in 2016.

ICC says Pakistan must satisfy on security to get visits

LAHORE: Pakistani officials must satisfy the concerns of visiting security experts if they want to host major teams again, the chief executive of cricket's world governing body said yesterday. Most international sides have stayed away from Pakistan since an Islamist militant attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore in 2009, which killed eight people and injured several cricketers.

In 2015 Pakistan hosted minnows Zimbabwe for a short limited-overs series three one-day internationals and as many Twenty20s-but that failed to change the views of most security experts.

"It's actually quite easy for you to convince me that international cricket returns to Pakistan, but unfortunately it's not me or the ICC that needs to be convinced," said David Richardson, chief executive of the International Cricket Council (ICC).

"It's the security experts, it's the security consultants who are advising the players, advising the teams, and that's really out of our control." He was speaking in Lahore, where he came to present Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq with a mace after his team reached the world top Test ranking.

Richardson's remarks come as England prepare to tour Bangladesh next month despite an attack on a Dhaka cafe in July that left 20 hostages including 18 foreigners dead. It was claimed by the Islamic State group. Security experts cleared the tour on the assurances of the country's government and the Bangladesh Cricket Board.

Richardson acknowledged overall improvements in Pakistan's security situation, with a marked decrease in militant attacks and casualties this year and last.

"I know that the Pakistan government and the Pakistan Cricket Board are doing whatever they can to try and persuade the people and make the security situation better in Pakistan. Pretty soon we'll get to a situation where teams are willing to play international cricket in Pakistan," he said.

Misbah meanwhile praised his players for making it to number one without playing at home. "We've been playing on foreign soil since 2009 but we are not only strong enough but we are right at the top, especially in the top format of this game," he said. Players, he said, had to compete outside the country for almost six to seven months. "Credit should be given to the families." — AFP

Captain Kohli admits India need to play spin better

KANPUR: Skipper Virat Kohli conceded yesterday that India must bat better against spin, as the favourites prepare to take on a dangerous New Zealand in the first Test in Kanpur. Kohli pointed to India's loss last year at the hands of Sri Lanka's spinners on a raging turner as evidence of his side's weakness, as they begin their quest to regain the number one world ranking spot. His team take on the Black Caps today in the first of three Tests and India's 500th in total, at Kanpur's Green Park which is expected to prove favourable to spinners.

"It's an area where we can improve, we have lost a Test match in Sri Lanka because we couldn't play as well as we would have liked," Kohli told reporters. "The team wants to improve on that aspect of the game, (its) something that (we) surely need to get stronger," he said, adding that his batsmen were working on this.

Sri Lankan veteran spinner Rangana Herath claimed seven wickets to skittle India for 112 last August in a stunning victory, although India went on to win the next two matches.

Kohli, known for his aggressive brand of cricket, said he was impressed with New Zealand's "fearless" style of play in recent times and believes the visitors will prove tough opponents. "I think Kane is leading the side very well. We expect very good competition and good hard-fought cricket," Kohli said of his opposite number Kane Williamson. India, who start the series strong favourites after their recent 2-0 away victory against the West Indies, are also eyeing a return to the top of the International Cricket Council rankings.

India recently toppled Australia from the top of the rankings, only to be leapfrogged by their archrivals Pakistan.

India's spin king Ravichandran Ashwin is in form, picking up 17 wickets in the Caribbean, while batsmen Lokesh Rahul and Ajinkya Rahane have also been in good knick. Williamson said his young side would be looking to build on their success at this year's World Twenty20 when they reached the semi-finals. "We have got some exciting young talent. We showed that in the T20 world cup."

"That was huge for us. Yes, the formats are different, but I am hoping we can build on from those experiences," the 26-year-old said. New Zealand, who recently suffered a 1-0 loss against South Africa, will be counting on its spin bowlers including Indian-born Ish Sodhi, along with Mitchell Santner and Mark Craig.

"Yes, how our spin bowlers bowl will be important. But at the same time we are hoping for a bit of reverse swing and that certainly brings the seamers into it," said Williamson, who heads into his third series as skipper. — AFP

KANPUR: India's captain Virat Kohli gestures during a press conference ahead of the first cricket test against New Zealand in Kanpur, India, yesterday. — AP

KANPUR: New Zealand's captain Kane Williamson, front, catches a ball during a practice session ahead of the first cricket test against India in Kanpur, India, yesterday. — AP

New Zealand aim to turn tables on spin kings India

KANPUR: New Zealand captain Kane Williamson believes his slow-bowling trio can prove a handful for India in their own spin-friendly back yard in the three-test series starting today. Rolling out raging turners and unleashing the spinners has been the tried-and-tested formula behind India's formidable home form, and the cracks on the track in Kanpur's Green Park Stadium suggest the trend will continue against the Kiwis.

India have won each of their last three home series, against Australia, West Indies and South Africa, without losing a test.

But New Zealand seem to have done their homework and have included a trio of specialist spinners-Ish Sodhi, Mitchell Santner and Mark Craig-in their squad with a reasonable chance of all three playing in the series opener in Kanpur.

"They've got very good spinners, naturally very experienced in these conditions. But we have got some exciting young talent. We have shown that in the (World) Twenty20," Williamson said, referring to the impressive display by leg-spinner Sodhi and left-armer Santner in the tournament in India earlier this year.

"Yes, the formats are different but we are hoping they can build on from those experiences," Williamson said. "There were a lot of learning experiences to be had, certainly this being one of them, being exposed in these conditions which will certainly suit spin bowling.

"We are certainly hoping they can play a big part in the series." Williamson had a good look at the wicket in Kanpur and the 26-year-old spotted a silver lining in the dry track, in the form of reverse-swing potential. "Coming into it, and certainly watching the previous series here, without much grass on the block, obviously the ball deteriorates quite quickly and reverse swing and spin naturally become big factors," he said.

"How our spin bowlers bowl will be important, but at the same time we are hoping for better reverse swing. We will have to see how things unfold." Williamson conceded spin might make or break fortunes in the series but did not agree fully with team mate Ross Taylor's suggestion of employing the sweep shot frequently to negate the Indian spinners.

"I think it's certainly up to individuals. Some guys sweep more than others," Williamson said.

"I suppose sweeping is a big part of an Indian player's game. They've got great footwork, they get forward, they get back and come down the wicket. "You can learn a lot from the way they play but at the end of the day, it's up to individual players who are the most comfortable with it." — Reuters

England's Anderson could be rested in test series

LONDON: England fast bowler James Anderson may sit out some of the test matches on their tours of Bangladesh and India, he said yesterday.

The 34-year-old, England's leading test wicket-taker with 463 victims, was named in the squad for the tour to Bangladesh where they play two tests next month. England travel to India in early November for a five-test series.

"It's a tough one because as a player if you're fit you want to play, simple as that, no matter what the format you're desperate to play," Anderson told reporters.

"But there may well come a time when it will get managed. At 34 I probably have to manage myself, be managed, quite well.

You want, if possible, to play every test but India is going to be five back to back and that's a huge ask for any bowler," he added. "There will probably come a point where we try to look and maybe I've got to sit out." — Reuters

RAWALPINDI: Pakistani director and bowling coach of Islamabad United Wasim Akram (2R) and his wife Shaniera Akram (3L) take a selfie during an exhibition match at Rawalpindi Cricket stadium in Rawalpindi on Tuesday, to celebrate their triumph in the Pakistan Super League earlier this year. Dashing Australia batsman Dean Jones has tipped Pakistan's resurgence in Twenty20 cricket following the success of its new domestic league, saying fierce hitter Sharjeel Khan can revive the country's fortunes. — AFP

Skipper Misbah lauds Pakistan achieving No 1 test ranking

ISLAMABAD: Misbah-ul-Haq has paid credit to his players and their families for earning test cricket's No.1 ranking while exiled from playing home matches for the past seven years.

Having earned the No. 1 spot last month, Pakistan's test captain Misbah was handed the test mace by ICC chief executive David Richardson at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore yesterday. "It's one of the best days in my life, it's the happiest day in my cricketing career and I like to congratulate everyone who has been part of this achievement and part of this journey," Misbah said. Pakistan has played its 'home' tests in the United Arab Emirates since 2009 when Sri Lanka's team came under terrorist attack in Lahore and other nations subsequently refused to tour Pakistan due to security concerns.

"We are playing away matches and are not playing where we are brought up; even Dubai and Abu Dhabi are foreign soil," Misbah said. Zimbabwe is the only test-playing nation which has toured Pakistan since 2009, but that was only for a three-match limited-overs series, also in Lahore, last year.

"Credit should be given to the families," he said. "The families of the players really sacrificed lot of things ... we have to play almost 6-7 months out of country and that's difficult."

Misbah, in the twilight of his career at age 42, has been instrumental in reshaping Pakistan test team, especially after Lord's test spot-fixing fiasco in 2010 when three players were banned for five years. Over the last five years, Misbah became Pakistan's most successful test captain and also whitewashed both England and Australia in the test series in the UAE.

Richardson pointed Misbah's captaincy as one of the reasons for Pakistan achieving test cricket's No. 1 spot for the first time since the rankings were introduced in 2003. Revised rankings showed Pakistan would also have been top in 1988 if the current measures were used "This is a remarkable achievement given that the last 24 series had all been played away from Pakistan's borders," Richardson said.

"Any player if he can put on his CV that he was part of the team that was No. 1 ranked in test cricket, that to me will be a pinnacle achievement for any player." Pakistan face a stern test to keep its No. 1 ranking intact in the coming months. India is the biggest threat as it could become No. 1 if it beats New Zealand in the three-test series at home. ICC will award $1 million to the team which stays No. 1 on April 1, 2017 and Pakistan has at least three tough series - against West Indies, New Zealand and Australia - during this period.

"West Indies is unpredictable like Pakistan, they can be so strong at a given day so we really can't say they are easy side," Misbah said.

"Then two tough tours. New Zealand has a strong side especially at home and then Australia ... I hope we can be competitive there and prove ourselves where normally teams from Asia struggle."

Richardson said it was not in the hands of the ICC to convince other nations that it's safe to tour Pakistan, but hoped the government and the Pakistan Cricket Board can convince foreign teams to resume tours.

"Circumstances in the world really have got quite difficult from a security point of view (and) Pakistan has been probably hardest hit than any other country," Richadson said. "It's not me or the ICC that needs to be convinced. It's the security experts, it's the security consultants who are advising the players, who are advising the teams and that's really out of our control.

"I know that the Pakistan government and the PCB are doing whatever they can to try and persuade the people and make security situation better in Pakistan. Pretty soon we'll get to a situation where teams are willing to play international cricket in Pakistan." — AP

LAHORE: Pakistan cricket captain Misbah-ul-Haq holds the ICC Test Championship mace in Lahore yesterday. Pakistan achieved the number one ranking in the Test Championship table after the Test match series drawn 2-2, between England and Pakistan at the Oval in London on August 14, 2016. — AFP

Ahli United Bank welcomes Kuwait National Paralympic team

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB), one of Kuwait's leading Islamic banking institutions welcomed yesterday the Kuwait National Paralympic team at the Kuwait International Airport upon their return from Brazil. The bank's latest initiative reflects its keenness to celebrate the proud moments and successes achieved by the team. Despite the level of participation, all members of the Paralympic team are winners.

His Excellency, Sheikh Salman Al Sabah, Kuwait's Youth and Sports Minister and her Excellency, Hind Al-Subaih Minister of Social Affairs & Labour/ Minister of State for Planning & Development Affairs along with the Honorary President for the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club, Sheikha Sheikha Khalifa Al Sabah, as well as the club's Chairman, Shafi Al Hajeri were present to welcome and greet the national team upon their arrival to Kuwait.

AUB has been a supporter to Kuwait's national special needs team, and was amongst the first to welcome them back to honor them for their participation at the Paralympics.

The bank thanked Kuwait's champions, specifically Ahmad Al Mutairi for winning the first place and gold medal in the 100 meter competition and representing the country in an internationally acclaimed event. AUB's sponsorship reflects its continued support towards special needs, and the strong role that the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club plays to train young athletes to represent Kuwait in a number of international events. In addition, the bank's sponsorship is in line with its overall social responsibility approach and supporting special needs, an initiative that is also reflected in the bank's tailored services for them.

Bader Al-Debasi, from AUB said, "We believe in our youth's abilities to overcome any challenge and prove their ability to represent their country. Despite the results they have achieved, they continue to be our champions who deserve to be honored."

AUB employees meeting and congratulating Ahmad Al Mutairi.

Ortiz, Bradley HRs carry Red Sox past Orioles

BALTIMORE: David Ortiz broke open a tight game with a three-run homer in the seventh inning, and the Boston Red Sox beat the Baltimore Orioles 5-2 Tuesday night for their sixth straight victory. Jackie Bradley Jr. also homered for the Red Sox, who stretched their lead over Baltimore in the AL East to five games. After sweeping four games from the Yankees, Boston has won the first two of this pivotal four-game series. Trey Mancini homered in his major league debut with the Orioles, who trail Toronto by a game for the first AL wild card. Kevin Gausman (8-11) allowed five runs and 10 hits in 6 1/3 innings. Eduardo Rodriguez (3-7) pitched 6 1/3 innings of two-run ball for his first win in 11 starts since July 16. Craig Kimbrel worked the ninth for his 28th save.

BALTIMORE: Boston Red Sox outfielders Chris Young, from left, Jackie Bradley Jr and Mookie Betts celebrate after a baseball game against the Baltimore Orioles in Baltimore, Tuesday. Boston won 5-2. — AP

BLUE JAYS 10, MARINERS 2

J.A. Happ became the major leagues' second 20-game winner and Russell Martin and Michael Saunders each hit a two-run homer, lifting Toronto over Seattle to move into first in the AL wild-card race. Toronto took the lead with an eight-run fourth inning and moved a game ahead of Baltimore. Detroit remained 2 1/2 games behind the Blue Jays. Seattle lost for the fourth time in five games to fall four games behind Toronto. Happ (20-4) allowed two runs, six hits and a walk over five innings, striking out eight while winning for the 14th time in his last 15 decisions. He's the first Toronto pitcher to reach 20 wins since Roy Halladay in 2008. Martin and Saunders each homered off Hisashi Iwakuma (16-12) during the Blue Jays' big inning.

GIANTS 2, DODGERS 0

Eduardo Nunez and Brandon Belt homered to help San Francisco overcome injuries to All-Star pitcher Johnny Cueto and shortstop Brandon Crawford. San Francisco pulled into a three-way tie for first place in the NL wild-card standings with the Mets and Cardinals. The Giants are five games behind the NL West-leading Dodgers with 11 to play.Cueto exited with a strained left groin in the sixth inning. Crawford came out with a dislocated left pinky in the second. A team trainer checked on Cueto with Andrew Toles at bat. Cueto stayed in and walked Toles, then motioned that he was done.

ASTROS 2, ATHLETICS 1, 10 INNINGS

George Springer hit a go-ahead single in the 10th inning, and Houston beat Oakland.Tony Kemp, who tied it with a pinch-hit double in the seventh, got things going with a leadoff double against Sean Doolittle (2-3) and Jake Marisnick sacrificed him to third to bring up Springer. Chris Devenski (4-4) struck out four in 3 2-3 innings of relief for the win, and Ken Giles escaped a bases-loaded jam and closed it out for his 13th save. The Astros remain in the mix for the AL wild card. Jose Altuve's eighth-inning single gave him 200 hits in three straight seasons, the first to do so since Ichiro Suzuki from 2001-10. Oakland's Danny Valencia was ejected at the end of the ninth by plate umpire Marty Foster after striking out.

YANKEES 5, RAYS 3

Rookie slugger Gary Sanchez hit his 17th homer in 42 games this season, a three-run shot in a four-run seventh inning for the Yankees. The banged-up Yankees are 3 1/2 games behind Baltimore for the second AL wild card.

Sanchez gave the Yankees a 5-2 lead with his drive off Brad Boxberger (4-3). Mark Teixeira hit a solo shot in the fourth for New York, which was swept in a four-game series at Boston last weekend and had lost seven of eight overall. Luis Severino (3-8) pitched 1 1/3 innings of scoreless relief to earn the win. Dellin Betances got three outs for his 12th save.

TIGERS 8, TWINS 1

Matt Boyd breezed through eight innings, backed by home runs from James McCann and Miguel Cabrera, and Detroit stepped forward in the AL wild-card race.With Baltimore's loss to Boston, the Tigers cut the deficit between them and the second spot to 1 1/2 games with 12 to go. Boyd (6-4) allowed three hits, including Robbie Grossman's seventh-inning homer. McCann, in the designated hitter role for the injured Victor Martinez, connected for a three-run shot during Detroit's a four-run sixth against Hector Santiago (12-9).

CARDINALS 10, ROCKIES 5

Adam Wainwright was shaky on the mound and shined at the plate with a career-high four RBIs, helping St. Louis move into a three-way tie for the top NL wild card. The free-swinging Wainwright lined a two-run double in the second inning and brought in two more with a bloop single in the fifth. Matt Adams and Jedd Gyorko homered to help the Cardinals pull even with the New York Mets, who lost at home to last-place Atlanta for the second straight night. Wainwright (12-9) gave up four runs in 5 1/3 innings. Daniel Descalso, Charlie Blackmon and Gerardo Parra homered for Colorado, and Jorge De La Rosa (8-9) allowed eight runs - seven earned - in 4 2/3 innings.

INDIANS 2, ROYALS 1

Pinch-hitter Brandon Guyer hit a game-ending RBI single, helping Cleveland inch closer to the AL Central title. Guyer's two-out hit off Joakim Soria landed just fair in the right-field corner and scored Coco Crisp. Guyer was the third pinch hitter of the inning used by manager Terry Francona. Cleveland leads Detroit by seven games in the division. The Indians haven't won the AL Central since 2007. The Royals, the reigning World Series champions, will be eliminated from contention in the division if they lose to Cleveland tonight. Alex Gordon singled in a run for Kansas City, and Brian Flynn (1-2) got the loss. Andrew Miller (9-1) got five outs for the win.

RANGERS 5, ANGELS 4

Rookie Nomar Mazara hit his 20th homer in another testy game with multiple ejections and the Rangers moved closer to their second consecutive AL West title. Texas (90-62) cut its magic number to two to clinch the seventh division title in franchise history. Mazara hit a 438-foot drive off rookie Daniel Wright (0-4), a two-run shot in the fourth that put the Rangers up 4-3. Nick Martinez (2-3) worked 3 1/3 scoreless innings in relief, and the right-hander made a spectacular play in the fifth, when he reached behind his back for a no-look snag of Andrelton Simmons' hard liner and turned it into a double play. Sam Dyson worked the ninth for his 35th save in 40 chances.

MARLINS 1, NATIONALS 0

Giancarlo Stanton homered to back a strong outing by Jose Fernandez, who pitched eight innings and struck out 12 for the Marlins.Fernandez (16-8) allowed three hits without a walk to outduel Washington's Tanner Roark (15 9) who pitched seven innings and allowed one run. David Phelps pitched the ninth for his fourth save in 10 chances. The Nationals were held to four hits in their fourth consecutive loss. Stanton connected for his 27th homer in the sixth inning. Stanton also homered in Monday's 4 3 win.

BRAVES 5, METS 4

Mets nemesis Julio Teheran pitched seven more sparkling innings and the last-place Braves blunted New York's bid to extend its NL wild-card lead. The Mets nicked the Braves' bullpen for three runs in the eighth but couldn't complete the comeback. The Braves have the worst record in the NL, yet have won four straight. Teheran (6-10) gave up five hits and left with a 5-1 lead. Dating to the final time he saw the Mets last season, he's 3-0 with a 0.73 ERA in five starts against them. Jim Johnson pitched the ninth for his 16th save in 19 chances. Robert Gsellman (2-2) lost in his fifth major league start.

CUBS 6, REDS 1

Jon Lester overcame an injury scare to throw seven strong innings, and the Cubs moved closer to securing the NL's best record. Lester (18-4) extended his scoreless streak to 21 innings before Jose Peraza's RBI triple in the fifth. He stayed in after Joey Votto's comebacker in the sixth left him with a welt on the wrist of his glove hand.The Cubs' 96th win reduced their magic number to three over Washington for clinching home field advantage throughout the NL playoffs. Josh Smith (3-2), making a spot start in a bullpen game for the Reds, allowed one run and three hits in three innings. Brandon Phillips had two hits for Cincinnati.

SAN DIEGO: San Diego Padres' Wil Myers tosses his bat after flying out against the Arizona Diamondbacks during the third inning of a baseball game in San Diego, Tuesday. — AP

PIRATES 6, BREWERS 3

Andrew McCutchen, Jody Mercer and Josh Bell each drove in two runs, and Pittsburgh kept its faint playoff hopes alive.The Pirates have won fifth of six to improve to .500 (75-75) for the first time since they were 69 69 on Sept. 8. Jared Hughes (1-1) pitched an inning for the win and Tony Watson worked the ninth for his 14th save. Milwaukee right-hander Matt Garza was charged with five runs and eight hits in four-plus innings.

PHILLIES 7, WHITE SOX 6

Odubel Herrera homered and drove in three runs, leading Philadelphia to the win. Tommy Joseph and Roman Quinn added two hits apiece and combined to drive in three runs for the Phillies. Herrera, who hits between Joseph and Quinn in the lineup, is 15 for 28 in his last seven games. Melky Cabrera hit a three-run homer for the White Sox, who have lost four straight. James Shields (5-18), winless since July 26, allowed six earned runs and nine hits in 5 1/3 innings.Trailing 7-3 in the ninth, the White Sox pulled within one on a two-out wild pitch and a two-run double from Adam Eaton. But Michael Mariot got Tim Anderson to ground out for his first career save. Philadelphia's Jake Thompson (3-5) gave up three runs and four hits over five innings.

PADRES 5, DIAMONDBACKS 2

Adam Rosales homered and drove in four runs and rookie Ryan Schimpf scored three times to lead San Diego. The start of the game was delayed 70 minutes by rain. It was only the seventh delay in Petco Park's 13-season history, the sixth because of rain. The other one was due to a swarm of bees during a game in 2009. Keith Hessler (1-0) got one out for his first career victory and Brandon Maurer got his 12th save. Zack Godley (4-4) allowed two runs in two innings and got the loss. — AP

MLB results/standings

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

American League

	W	L	PCT	GB
Eastern Division				
Boston	87	64	.576	-
Toronto	83	68	.550	4
Baltimore	82	69	.543	5
NY Yankees	78	72	.520	8.5
Tampa Bay	64	86	.427	22.5
Central Division				
Cleveland	87	63	.580	-
Detroit	80	70	.533	7
Kansas City	77	74	.510	10.5
Chicago W Sox	72	79	.477	15.5
Minnesota	55	96	.364	32.5
Western Division				
Texas	90	62	.592	-
Houston	80	71	.530	9.5
Seattle	79	72	.523	10.5
Oakland	66	85	.437	23.5
LA Angels	65	86	.430	24.5

National League

Eastern Division				
Washington	88	63	.583	-
NY Mets	80	71	.530	8
Miami	76	75	.503	12
Philadelphia	68	83	.450	20
Atlanta	60	91	.397	28
Central Division				
Chicago Cubs	96	55	.636	-
St. Louis	80	71	.530	16
Pittsburgh	75	75	.500	20.5
Milwaukee	68	83	.450	28
Cincinnati	63	88	.417	33
Western Division				
LA Dodgers	85	66	.563	-
San Francisco	80	71	.530	5
Colorado	72	79	.477	13
San Diego	64	87	.424	21
Arizona	63	88	.417	22

Kaepernick reveals death threats over anthem protest

SAN FRANCISCO: San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick said Tuesday he has received death threats over his national anthem protest as the killing of an unarmed black man in Oklahoma sparked renewed outrage. Kaepernick has staged a silent boycott of "The Star-Spangled Banner" during 49ers games this season, pointedly sitting or kneeling during renditions of the song rather than standing. The 28-year-old says he is protesting racial inequality and injustice in America, including the actions of law enforcement towards minorities. Kaepernick told reporters on Tuesday he had received threats from different avenues since starting his protest. "If something like that were to happen, you've proved my point," said Kaepernick when asked about the possibility of the threats being acted upon. "It'll be loud and clear why it happened."

The quarterback said he had anticipated the backlash before he embarked on his protest. "I knew there were other things that came along with this when I first stood up and spoke about it. It's not something I haven't thought about," he said. The killing on Friday of 40-year-old Terence Crutcher by police in Tulsa was emblematic of the issues Kaepernick is protesting against. "This is a perfect example of what this is about," Kaepernick said. "It will be very telling about what happens to the officer that killed him. They shot and killed a man and walked around like it wasn't a human being," he added.

Kaepernick meanwhile said he will donate $1 million to local communities over the next 10 months, while launching a website to detail how the money is spent. Meanwhile, Kaepernick won backing from 49ers legend Jerry Rice, who had initially criticized the quarterback's protests.

"I support @Kaepernick7 for bringing awareness for injustice !!!!" Rice tweeted. "As Americans we all have rights! Im (sic) hoping we all come together#solution." — AFP

PARIS: France's Renaud Lavillenie competes in the Pole Vault contest of the "Fly Europe Paris" European Athletics Circuit event in Paris yesterday. — AFP

Fly Europe 'to take off' despite Paris lethargy

PARIS: The Paris leg of the new European athletics circuit "Fly Europe" may have attracted few fans yesterday but organisers believe it is set to take off.

Despite the presence of French pole vault star Renaud Lavillenie, the world-record holder, the Parc Andre-Citroen in the west of Paris was hardly buzzing with excitement. "The aim is to see and sell athletics in a different way," said Marco Sicari, an Italian Athletics Federation official.

His is one of five countries-alongside Britain, France, Germany and Spain-involved in launching the Fly Europe circuit. "In 2017 the idea is to organise the five stages during the second half of September, after the Diamond League," added Sicari. Coming so close after the Olympics and being barred from some of Paris's more iconic venues due to security concerns may have affected the turnout, but those who ventured into the park-intentionally or not-were impressed. "Seeing them so close, the beauty of their movements, it's almost like works of art," said Yannick Bruno, a jogger.

"You can imagine the effort it takes to get to that level." Men's pole vault, men's sprint and women's long jump were on the card in Paris, although with some crucial differences. The most notable is the sprint being judged on top speed and not the time it takes to cover a set distance.

Special speed guns linked to giant screens were used to give real-time results for fans to see who reached terminal velocity. In pole vault, the bar isn't systematically raised as those still in the competition try to clear it, but competitors pick a height to attempt without their opponents' knowledge. Lavillenie delighted the home fans by clearing 5.80m for the 115th time in his career. It is such innovative and original regulations that provide part of the attraction for the series, which takes place on the streets as opposed to in a stadium.

The Fly Europe circuit in Germany took place in Berlin 10 days ago in the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate.

The concept for a series of street events has been going strong in the German capital since 2011 but is now being exported around western Europe. All that was lacking from Paris was a stand-out performance, but other street events have been blessed with startling successes. In Belgrade earlier this month, home favourite Ivana Spanovic beat her long-jump national record with a leap of 7.10m, a month after winning Olympic bronze.

That same day, September 11, Kenyan 800m world record holder David Rudisha set a new world best time over 500m of 57.69sec at the Great North CityGames in northern England in front of 20,000 people.

Usain Bolt has previously raced the Great North Run in Manchester while Wroclaw in Poland hosts a yearly hammer competition in which competitors fling the weight over the river Oder. — AFP

Five players who fell out with their club

LONDON: Four-time African player of the year Yaya Toure is out in the cold at his club Manchester City after Pep Guardiola said he would not play until his agent apologised for remarks he made.

AFP Sports looks at five other examples of players who either refused to play or were barred by the manager from doing so:

Bastian Schweinsteiger (Manchester United)

The former Bayern Munich enforcer has incurred the wrath of Jose Mourinho by turning down a loan move to Portuguese side Sporting Lisbon after being told by his coach that he would not feature for United this season. The 32-year-old is training on his own and rolling up to pick up his wages of a reported £190,000 ($246,000, 220,000 euros) a week.

Carlos Tevez (Manchester City)

The adrenalin burn Argentinian international striker played up to his nickname of 'Apache' by refusing to warm up to potentially go on as a substitute in the last moments of a Champions League match in September 2011 with Bayern Munich. City coach Roberto Mancini said Tevez, then 28, would never play for City again. But a combination of his massive wages and the huge fee City were asking meant there were no takers, as Tevez holidayed in Argentina and considered retiring before eventually returning to the first team in March. He was to leave in 2013 for Juventus.

Pierre van Hooijdonk (Nottingham Forest)

The Dutch international striker's goals had been instrumental in Forest returning to the Premier League at the first time of asking but went on strike at the beginning of the 1998/99 season because he was furious key players had been let go. He then trained at his old club NAC Breda and demanded a move which was rejected. He yielded only when the club would not budge and then manager Dave Bassett felt compelled to play him. The depth of antipathy at the club was reflected when he scored his first goal on his return and the players congratulated Scott Gemmill for creating the chance and not him. Forest were relegated and he left, Vitesse Arnhem buying him for £3.5million.

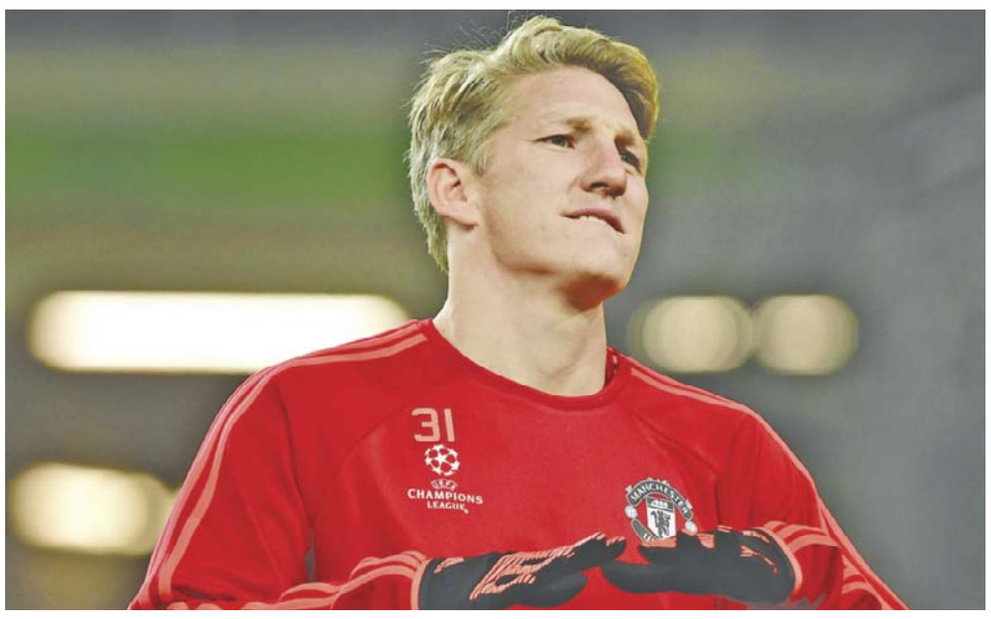
Dimitar Berbatov (Tottenham Hotspur)

The moody Bulgarian international striker tested the patience of the Spurs hierarchy and manager Juande Ramos as he looked to engineer a multi-million pound 'dream' move to Manchester United at the beginning of the 2008/09 campaign. Appropriately for a player who learnt English by watching the Godfather films he awaited an offer Spurs couldn't tun down. He refused to play in the Premier League game with Sunderland and was threatened with demotion to the reserves. Spurs complained to the Premier League about United 'tapping up' the striker but eventually sold him on September 1 that season for £30million.

Manchester City's Ivory Coast midfielder Yaya Toure.

Winston Bogarde (Chelsea)

Another Dutch international to cause his club endless headaches. Signed aged 30 and apparently without the knowledge of then Blues manager Gianluca Vialli in the 2000/01 season, the latter's successor Claudio Ranieri disliked him so much he wanted the player to leave just weeks later. Bogarde dug his heels in and stayed for four years, despite being dropped first to the reserves and the the youth team. He justified his behaviour by declaring in his biography: "This world is about money (he was on a reported £40,000 a week), so when you are offered those millions you take them. Few people will ever earn so many. I am one of the few fortunates who do. I may be one of the worst buys in the history of the Premiership but I don't care." — AFP



Manchester United's German midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger.

Tennis chiefs plan revamp of Davis, Fed Cup finals

LONDON: Tennis chiefs plan to adopt the NFL's Super Bowl model, by selecting fixed-venue cities in advance for their showcase Davis and Fed Cup finals. The switch away from one of the finalists hosting the decider is part of a broader strategy aimed at developing the men's and women's international team events. "This is all part of our mission to make the appeal of tennis broad and wide," International Tennis Federation President David Haggerty told Reuters.

Other options under consideration include a tweak of formats to reduce the length of matches, and expanding the top-tier Fed Cup competition to feature 16 nations. Haggerty, elected president a year ago, hopes to have the new hosting system in place by 2018.

"Davis Cup is 135 nations," Haggerty said. "This is a way to unlock potential revenue which will help grassroots tennis." Speaking at his Roehampton office, in a suburban district of south-west London, Haggerty did not name a figure cities would have to come up with to host the final, but said he thought it would be "significant". "We're waiting for cities to distinguish themselves," he smiled. "And we'll see what it is. I don't want to prejudge what it might be."

The ITF membership will vote on the plans next August. In American football's Super Bowl, the host city is selected well in advance, usually three-to-five years before the game. Similarly, European soccer's governing body, UEFA, selects the host city for the Champions League final two years in advance.

PRIME BENEFITS

Haggerty said he hoped to see cities, federations and their sponsors come together to bid for 2018. "The most likely scenario would be for two-to-three-year terms," said the American who won a four-year presidential spell in 2015.

"Right now we know who are in the finals but we don't know where it is going to be."

Croatia will host Argentina for the 2016 Davis Cup title after winning their respective semi-finals last weekend. But a host city has yet to be named.

"It is really hard to plan and get viewership and fans excited," Haggerty said of the current format. "If you have a fixed site, people can begin to plan and look ahead. "Last year we had a fantastic final in Ghent. But the reality is, Britain could have sold out the (13,000-capacity) stadium. Belgium could have sold it out, too." In the women's competition, Haggerty is eager to introduce an expanded Fed Cup top group, and introduce a "Final Four" format.

"We are going to spend the next nine months working with players, with our nations, talking about other possibilities, such as formats.

"Should it be in Davis Cup two out of three sets, or three out of five? It could be looking at a two-day format." Haggerty said one of the prime benefits of the "neutral final" plan was to unlock more potential revenue. "This can then be used to grow our mission, which is to distribute funds to grassroots tennis, especially to nations who need money for development.

"Because right now the hosting country is the one that gets all the glory, and the money. This would enable us to distribute it in a far better way to achieve our mission. "Our mission is to make tennis broad and wide. We have 700,000 spectators that come to Davis and Fed Cup each year... about 3.6 billion people view it on TV, but it's got to be more than that. "It's got to be bigger than that, and with a neutral final venue we can work with our broadcast partners and make it a much bigger show than just two nations that know they're playing each other. "We can make this into a much more massive win for tennis." — Reuters

Syrian teenager who swam at Rio Olympics honoured

LONDON: A Syrian teenager who saved fellow refugees from drowning and then swam for the refugee team at the Rio Olympics was among those honoured at the inaugural Global Goals Awards in New York.

Yusra Mardini, 18, who fled Syria with her sister in 2015, received the Girl Award at the ceremony on Tuesday night honouring champions for women's and girls' rights worldwide.

Mardini, who had to swim for her life when her overloaded boat broke down in the Mediterranean on the way to Europe, captured headlines when she competed for the 10-strong refugee team at the Games in Brazil.

This week Mardini, who now lives in Germany, told world leaders at the United Nations summit on migrants and refugees that she wanted to change perceptions of those displaced from their homes.

"This experience (the Olympics) has also given me a voice," she said. "I want to change perceptions of refugees. It is not a choice to flee your home, and refugees can achieve anything." Rebeca Gyumi, a lawyer who fights against child marriage in Tanzania as head of the Msichana Initiative, was also honoured at the awards, curated by the U.N. children's agency, UNICEF. She won the award for achieving social change for girls.

The social enterprise DoctHERS, which brings healthcare to vulnerable girls and women in Pakistan, won an award for its campaigning work. It matches trained junior female doctors in Pakistan with rural women and girls via telemedicine.

Aimed at rallying support for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed last year to tackle poverty and inequality by 2030, the Global Goals Awards were judged by a panel comprising the 17 SDG advocates who advise UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. — Reuters

Puig knocks Kvitova out of Tokyo

TOKYO: Rio Olympic champion Monica Puig beat seventh seed Petra Kvitova 1-6, 6-4, 6-4 with a dogged display to reach the Pan Pacific Open quarter-finals yesterday.

Puig, who beat Germany's Angelique Kerber in last month's Olympic final to capture Puerto Rico's first ever gold medal, recovered from a nightmare start in Tokyo to stun Czech Kvitova, a two-time Wimbledon champion.

"The balls felt heavy today with the roof open," said Puig. "It took some time to adjust to the conditions but I kept fighting and that's what got me through."In other matches, former world number one Caroline Wozniacki also advanced, the Dane toppling fourth seed Carla Suarez of Spain 7-6, 4-6, 6-4 while Japanese teenager Naomi Osaka upset Slovakia's Dominika Cibulkova 6-2, 6-1.

Osaka, born of a Japanese mother and Haitian father and who models her game on her idol Serena Williams, insisted she paid no attention to rankings after thrashing the world number 12. "I honestly don't care about that," said the 18-year-old tournament wildcard, herself ranked 66th. "Maybe she didn't know much about me." After her upset win, Osaka revealed that her mind had wandered during the match to what she was going to eat for dinner. Asked to pinpoint how her game has improved over a breakout season, Osaka replied cryptically: "I don't know. To be honest, I kept thinking that I'd fancy some grilled meat." — AFP

TOKYO: Monica Puig of Puerto Rico hits a return against Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic during their women's singles second round match at the Toray Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

Protests put Asian referees on the spot

SEOUL: A rash of complaints about controversial decisions has put Asia's football referees on the spot despite strenuous efforts to raise standards.

Japan and Thailand both lodged official protests after key decisions went against them in this month's World Cup qualifiers, while standards are mixed at club level. Japan were incensed after Takuma Asano's shot crossed the line against the United Arab Emirates, but went unnoticed by Qatari ref Abdulrahman Al Jassim. They lost the game 2-1.

And Thailand complained when China's Fu Ming awarded a penalty in the closing minutes of their qualifier against Saudi Arabia, which consigned them to a 1-0 defeat in Riyadh.

"The penalty was not our mistake. In fact, in the first half, we should have been awarded a penalty," Thai coach Kiatisuk Senamuang told reporters.

Five days later, Saudi Arabia were trailing Iraq 1-0 until they were awarded penalties in the 81st and 87th minutes by Qatar's Khamis Al Marri. They scored both to win 2-1.

Such controversies are hardly new to football, but they have raised fresh questions about refereeing standards as Asian football strives to match other regions. Former Iran coach Afshin Ghotbi, who has also taken charge of clubs in Thailand and Japan, said referee selection was a sensitive area. After Japan's "ghost goal" in Saitama, Japanese fans on social media questioned whether the Arabic-speaking Qatari referee was biased in favour of the UAE.

"Assigning an official from an Arabic-speaking country close to the UAE in a game between Japan and UAE placed unnecessary pressure on the officiating team," Ghotbi told AFP.

"Confederations can improve by assigning officials to matches to eliminate even a hint of influence or bias."

Al Jassim was later criticised for disallowing an apparently legitimate goal for Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors against Shanghai SIPG in the AFC Champions League quarter-finals. However, the incident was quickly forgotten as Jeonbuk went on to win 5-0.

'ARIGATO'

The Kuala Lumpur-based Asian Football Confederation refused to comment on individual referees. But it has been increasingly active in referee development and education, holding seminars and courses all over the continent.

Strides have been made. Ravshan Irmatov of Uzbekistan has taken charge of World Cup semi-finals and quarter-finals, and Iran's Alireza Faghani officiated at the 2016 Rio Olympic gold medal match. One high-profile outing didn't go so well. In the opening match of the 2014 World Cup, Japan's Yuichi Nishimura was roundly criticised when he gave Brazil a highly disputable penalty against Croatia.

After it put the misfiring hosts 2-1 up and on their way to a 3-1 win, Brazil's O Globo newspaper gratefully ran the headline "Arigato" ("Thank you" in Japanese).

Later that year, Nishimura was again under fire when he turned down Al Hilal's repeated penalty appeals in their AFC Champions League final defeat to Western Sydney Wanderers.

The Saudi club issued an angry statement alleging corruption and calling the game a "black spot in the history of Asian football" which had "looted the rights of an entire nation".

In a continent which has endured a litany of match-fixing scandals, suspicions of corruption are never far away.

But Alfred Riedl, coach of Indonesia with spells in Vietnam, Laos, Palestine and Kuwait, said sometimes the quality of refereeing is simply not good enough.

"The standard of referees in Southeast Asia is simply not adequate and is often really bad," Riedl told AFP. "Everyone makes mistakes but too many times, the referees' decisions are unknowable. In Indonesia there is still the same bad quality of refereeing as six years ago as referees are scared to make big decisions."

Ghotbi said that while improvements have been made in Asian officiating, more could be done.

"Compared to... other continents, there are differences in judgement of referees, their management and interaction with players and coaches," he said.

"Most judgement errors has to do with experience and understanding the context of the game... obviously, there is a longer history of professional football in other regions, and Asian football is trying to close the gap."

China also complained about a disallowed goal in the 0-0 draw with Hong Kong in November which appeared to have torpedoed their World Cup qualifying campaign. But, as is the way with such protests, the result was allowed to stand. — AFP

Sevilla tops Real Betis in Spanish league derby

MADRID: Sevilla provisionally moved to second place in the Spanish league after defeating Real Betis 1-0 in the Seville derby on Tuesday.

Argentine defender Gabriel Mercado scored the winning goal from a free kick delivered by midfielder Samir Nasri in the 51st minute at the Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan Stadium. Mercado redirected the ball just enough to beat goalkeeper Antonio Adan.

"It was a great atmosphere," Mercado said. "I'm incredibly happy to have experienced this, scoring a goal and helping the team earn this victory."

Sevilla reached 11 points with its third win in five games, moving to within a point of leader Real Madrid, which hosts Villarreal on Wednesday with a chance to win its fifth match in a row. Third-place Barcelona, three points behind Madrid, plays fifth-place Atletico Madrid at the Camp Nou.

Just two minutes after Sevilla took the lead, Real Betis had a goal by Alex Alegria disallowed because of offside, although replays indicated it should have counted.

"We didn't deserve to lose this match," Real Betis midfielder Joaquin Sanchez said. "We played with intensity and had our chances, but we let them score on a set piece. A lot of times matches like this are decided on details. We didn't have luck on our side." Betis stayed with five points, dropping to 13th in the standings.

MALAGA 2, EIBAR 1

Teenage Moroccan striker Youssef En-Nesyri scored a 76th-minute winner to give Malaga its first league victory.

Nano put the visitors ahead from inside the area in the 42nd but Sandro equalized for Malaga two minutes later and En-Nesyri sealed the win by curling a left-foot shot into the far corner after a breakaway. The 19-year-old Moroccan, one of Malaga's most promising players, was making his first-team debut at home.

Malaga had lost two in a row after consecutive draws in its first two games. It provisionally moved to 12th in the 20-team standings with five points from as many matches. Eibar hadn't lost since a 2-1 result at Deportivo La Coruna in its opener. The Basque club remains seventh in the standings with seven points. — AP

SEVILLA: Sevilla supporters display a giant banner before the Spanish league football match Sevilla FC vs Real Betis at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan stadium in Sevilla on Tuesday. Sevilla won 1-0. — AFP

PSG claims French league top spot with win against Caen

PARIS: Edinson Cavani scored his sixth league goal of the season and teammate Lucas netted his fourth as Paris Saint-Germain returned to the top of the French league with a 3-0 victory over newly-promoted Dijon on Tuesday.

Following a stuttering start to the season, the four-time defending champions followed up their 6-0 rout of Caen with a convincing win at the Parc des Princes. Cavani, who hit four against Caen in the space of 45 minutes, doubled PSG's lead from the penalty spot in the 26th minute after Hungarian defender Adam Lang scored an own goal when he deflected a cross from Maxwell. The Uruguay striker is now the league's joint top scorer with six goals, the same as Lyon forward Alexandre Lacazette.

Lucas completed PSG's win in the 67th minute with a header past goalkeeper Baptiste Reynet from Maxwell's cross. The win provisionally lifted PSG to the top of the league standings. Level on points with PSG but with a match in hand, Monaco can claim back the lead when it travels to Nice later.

LILLE 1, TOULOUSE 2

After not scoring in the French league for 15 months, Swedish striker Ola Toivonen ended his goal drought in style, netting twice as his new club Toulouse won 2-1 at Lille. Toivonen spent last season on loan from Rennes at Premier League side Sunderland and joined Toulouse this summer.

Toivonen's goals, combined with another superb performance from teenage goalkeeper Alban Lafont, helped Toulouse to its first win at its northern rival in 10 years.After Toivonen put the visitors in front in the 12th minute with a clinical finish past Vincent Enyeama, Lafont denied Younousse Sankhare's header. He was powerless when Marko Basa headed the ball home form a free kick to level in the 35th but kept out a close-range effort from Nicolas de Preville just after halftime. Toivonen scored the winner with 13 minutes left, connecting with a cross at the penalty spot and sending Enyeama the wrong way. Toulouse moved to a provisional third place, two points behind PSG. — AP

PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's Uruguayan forward Edinson Cavani (L) celebrates with Paris Saint-Germain's Argentinian forward Angel Di Maria (R) after scoring a penalty during the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Dijon (DFCO) at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris, on Tuesday. — AP

LIVERPOOL: Everton's Enner Valencia, front, and Norwich City's Youssouf Mulumbu battle for the ball during the English League Cup, Third Round soccer match between Everton and Norwich City at Goodison Park, Liverpool. England, Tuesday. — AP

Fabregas downs Leicester as Everton crash out

LONDON: Cesc Fabregas made an emphatic point to Chelsea manager Antonio Conte as his double sealed a 4-2 win at Leicester, while Everton and Bournemouth suffered shock third-round exits from the English Football League Cup yesterday.

Fabregas has been limited to three substitute appearances in the Premier League since Conte took charge over the summer, but the Spain midfielder proved he can still be a game-changer with an influential display capped by the decisive two goals in extra-time.

"I was happy to play from the start! Hopefully this will shut up a few journalists talking rubbish all the time," said Fabregas, who has been linked with a move away from Chelsea.

Elsewhere, second-tier Norwich spoiled Everton's impressive start to the season and inflicted Ronald Koeman's first defeat as Toffees boss with a 2-0 win at Goodison Park.

Bournemouth were the other top-flight casualties as second-tier Preston won 3-2 thanks to a hat-trick from Denmark striker Simon Makienok.

At the King Power Stadium, Shinji Okazaki put Premier League champions Leicester ahead in the 17th minute when the Japan striker punished terrible Chelsea defending to head home from close range.

Okazaki followed his first goal since March with a second in the 34th minute. Gary Cahill reduced the deficit on the stroke of half-time, the defender heading home after being left unmarked at the far post from a Fabregas corner.

The Blues equalised four minutes after the interval through Cesar Azpilicueta's blistering long-range effort.

Leicester had to play extra-time with 10 men after Marcin Wasilewski's 89th minute dismissal for elbowing Diego Costa and Fabregas made them pay, finishing a flowing move in the 92nd minute and drilling home again two minutes later. Everton are second in the Premier League but Koeman made six changes and his stand-ins were brushed aside by promotion-chasing Norwich. The Canaries went ahead when former Everton striker Steven Naismith slipped as he went to shoot and inadvertently lobbed the ball into the net. Josh Murphy's superb strike from the edge of the area in the 74th minute completed the upset. "I can't criticise the players. We played well but weren't clinical enough. The difference was Norwich were clinical with their two chances," Koeman said.

HAT-TRICK HERO

At Dean Court, Makienok, who hadn't scored in his previous 19 appearances, gave Preston the lead in the 10th minute before Bournemouth equalised through Lewis Grabban's 53rd minute penalty. Dan Gosling put the hosts ahead from close range in the 76th minute, only for Makienok to force extra-time in the 85th minute and then win it for Simon Grayson's men in the 111th minute. Lucas Perez's first goals for Arsenal inspired a 4-0 rout of second-tier Nottingham Forest at the City Ground.

Gunners boss Arsene Wenger, who has never won the League Cup, made 11 changes from the team that thrashed Hull on Saturday and the understudies went ahead in the 23rd minute through a long-range effort from Switzerland midfielder Granit Xhaka.

Spanish striker Perez, who arrived from Deportivo La Coruna on transfer-deadline day, opened his Arsenal account in his third appearance with a 60th-minute penalty after a foul on Chuba Akpom. Perez got his second in the 71st minute and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain got Arsenal's fourth in stoppage time.

"It was a motivated team against us and we had a complete performance. The speed and movement of our play was fantastic," Wenger purred. Liverpool, last year's beaten finalists, remain on course for a return to Wembley after a 3-0 win against Championship side Derby at the iPro Stadium. Estonia centre-back Ragnar Klavan took advantage of poor Derby defending to fire home in the 24th minute.

Philippe Coutinho doubled Liverpool's lead in the 50th minute and Divock Origi put the result beyond doubt four minutes later.

Newcastle defeated Championship rivals Wolves 2-0, Leeds beat fellow second-tier side Blackburn 1-0, while Reading won 2-1 in another all-Championship clash at Brighton. — AFP

Forgery claims hit AC Milan takeover bid

MILAN: A Chinese consortium looking to purchase AC Milan has been accused of providing false documents during its initial negotiations with the Serie A giants, according to reports yesterday. Sino-Europe Sports Investment Management Changxing Co, led by businessman Li Yonghong, has already paid 100m euros to Fininvest, the holding company of AC Milan owner and president Silvio Berlusconi, who is expected to sign off on the 740m euro deal by the end of the year.

But a report by the Bloomberg financial news site, which cites a statement from the Chinese lender whose name appears on the documents, alleges that false documents were used in the initial negotiations.

The report claims Sino-Europe Sports provided documents on "what appears to be Bank of Jiangsu Co. stationery, purporting to show transaction details of a consortium member's corporate account".

It added that "after reviewing the matter, Bank of Jiangsu found it hadn't issued any such document detailing the account's transactions". In a statement to AFP on Wednesday, Fininvest said it would "not confirm" that it had received the documents in question, adding: "and we do not intend to comment on the affair." The Bloomberg report claims, however, that: "Fininvest checked the soundness of the buyers through contacts with Chinese financial institutions, and it continues to work to finalize the deal by the end of the year."

The claims, reported widely in the Italian media, have cast a shadow over a deal that could see Milan, one of the world's legendary football clubs, following in the footsteps of city rivals Inter Milan in being sold to Chinese investors.

Inter, Italy's last Champions League winners, in 2010, are now owned by the Chinese group Suning, who bought a majority stake in the club several months ago from Indonesian Erick Thohir. AC Milan already pulled out of one deal with Chinese investors last year, and recently the new bid was hit by doubts.

Sino-Europe Sports issued a statement last week to quash claims it was struggling to gather the necessary funds for a successful takeover. "Sino-Europe Sports confirms that everything is progressing rapidly towards the closing for the acquisition of Milan," the statement said. "Yesterday [on Friday] David Han took part in a series of planned meetings with his advisors and Fininvest. All the parties are working to close the deal in the planned timescale."

According to preliminary negotiations between the parties, the deal is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. — AFP

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Tennis chiefs plan revamp of Davis, Fed Cup finals Page 18

TORONTO: Carey Price #31 of Team Canada eyes the puck next to Kyle Palmieri #23 of Team USA in the third period during the World Cup of Hockey at the Air Canada Center on Tuesday in Toronto, Canada. Canada won the game 4-2. — AFP

USA out of World Cup after Canada drubbing

TORONTO: Patrick Kane was on the verge of tears as the final horn sounded on another American loss to Canada. A 4-2 wipeout eliminated the United States from the World Cup of Hockey on Tuesday night, ending what was perhaps the best chance for this generation of players to win an international competition. Instead, the US flamed out in two games, leaving disappointment, frustration and plenty of questions about the direction of the program.

In the aftermath of a dominant, clinical performance by the tournament favorite, and a lackluster showing by the US, top players were shell-shocked by the early exit.

"Two games here and you're done," said Kane, who doesn't have a goal in nine consecutive games in a Team USA uniform. "It's just amazing. It's crazy the way hockey is. It's definitely frustrating being an American and having these opportunities and have nothing to show for it."

A shutout at the hands of Team Europe, a group of players from eight countries, and then a mistake-prone loss to Canada was enough to keep the US from reaching the semifinals. Canada and Europe clinched spots.

What Kane called a "dud" against Europe put the US in a must-win mode against its biggest rival. Regulation victories against Canada and the Czech Republic would've advanced the Americans, and now the final round-robin game Thursday is a matchup of lame-duck teams. US general manager Dean Lombardi said in June that his goal was to build a team that could beat Canada. The American roster, heavy on size and grit and light on speed and skill, was widely panned when it was announced, and it took more hits this week.

"You guys can beat up the roster all you want," coach John Tortorella said. "You look at some of those players on our roster, there are some pretty good skilled players and we just simply did not do enough offensively and we self-inflicted quite a bit in two games."

CRITICISM

Tortorella said he's still waiting for the US to generate some offense. It got an early goal by defenseman Ryan McDonagh and a late one by T.J. Oshie well after the game had been decided.

Forwards Phil Kessel, Paul Stastny and Kyle Okposo, and defensemen Justin Faulk and Kevin Shattenkirk were among the players left off the roster who could have provided more offense.

Minutes after the game went final, Kessel tweeted : "Just sitting around the house tonight with my dog. Felt like I should be doing something important, but couldn't put my finger on it." It was just his third tweet in the past year, one of which was a picture of him raising the Stanley Cup. After mistakes led to two Canada goals by Matt Duchene and one each by Corey Perry and Patrice Bergeron, US players brushed off Kessel's tweet and criticism of the roster construction.

"Everyone that was here deserved it," said captain Joe Pavelski, who like Kane and fellow star Zach Parise struggled to generate scoring chances. "There's decisions made and that's the way they went and that's the way that group was put together. It doesn't matter who has here or who wasn't. It was a job for us to get it done, and we were not good enough."

The US continued to be not good enough against Canada, falling to 1-5 against the world's top hockey power dating to the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. On Tuesday night Canada was the better team from about the five-minute mark on, getting two goals 14 seconds apart to move past McDonagh's and benefiting from 34 saves by Carey Price.

Price's international shutout streak ended at 228:41, but Canada got the job done. "There was times tonight that I didn't think we were even close to being as good as we're capable of being," Canada coach Mike Babcock said. "We weren't as good as we're capable of being tonight."

The US was not nearly as good as it was capable of, despite the star power left at home. Defenseman Dustin Byfuglien left Duchene alone on his first goal, and winger Max Pacioretty failed to clear the puck on his second, the kinds of mistakes no team can make against Canada.

"It was very important that if they were going to get something, they had to earn it," Tortorella said. "I thought we had a good start, but we gave them a couple of freebies there and you just can't do that."

Goaltender Jonathan Quick continued his strong international play, stopping 30 shots to keep the score from being even more lopsided. But like Kessel sitting at home with his dog, Quick couldn't get goals at the other end to keep the US from another head-shaking loss.

"I feel like we let our country down, we let ourselves down," defenseman Ryan Suter said. "You come into this not knowing how many more chances you're going to get and to be out after two games is extremely disappointing." — AP

Rome Mayor Raggi rejects city's 2024 Olympic bid

ROME: Rome Mayor Virginia Raggi rejected the city's bid for the 2024 Olympics yesterday, effectively dooming the capital's candidacy for the second time in four years.

If approved by Rome's city assembly, Raggi's motion to withdraw the bid would leave only Los Angeles, Paris and Budapest, Hungary, in the running for the 2024 Games. The International Olympic Committee will decide on the host city in September 2017.

At a news conference in city hall, Raggi said it would be financially "irresponsible" to pursue the bid any further given the city is barely able to get its trash picked up. She highlighted the debts that previous Olympic host cities have incurred and the unfinished infrastructure already dotting Rome from previous sporting bids as reasons to justify the withdrawal. "In light of the data we have, these Olympics are not sustainable. They will bring only debt," she said. "We don't want sports to become another pretext for more cement foundations in the city. We won't allow it."

Raggi drew up a motion to withdraw the bid Wednesday and put it before the city assembly, which has the final say. There was no immediate word if and when the council would take it up.

Raggi had been scheduled to meet with Italian Olympic Committee president Giovanni Malago before going public with her decision. But about 45 minutes after the meeting was scheduled to begin, Malago and the rest of the delegation left city hall saying Raggi hadn't shown up.

Raggi said she was just running late. But Malago bitterly complained about what he called Raggi's "disrespect" and ignorance of the bidding process and costs. He urged her not to put the motion to the assembly. "Don't talk about things you know nothing about," he told a news conference at the headquarters of the national Olympic body. Malago said the committee would continue working on the bid in the absence of a formal vote, noting the next dossier must be submitted to the IOC on Oct. 7.

"If there's no formal act, we can continue," he said. "They can't just declare it in a news conference." Indeed, rival cities weren't ready to count Rome out altogether. "There is no confirmation that Rome has departed from the 2024 race and as such it is not appropriate for us to offer any comment except to wish our Italian colleagues well during this period of difficult time," the Budapest Olympic committee said.

Raggi, who was elected in June representing the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement, campaigned with the message that an Olympic bid was unsustainable for a city struggling to emerge from years of corruption and poor public services. She said she was merely being consistent with her campaign position.

Her rejection marks Rome's second withdrawal in four years after then-Premier Mario Monti stopped the city's plans to bid for the 2020 Olympics because of financial problems.

The Rome bid was approved by the city assembly last year with 38 votes in favor and only six against - meaning Raggi will have to put the issue up for another vote to officially end the candidacy.

The IOC requires bidders to have support from the government and city. Malago ruled out a bid for the 2028 Games, even from another Italian city. "We've lost all credibility, if we pull out," he said. "Because they'll think people in Italy are not serious." Previous Mayor Ignazio Marino, who was forced out over an expense account scandal, had supported the bid. And Premier Matteo Renzi has been a big fan of the candidacy since he helped launch it in 2014. He has said the bid would be doomed if Rome's mayor doesn't support it.A budget of 24 million euros ($27 million) has already been allotted - much of it spent - to the bid committee, even though candidacy head Luca Cordero di Montezemolo has no salary. Raggi's rejection was another stinging blow for the IOC's "Olympic Agenda 2020" program, which was designed to make bidding for and hosting the games more flexible and more affordable.

"Rome was able to bid only after the IOC changed its rules with Agenda 2020 and reduced the costs of putting together a candidacy," Malago said. — AP

ROME: Rome Mayor Virginia Raggi smiles during a press conference after she did not show up at a scheduled meeting with a delegation of the Italian Olympic Committee, in Rome, yesterday. — AP

Ceferin unveils Euro 2020 logo

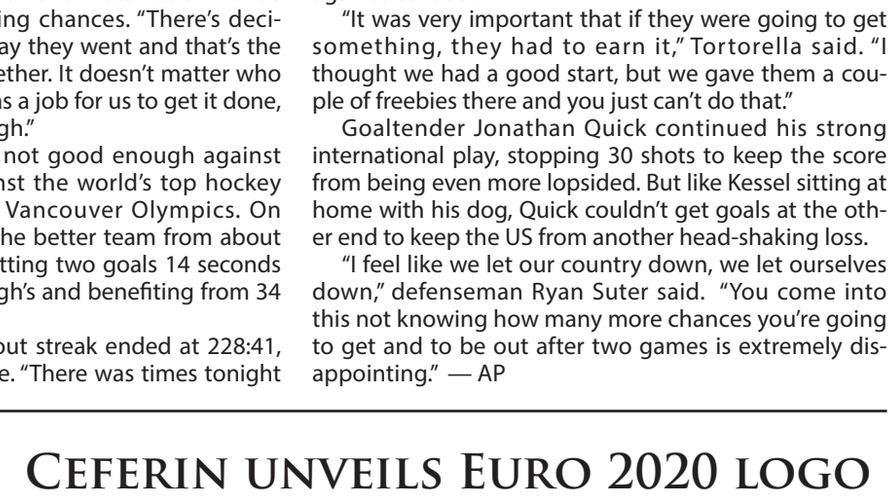
LONDON: New UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin unveiled the logo for Euro 2020 at the tournament's official launch in London yesterday. The logo shows multicoloured fan silhouettes standing either side of the competition's Henri Delaunay Trophy on a green bridge, representative of the links between the 13 host countries. The 2020 European Championship is being staged in 13 cities across Europe to mark the 60th anniversary of the competition, with the semi-finals and final to take place at London's Wembley Stadium.

"UEFA wanted the 2020 tournament to be a true celebration of the game we all love and cherish," Ceferin said in a speech at London's City Hall municipal building.

"What better way could there be than to take the tournament, for one time only, to all four corners of our beautiful continent?"

Matches will also be played in Azerbaijan, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Russia, Scotland and Spain. Ceferin was accompanied by Greg Clarke, new chairman of England's Football Association, and Mayor of London Sadiq Khan. "We're looking forward to welcoming supporters from across Europe," said Khan.

"As a truly international city, London has a fanbase for almost every nation on earth. One of the great things about football in our city is that it brings people from different backgrounds together." — AFP



LONDON: Mayor of London Sadiq Khan (L) and UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin (R) pose for photographers with a replica cup mounted on the logo at an event to launch the logo for the 2020 UEFA European Championship football tournament in London yesterday. — AFP

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YANGON: This photo taken on September 1, 2016 shows bankers counting Myanmar kyat notes at a bank. —AFP

MYANMAR BANKS ON MOBILE MONEY

NATION SPINNING THROUGH A THRILLING ECONOMIC REVIVAL

YANGON: Carrying her wages in wads of cash across Myanmar was once a risky, onerous but unavoidable ritual for maid Khin Myint Oo. But now she just pings off a text to move the money to her children back home as mobile banking sweeps into a country whose people have for decades been locked out of basic financial services. Myanmar is spinning through a thrilling economic revival since shedding junta rule in 2011. But with an embryonic banking system-an estimated 90 percent of the population still do not have an account-the country's new civilian leaders are banking on mobile money as a shortcut.

"People keep money in their homes in a box," explained Khin Myint Oo, who moved to Myanmar's biggest city Yangon to work as a housekeeper and support her children in northeastern Shan state. With no bank branches nearby, the family faced two options: long trudges to the nearest teller or shipping stacks of tattered notes by bus. With just some 1,500 branches in a largely rural country the size of France, experts say it will take years to build enough banks to reach the 51 million population.

Many also have bad memories of 50 years of military rule, when bank runs and currency collapses were frequent and painful. But change is afoot. Khin Myint Oo now wires home to her children in a matter of minutes using Wave Money, one of the first mobile banking firms to roll out services. The company, a tie-up between a telco operator and a private bank, has built a network of 4,000 mum-and-pop shops around the country where clients can deposit and withdraw cash by phone.

Referred to as "human ATMS", these stores are far more accessible and numerous than bank branches. Wave constantly monitors their liquidity and dispatches agents to replenish shops running low on cash. "The advantage is it now takes very little time to transfer money," Khin Myint Oo said from inside the apartment she cleans for $2 a day-a sizeable raise from her days as a farmhand.

Don't bank on it

In one of its first moves since taking power in April, the government passed regulations allowing non-banks to enter the e-money market and offer services to the country's oceans of "unbanked". "In terms of things you could do straight away that would improve people's lives ...this (policy) would float right to the very top," said Sean Turnell, an Australian economist advising the administration. Mobile money began in Kenya a decade ago and is now used by nearly half the population.

Similar systems have since taken root across Sub-Saharan Africa and in other developing nations, providing millions of people with safe ways to move and manage their money. Myanmar's promise as a frontier market is beginning to show especially as phone towers are erected. Just four years ago only 10 percent of the population had a mobile phone-now it is 60 percent, with most using smartphones.

"Myanmar was always the market that everyone would talk about in mobile money conferences because it was so untouched," said Wave Money CEO Brad Jones. Yet unleashing the technology's full potential rests on overcoming an age-old obstacle: trust. During its economic heyday under British colonial rule, Myanmar was home to the highest concentration of foreign-owned banks in Southeast Asia. But its fortunes swiftly changed after a military clique grabbed power in 1962 and nationalized all banks, the first of many policies that sunk the nation into poverty. Faith in the financial system tanked after a flurry of demonetization decrees in the 1980s wiped out nearly two thirds of the cash in circulation, triggering bank runs and driving many people to convert any savings into gold.

Gold and gem stones

"Getting people to trust ephemeral monetary value will be the first challenge. If people have any surplus at all they often buy gold and gem stones," said Turnell. Changing this behavior is a crucial step on the path out of poverty. Physical assets like gold cannot be cashed quickly, forcing the poor to turn to loan sharks in times of need.

Mobile money is Myanmar's best bet at swiftly linking its poor to safer, more regulated financial services, said Paul Luchtenburg from the UN's Capital Development Fund in Yangon. "If it was only bank-led, it would take a long time because the banks are so busy just getting their house in order," he told AFP. In Dala, a muddy suburb across the river from Yangon, those who want to save money have two options: take the boat to a bank in the city or bury it in the backyard. Like much of the country, there are zero banks or ATMs in town. Yet several shops have started offering mobile banking services. "When this service becomes more popular, it will be so much more helpful to people than banks," said Zaw Zaw Oo, whose small convenience store is now part of Wave's network of "human ATMs". Until then, they'll have to wait for the next ferry. —AFP

GULF MIXED WITH SAUDI OUTPERFORMING PEERS

MIDEAST STOCKS

DUBAI: Bourses in the Gulf were mixed yesterday with Saudi Arabia's bourse supported by the petrochemical sector while Egypt lost steam as local and regional funds exited positions. Saudi Arabia's index rose 0.4 percent in moderate trade as Brent prices firmed over $46 a barrel. Saudi Basic Industries, the petrochemical heavyweight, climbed 0.9 percent.

The insurance sub-index, usually actively traded by day traders, added 1.7 percent as almost all the constituents advanced, recouping some of the heavy losses of the week. BUPA Arabia, a mid-sized medical insurer, rose 2.9 percent. But banking shares were mixed, with the sub-index losing 0.2 percent as the sector's heavyweights diverged. Al Rajhi Bank, the largest listed Islamic lender, dropped 2.7 percent.

"There is an overhang from the construction sector on Saudi banks, but we believe that the capital buffers in top-tier banks are sufficient," said Kunal Damle, institutional sales for brokerage at Bahrain's Securities & Investment Company (SICO). Samba Financial Group, which derived 11 percent of its net income from corporate banking in the first half of the year, jumped 4.9 percent.

The exchange will be closed today in observance of the kingdom's national day holiday and will resume trade on Sunday Sept 25. Qatar's stock index slipped 0.04 percent, after advancing 1.0 percent on Tuesday as passive funds flowed into the companies now included in the FTSE's secondary emerging market index.

Dubai drops

Seven of the 22 shares which are now FTSE members pulled back, with Ezdan Holding Group dropping 1.2 percent, while five of them advanced with Masraf Al Rayan adding 0.3 percent. But mobile operator Ooredoo, now a member of the FTSE emerging market index, added 2.4 percent after the company said late on Tuesday it had no intention of selling any of its interest in Indonesian subsidiary Indosat Ooredoo. There had been media speculation it was considering a stake sale to focus on Middle Eastern markets.

Dubai's index failed to hold onto small gains from earlier in the day and dropped 0.3 percent as declines in blue chips weighed on the exchange. Emaar Properties retreated 1.3 percent and Dubai Investments lost 1.0 percent. But Abu Dhabi's index rose 0.2 percent although activity was lower than previous sessions this week. Union National Bank, which has shed 6.7 percent since Sunday, added 1.0 percent.

Cairo retreats

Cairo's main index retreated 1.4 percent in this week's highest volume of trade as both local and regional funds cashed out, bourse data showed. All 30 shares declined with real estate developer Amer Group Holding slumping 6.9 percent and Qalaa Holdings dropping 5.3 percent. "Investors are hopeful, but are not holding their breath waiting for the IMF $12 billion loan and the host of policy actions that should be taken to secure it," said a Cairo based portfolio manager. —Reuters

AIRBUS: US GRANTS LICENSE FOR PLANES IN IRAN DEAL

DUBAI: Airbus announced yesterday that the US government has granted it a license to sell the first 17 airplanes involved in a landmark deal with Iran made possible by last year's nuclear agreement. The announcement comes as Iranian leaders and US officials are gathered this week in New York for the United Nations General Assembly and serves as a sign that the outgoing administration of President Barack Obama will honor the economic terms of the accord.

Airbus received the license from the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, Airbus spokesman Justin Dubon told The Associated Press. He said the first 17 planes will be A320s and A330s. He declined to offer a breakdown of how many of each are involved in the initial sale, but said Airbus hoped to receive a second license allowing it to sell the remaining planes to Iran.

Iranian officials had no immediate comment and its state media did not immediately report the approval. Though based in Europe, Airbus was required to get the US Treasury's license for the deal as at least 10 percent of Airbus components are of American origin. In January, national carrier Iran Air signed agreements to buy 118 planes from Airbus, estimated to be worth some 22.8 billion euros ($25 billion). The deal included 21 A320ceos, 24 A320neos, 27 A330ceos, 18 A330neos, 16 A350-1000s and 12 double-decker A380s.

Base model A320s are currently listed at an average of $98 million, while A330s start at $231.5 million. That puts the value of the approved 17 aircraft in the first license around at least $18 billion and possibly much higher based on list prices, though buyers typically negotiate sizable discounts for bulk orders. Most Iranian planes were purchased before the 1979 Islamic Revolution that ousted Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and brought Islamists to power. Out of Iran's 250 commercial planes, 162 were flying in June, while the rest are grounded due to lack of spare parts.

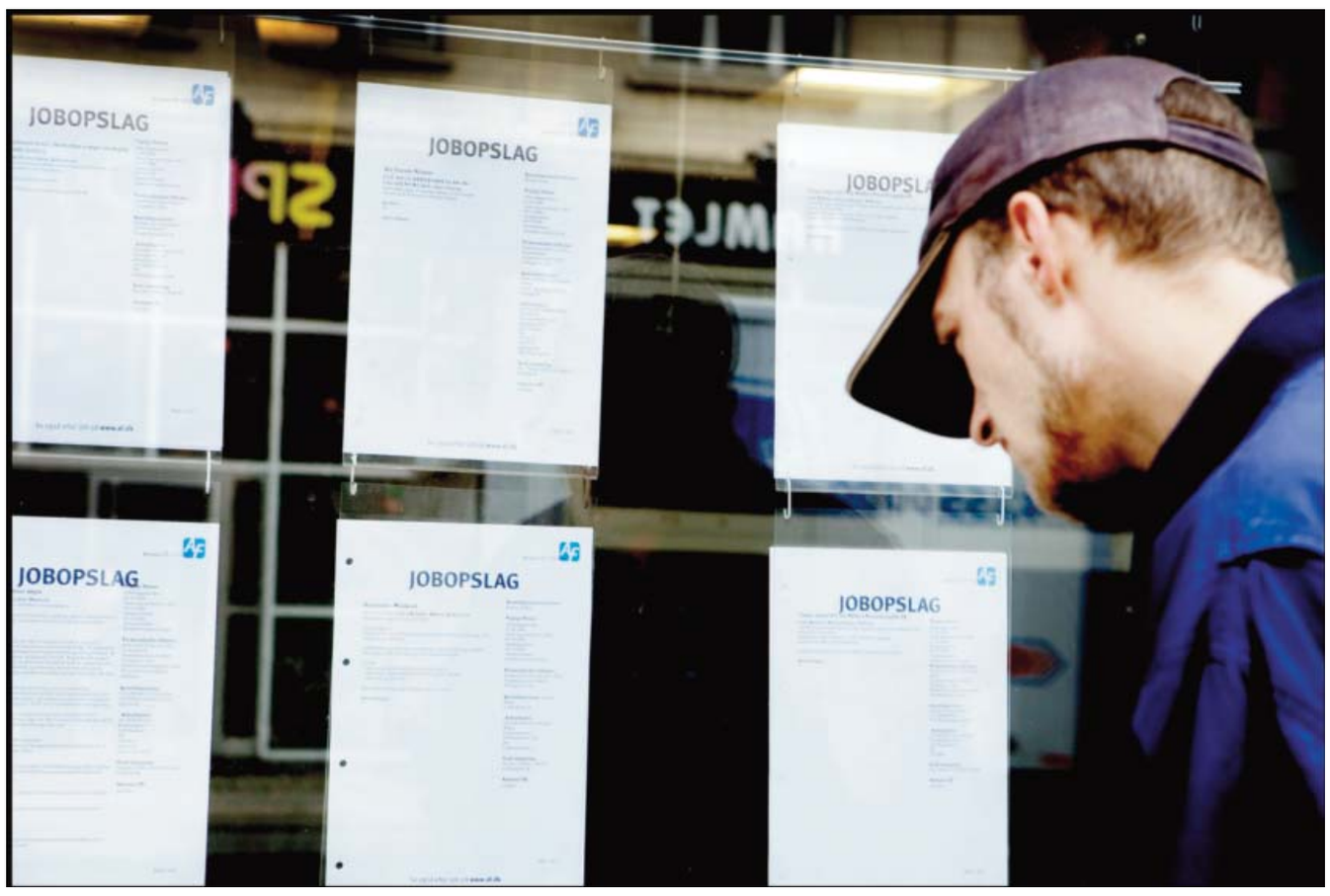
The announcement by Airbus will be closely watched by Chicago-based Boeing Co., which has an agreement with Iran that Iranian officials have suggested could be worth as much as $25 billion. Such a deal would be the biggest between an American company and Iran since the Islamic Revolution and US Embassy takeover. In a June letter to the US Congress, Boeing said the deal involves Iran Air buying 80 aircraft with a total list price of $17.6 billion, with deliveries beginning in 2017 and running until 2025. Iran Air also will lease 29 new Boeing 737s. —AP

Denmark eyes looming skills shortage as economy picks up

Population ages while youth shun vocational jobs

COPENHAGEN: After a lackluster recovery from the 2008 financial crisis, Denmark's central bank has warned that the labor market faces a squeeze as unemployment falls, the population ages and young people shun vocational jobs. At Technical Education Copenhagen, traineeships for another 20 to 30 lorry drivers could probably have been found if only people were interested in them, according to Anders Wendelboe, a head of education at the vocational training college.

In a country where work-life balance is highly valued, a wrongful perception that the job came with irregular working hours was putting some people off, he speculated. "Young people today would like to have leisure time, they would like to have a family," he said. A lack of skilled workers was also threatening growth at Teccon Form, a company in the western town of Holstebro making tools for injection molding, employing around 20 people. "There has probably been too much focus on having a university education," chief executive Michael Nederby lamented. "There has been a slightly higher status around that, and we are fighting against that," he said, adding that he had been forced to raise salaries to compete with other employers.



COPENHAGEN: This file photo taken on September 18, 2006 shows a man searching for jobs at a job center. — AFP

Central bank warning

Denmark's central bank last week warned that the country was technically at full employment and that the economy could be hit if the country did not find ways of growing its labor force. "Unemployment has now reached its 'structural level' ... There are, so to speak, no labor reserves among the unemployed," it said in a quarterly report. "There are already signs of pressures in the labor market. The clearest indications are reporting of labor shortages in both the construction and manufacturing sectors," it added.

Seasonally adjusted unemployment stood at 4.2 percent in July, according to data from Statistics Denmark based on the number of people on unemployment benefits and in labor market activation programs. The number rises to 6.2 percent under the so called ILO (International Labor Organization) measure, which is used to compare unemployment in different countries. Denmark was badly hit by a burst property bubble during the 2008 financial crisis and growth has lagged the economies of neighboring Sweden and Germany. The country's central bank believes economic output will edge up 0.9 percent this year and 1.5 percent in 2017.

No quick fix

"The problem is the greatest among vocationally trained labor with technical skills, such as electricians, industry technicians and mechanics," said Steen Nielsen, head of labor market policy at the Confederation of Danish Industry. A previous reform raising the age of retirement, as well as using foreign labor-mostly from other EU countries-would help plug the skills gap in the short term, he added.

Still, as Denmark's population ages, that is unlikely to be enough. "A shift is taking place in the labor market," said Stine Pilegaard Jespersen, the head of labor market and education policy at the Confederation of Danish Enterprise. "More elderly are leaving the labor market ... and the young who are coming in are much less likely to have a vocational education than those who are leaving," she added. Two of the country's top markets for foreign labor, Germany and Poland, also have ageing populations and will also see their workforce shrink over the coming decades, she noted.

Denmark received 21,000 asylum seekers last year, and many Danes worry that the new arrivals-like previous generations of refugees-will struggle to find work, putting pressure on the Scandinavian country's welfare state. While some professions facing labor shortages, such as bakers and butchers, could offer opportunities, refugees were unlikely to play a major part in fixing the problem, Jespersen said.

A survey published by Denmark's integration ministry in May showed that 55 percent of newly arrived refugees had only completed primary school, while eight percent had no education whatsoever. "What we typically see with refugees is that they don't have very strong skills. Many of them are very young and don't have a lot of schooling, and they also don't have a lot of work experience," said Nielsen. "On top of that there is a big language barrier," he added. — AFP

News in brief

India wants UAE, Saudi oil for strategic reserve

MUMBAI: India is talking to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia to fill half of the 1.5 million tons of the Mangalore strategic storage, along with Iranian crude, its oil minister said yesterday. Dharmendra Pradhan told a news conference India is exploring two to three other models for sourcing oil to fill the remainder of the storage. During Saudi Arabia Energy Minister Kahlid A Al-Falih's visit to New Delhi in October, India plans to discuss the filling of the Mangalore strategic storage, and investments in refinery and petrochemical projects. Globally, most of the biggest crude oil consuming countries have a strategic storage capacity of at least 50 days, but India currently stands less than 10 days.

Qatar budget back to near balance by 2018

DOHA: Qatar's budget should be back to "near balance" by 2018, as it overcomes the shock waves from a global fall in energy prices, economists at Qatar National Bank have forecast. The QNB, in its "Qatar Economic Insight" report, predicts that rising oil prices and the introduction of a value-added tax will help Qatar recover from the deficits expected in 2016 and 2017. "The government's budget balance is expected to register a deficit of 5.3 percent of GDP in 2016 and 2.2 percent in 2017, before recovering to near balance in 2018," the report said. "The government's revenue is expected to recover in 2017 with rising oil prices. "Furthermore, the introduction of a value-added tax (expected at 5 percent rate) should boost the government's revenue in 2018 by about 1 percent of GDP." This year Qatar faces its first budget deficit in 15 years-expected to total more than $12 billion-as the emirate copes with the oil price slump.

Egypt's current account deficit rises to $18.7 bn

CAIRO: Egypt's current account deficit rose to $18.7 billion for the 2015-16 fiscal year that ended in June, from $12.1 billion last year, central bank data showed. Egypt's economy is struggling to recover after a mass uprising in 2011 that drove away tourists and foreign investors and created a shortage of foreign currency that has sapped its ability to purchase from abroad and relaunch key industries. The trade deficit for the financial year stood at $37.6 billion compared with a deficit of $39.1 billion last year. The improvement was "due partly to the decline in world oil prices, which had a bearing on Egyptian exports and imports", a central bank statement said. Total exports for the financial year tallied $18.7 billion against $56.3 billion in imports. Those were each less than the $22.24 billion exported and $61.31 billion imported last year. Tourism receipts roughly halved to $3.77 billion from $7.37 billion a year earlier. Egypt's tourism industry, a cornerstone of the economy and a crucial source of hard currency, has struggled to rebound since 2011.

Why it matters: Minimum wage

WASHINGTON: Modest income growth for most Americans, strikes by fast-food workers, and the rapid growth of low-paying jobs at the same time middle-income work shrinks have combined to make the minimum wage a top economic issue for the 2016 campaign. Millions could benefit: Raising the federal minimum wage from $7.25 an hour to $12 would lift pay for 35 million workers, or 1 in 4 employees nationwide, according to the liberal Economic Policy Institute. But it would also boost costs for employers and may slow hiring. And it could lead to higher prices at clothing stores and restaurants and for other services.

PITTSBURGH: In this April 14, 2016, file photo, union organizers, students, and supporters for a $15 an hour wage march through the Oakland section Pittsburgh. — AP

Where they stand

Both candidates have struggled to articulate their positions. Hillary Clinton says she supports raising the minimum wage to $12 an hour, rather than the $15 supported by advocates for low-income workers and by the Democratic Party's platform. But she also supports state and local efforts to push it higher than $12. Donald Trump is harder to pin down. Last fall he opposed any increase in the minimum, saying that overall wages were too high in the U.S. In July he said the minimum wage should be $10, but added that states should "really call the shots."

Why it matters

Income for the typical household has fallen 2.4 percent since 1999, even after a big gain in 2015. That has elevated the issue of wage growth over other economic concerns, particularly as the unemployment rate has fallen back to pre-Great Recession levels. And low-wage industries are increasingly where the jobs are. The three occupations with the highest employment in 2015 were, in order, retail salespeople, cashiers and fast-food workers. Together they accounted for 11.3 million jobs, or 8 percent of the nation's total. They are also growing quickly. Of the 10 occupations that the Labor Department projects will produce the most jobs in the coming decade, five pay a median wage of less than $12 an hour.

Meanwhile, according to Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, in 2015 the US still had fewer middle-income jobs than it did before the recession. That reflects what economists call the "hollowing out" of the workforce, as traditional mid-level positions such as office administrators, mail clerks, and factory production workers are cut in recessions and never fully recover their previous levels of employment. Higher-paying and lower-paying jobs, meantime, have both surpassed their pre-recession levels.

Contrary to popular myth, low-wage jobs aren't dominated by teenagers earning extra spending money. About half of fast-food workers are 25 or over. And one-quarter have children. That has probably been key to a willingness by fast-food workers to demand higher pay. The push for a higher minimum has won considerable success at the state and local levels. Twenty-six states have lifted their minimums in the past two and a half years. California's will be $15 by 2022 and New York's will be $15 by July 2021.

A wage floor at that level makes even left-of-center economists nervous. It is double the current minimum, a much bigger jump than previous increases. Most economic research suggests that modest increases cost few, if any, jobs. The Congressional Budget Office estimated that a $10.10 minimum could reduce total employment by 500,000, or just 0.3 percent of all jobs. The CBO also found it would lift 900,000 people out of poverty. Still, $15 an hour is uncharted territory, with little research on its effects. — AP

First oil in 2 years leaves Libya's Ras Lanouf port

BENGHAZI: An oil tanker left the Libyan port of Ras Lanouf for Italy on Tuesday, an official said, the first shipment since fighting erupted over control of the "oil crescent" two years ago. Oil is war-ravaged Libya's key asset, and rival administrations have been vying for control of its oil wealth and territory since the 2011 uprising that overthrew Dictator Moamer Kadhafi and plunged the country into chaos.

"The Maltese-flagged vessel Seadelta has just left Ras Lanouf port with 776,000 barrels of oil, going to Italy. This is the first shipment of oil from Ras Lanouf port since November 2014," said Omran el-Fitouri, oil exports coordinator at the port. The shipment is also the first to leave any of the four ports in the area since they were seized by military strongman Khalifa Haftar last week.

His forces handed the ports over to the National Oil Corporation (NOC), which said that crude exports would resume "immediately" from Ras Lanuf and another of the four, Zuwaytina. The NOC says it is loyal to the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA), but also to the rival parliament based in the east which supports Haftar's forces and has refused to give the GNA its vote of confidence.

On Sunday, fighters loyal to the UN-backed unity government launched an attack aimed at retaking the key eastern oil ports, but were repelled by Haftar's forces. The fighting forced the Maltese-flagged tanker to turn back out to sea for safety, abandoning plans to load crude oil at Ras Lanouf. Other ports in the crescent have been operating intermittently in recent years, but if the breakthrough at Ras Lanouf-one of Libya's biggest ports-is sustained it could lend support to the status quo after the tussle for control. — AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.952
Indian Rupees	4.519
Pakistani Rupees	2.892
Srilankan Rupees	2.079
Nepali Rupees	2.827
Singapore Dollar	222.610
Hongkong Dollar	39.034
Bangladesh Taka	3.860
Philippine Peso	6.353
Thai Baht	8.706
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.776
Qatari Riyal	83.207
ani Riyal	786.772
Bahraini Dinar	804.440
UAE Dirham	82.471
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	29.050
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.480
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.216
Tunisian Dinar	137.460
Jordanian Dinar	427.340
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	2.0159
Morocco Dirham	31.471
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	302.750
Euro	338.470
Sterling Pound	394.030
Canadian dollar	230.490
Turkish lira	102.110
Swiss Franc	310.190
Australian Dollar	230.090
US Dollar Buying	301.550
GOLD	
20 Gram	266.420
10 Gram	136.130
5 Gram	68.910

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.950
Canadian Dollr	229.665
Sterling Pound	393.480
Euro	338.070
Swiss Frank	298.030
Bahrain Dinar	800.870
UAE Dirhams	82.710
Qatari Riyals	83.925
Saudi Riyals	81.510
Jordanian Dinar	426.885
Egyptian Pound	34.019
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.079
Indian Rupees	4.512
Pakistani Rupees	2.890
Bangladesh Taka	3.854
Philippines Pesso	6.328
Cyprus pound	159.675
Japanese Yen	3.970
Syrian Pound	2.405
Nepalese Rupees	3.840
Malaysian Ringgit	75.560
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.770
Thai Bhat	9.710
Turkish Lira	103.555

Bahrain Exchange Company

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.385785	0.395785
Czech Korune	0.004442	0.016442
Danish Krone	0.041106	0.046106
Euro	0.0331217	0.0340217
Norwegian Krone	0.032304	0.037504
Romanian Leu	0.075547	0.075547
Slovakia	0.009020	0.019020
Swedish Krona	0.031080	0.036080
Swiss Franc	0.301912	0.312912
Turkish Lira	0.097272	0.107572
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.219950	0.231950
New Zealand Dollar	0.214188	0.223688
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.223892	0.232892
Georgina Lari	0.136713	0.136713
US Dollars	0.298600	0.303300
US Dollars Mint	0.299100	0.303000
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003305	0.003889
Chinese Yuan	0.043845	0.047345
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036937	0.039687
Indian Rupee	0.004260	0.004649
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000019	0.000025
Japanese Yen	0.002863	0.003043
Kenyan Shilling	0.002981	0.002981
Korean Won	0.000259	0.000274
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069839	0.075839
Nepalese Rupee	0.002809	0.002979
Pakistan Rupee	0.002745	0.003035
Philippine Peso	0.006278	0.006578
Sierra Leone	0.000050	0.000056
Singapore Dollar	0.216326	0.226326
South African Rand	0.015668	0.024168
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001657	0.002237
Taiwan	0.009504	0.009684
Thai Baht	0.008358	0.008908
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.796349	0.804849
Egyptian Pound	0.024054	0.029172
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000183	0.000243
Jordanian Dinar	0.422783	0.431783
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.019789	0.043789
Nigerian Naira	0.001248	0.001883
Omani Riyal	0.779814	0.785494
Qatar Riyal	0.082333	0.083783
Saudi Riyal	0.079633	0.080933
Syrian Pound	0.001283	0.001503
Tunisian Dinar	0.133691	0.141691
Turkish Lira	0.097272	0.107572
UAE Dirhams	0.080989	0.082689
Yemeni Riyal	0.001368	0.001448

EU scraps time limits on free mobile roaming plan

BRUSSELS: The EU yesterday scrapped a controversial plan to limit its landmark free mobile phone roaming policy to 90 days a year, after an outcry from angry consumer groups. While doing away with time limits for roaming across the currently 28-nation bloc, the European Commission said it will instead impose checks to curb abuse of the system. "We will not put any kind of limits on duration or, how many days (travelers) can enjoy no roaming surcharges, but we decided to put some clear safeguards on residency," EU Commissioner for the Digital Single Market Andrus Ansip said at a news briefing.

The Commission announced the original "free roaming" plans with huge fanfare in early 2015, but when it unveiled the details earlier this month consumer groups were outraged by the limit. They had assumed the Commission's pledge to end mobile roaming charges-additional costs when people use their phone outside their home country-meant exactly that, without conditions or caveats.

As a result, they responded angrily to the 90-day "fair use" limit, charging that Brussels had caved in to the powerful telecoms companies for whom roaming charges have long been a lucrative source of extra income. The new rules, which require approval by the EU's 28 member states, end roaming "for all people who travel periodically in the EU," said the EU's Digital Economy Commissioner Guenther Oettinger. But they also ensure "that operators have the tools to guard against abuse of the rules," he added.

Instead of time limits, the new Commission proposal will allow operators to crackdown on people whose phone usage abroad "significantly" outweighs their domestic calls. It will also allow mobile operators to cancel SIM cards found to be used almost exclusively abroad by customers taking advantage of lower tariffs than those available in their home country. "If the company has doubts, it notifies the customer who has the right to justify the usage," Oettinger said.

The Commission's proposal now goes to the EU's 28 national regulators for negotiation, in order for the plan to be implemented by June 15 next year as originally promised. At the heart of the row over free roaming in Europe is the huge discrepancies in prices for phone and data usage across the EU, a market of 500 million people. —AFP

Zara owner Inditex profits rise as quick-trend model pays off

MADRID: Zara-owner Inditex posted a rise in first-half profits yesterday thanks to a well-honed business model allowing the Spanish group to beat rivals in whisking new trends to the shop racks. The world's largest fashion retailer by turnover, owned by the publicity-shy Amancio Ortega who has become the world's second richest man, said higher clothes sales and a rise in new stores around the globe drove the eight-percent jump.

Profits rose to 1.3 billion euros ($1.4 billion) in the six months from February 1 while sales were up 11 percent at 10.5 billion euros, said the company which operates eight store brands including Zara, upmarket label Massimo Dutti and teen chain Bershka.

Chief executive Pablo Isla said the main reason behind the sales jump was "the execution of our business model globally," with the opening of more than 80 stores in the first half, including in the new markets of Aruba, Paraguay and Nicaragua. While its competitors prioritise low production costs and outsource manufacturing to China, Inditex makes more than half of its clothes in factories in Spain, Portugal, North Africa, Turkey and Eastern Europe-relatively close to its main markets.

This business model allows it to get clothes to stores much faster than its rivals and avoid excess inventory. Clothes made for Zara, for instance, can go from the design stage to store racks in a mere two weeks. By comparison the process takes Inditex's nearest rival H&M six months because it sources its collection further away in China.

Concern over growth prospects

While H&M regularly challenges it for the global number one spot, Inditex is currently the largest fashion retailer by sales, based on the two companies' first-half results this year. But Noel Byrne, a business strategy professor at the Madrid branch of Boston's Suffolk University, warned that the Spanish group was bound to face tighter competition in the coming years as rival retailers adjust their own processes to match its quick delivery times.

"When you are making big profits it is one of the most dangerous times in business because the competition want a share of that, and they smell it and they inevitably come," he told AFP. As Inditex continues its push outside of Europe and plans to ramp up activities in China, it will also need to adapt its business model for Asia by opening design and production centers in the continent, Byrne added.

International expansion is crucial for the growth of the group, faced with Europe's slow economic recovery. According to a study by the Barcelona-based EAE Business School, China, Russia and South Korea are the countries where clothes spending has increased the most since 2004. Spain, meanwhile, only represents two percent of global clothes spending, and its share in Inditex's turnover has gone from 45 to less than 20 percent in just a decade. Despite the good results, shares in the group fell 0.89 percent to 32.39 euros in mid-afternoon trading due to a mix of profit taking and concern over "growth prospects in the second half that are slightly lower than before," said Manuel Pinto, an analyst at brokers XTB. —AFP

ARTEIXO, Spain: This file photo taken on March 18, 2015 shows Spanish textile giant Inditex CEO Pablo Isla arriving to a press conference announcing the company's year-end results. —AFP

WASHINGTON: Wells Fargo Chief Executive Officer John Stumpf prepares to testify on Capitol Hill. —AP

Peppered with tough questions, Wells Fargo CEO is taken aback

Calls for resignation from harshly critical senators

WASHINGTON: Facing bipartisan outrage from a Senate panel over accusations of employee misconduct, Well Fargo CEO John Stumpf appeared taken aback by the intensity of the verbal lashing. At a few points, he seemed flustered and stumbled a bit over his words. He bristled at assertions that the alleged opening of millions of customer accounts without their permission was a "scam."

Peppered with criticism for nearly three hours at a hearing Tuesday, the CEO of the nation's second-largest bank faced calls for his resignation from harshly critical senators. They pressed Stumpf about claims from regulators that Wells Fargo employees opened the unauthorized accounts, transferred customers' money into them, and even signed people up for online banking in a feverish drive to meet sales targets.

Debit cards were issued and activated, as well as PINs created, without customers knowing, US and California regulators said as they fined San Francisco-based Wells Fargo a combined $185 million earlier this month. While partly political theater, members of the Senate Banking Committee showed rare bipartisanship in their condemnation of Wells Fargo, and weren't satisfied by Stumpf's show of contrition.

"Words that come like a San Francisco fog on little cat feet won't cut it," Sen Sherrod Brown of Ohio, the panel's top Democrat, told Stumpf. "These were not magically delivered 'unwanted products.' This was fraud; fraud that you did not find or fix quickly enough." Stumpf said he was "deeply sorry" that the bank failed to meet its responsibility to customers and didn't act sooner to stem "this unacceptable activity." He promised to assist affected customers. The bank says it has already refunded to customers $2.6 million in fees charged for products that were sold without authorization.

'Gutless leadership'

After being lauded for navigating Wells through the financial crisis that struck in 2008, Stumpf faces what may be an even greater challenge. Senators of both parties were unrelenting in their attacks. Sen. Bob Corker, a conservative Republican from Tennessee, said it would be "malpractice" if Wells Fargo did not claw back executives' compensation. Elizabeth Warren, a Massachusetts Democrat and frequent critic of Wall Street, called for Stumpf and Wells Fargo to be criminally investigated and asserted that Stumpf had shown "gutless leadership" during the long-running sales misconduct.

"It struck me that he was berated in a way that shook him a bit," said Chris Kotowski, an analyst at Oppenheimer & Co. He contrasted that with Stumpf's usual "poised, deliberate" manner when speaking in other venues. Wells Fargo, familiar to customers for its stagecoach logo, had also long been known in the banking industry for its aggressive sales goals. The average Wells Fargo household had on average more than six products with the bank, a metric Wells top executives would highlight every quarter with investors. The bank even had a "Gr-Eight" program aiming to raise that number to eight. Wells never reached that level.

Stumpf defended the cross-selling of products - trying to draw customers into taking on more - as "deepening relationships." Senators underscored the irony of bank executives boasting on one hand to investors about the profitability of cross-selling, while also firing 5,300 sales employees for related activities. The senators also challenged assertions that Stumpf and other senior executives at the bank didn't become aware of the problems until 2013 - when the sales misconduct was reported by The Los Angeles Times. The practices apparently began several years earlier, as Stumpf suggested under questioning.

A major figure at the hearing who was not present was Carrie Tolstedt, the former head of the retail banking business. She announced in July that she would retire from the bank this year and is expected to leave with as much as $125 million in salary, stock options and other compensation. Senators hammered Stumpf on Tolstedt's compensation, demanding that he explain why the bank's board of directors - which he presides over as chairman - hasn't exercised its authority to take it back from her.

Questioned again by Warren, Stumpf said the bank had not considered firing Tolstedt. Under the settlement with regulators, Wells Fargo neither admitted nor denied the allegations. It later said it plans to eliminate the sales targets by Jan 1. Stumpf offered some detail at the hearing about who was fired, saying "bankers, bank managers, managers of managers, and even an area president." They ranged in pay from about $35,000 to $65,000. Not high enough up the chain, senators retorted. —AP

L'Oreal building solar projects at Arkansas, Kentucky plants

LITTLE ROCK: Cosmetics maker L'Oreal USA announced Tuesday it is building thousands of solar panels at its manufacturing facilities in Kentucky and Arkansas, a move the company says will help cut carbon emissions and create two of the biggest solar-powered projects in each state.

The subsidiary of the L'Oreal Group said it plans to install 5,000 solar panels at its Florence, Kentucky, plant and another 4,000 at its North Little Rock, Arkansas, plant. Work is expected to begin later this year, with the panels that will generate electricity for the plants operational by the middle of next year. The company said the Kentucky project will be the largest commercial solar array in that state and the North Little Rock project will be Arkansas' third-largest commercial array.

With the projects, L'Oreal USA said it will have reduced its carbon dioxide emissions by 80 percent from 101,634 metric tons in 2005 to a projected 20,059 this year. The projects also mean the company's five manufacturing plants in the United States will rely entirely on renewable electricity, L'Oreal said. The company will have 16 solar installations across the country with the addition of the two new ones. "We are committed to being a sustainability leader in the United States and are proud of the progress we have made," Frederic Roze, chief executive officer of L'Oreal Americas, said in a statement released by the company.

Clean renewable energy

Both projects are being developed by Little Rock-based Scenic Hill Solar. L'Oreal will own the solar panels and Scenic Hill will operate and maintain them, said Scenic Hill Chief Executive Officer Bill Halter. Halter, who is also Arkansas' former lieutenant governor, said the two arrays combined will produce about $7.5 million worth of electricity over the next 30 years, and described them as models for other manufacturers.

"We hope others will follow and we can see as a result of both of these projects that it is feasible for companies to reduce their electricity costs while simultaneously purchasing clean renewable electricity," Halter, Scenic Hill's chief executive officer, told The Associated Press. "I'd characterize it as a triple win of lower electricity prices, predictability in your electricity costs and producing sustainably with clean renewable energy."

L'Oreal officials said the two sites made sense given the size and history of the two manufacturing plants. L'Oreal has operated in Kentucky for more than 25 years, and the plant is the company's largest manufacturing site in the US and its largest worldwide by tonnage of products produced. The Arkansas plant has been in operation for more than 40 years. L'Oreal employs more than 400 people at its Kentucky plant and nearly 500 at the Arkansas site. "These are some of our biggest sites worldwide and therefore we have a responsibility to drive the performance of these sites from an environmental perspective," Richard Jones, head of North American manufacturing for L'Oreal Americas, told the AP.

The panels will produce 10 percent of the electricity of each facility, with the remaining power coming from local hydroelectric plants. The 1.5 megawatt Kentucky array will be installed on the roof of the 687,000-square-foot plant, while the 1.2 megawatt Arkansas array will be constructed on eight acres adjacent to the 446,691-square-foot facility. L'Oreal said the projected carbon emissions reduction from the Kentucky array will be equivalent to eliminating more than 2.8 million miles traveled by passenger cars per year. In Arkansas, it will be equivalent of a 3.2 million mile reduction per year. Each project will employ 25 construction workers for about four months, Halter said. The company declined to say how much it is spending on the two projects. —AP

Investors ask German court for 8.2b euros over VW's 'dieselgate'

FRANKFURT: Volkswagen investors have filed 1,400 lawsuits seeking 8.2 billion euros in compensation from the car giant over its emissions cheating scandal, a German court said yesterday, adding to a long list of legal woes for the embattled firm. Investors say the automaker failed to disclose details of the case in a timely way, leading them to lose money as the group's share price plunged by 40 percent in two days after the crisis erupted last September.

The $9.1 billion in claims is mostly made up of "bundled" actions containing lawsuits from multiple plaintiffs, many of them private investors, according to the court in Brunswick, close to VW's Wolfsburg, Lower Saxony headquarters. The US government and several German state governments are also among the claimants. Two of the claims lodged with the Brunswick court, from groups of institutional investors including Blackrock, the world's largest fund manager, account for a total of 2 billion euros alone.

A spokesman for Volkswagen reiterated the carmaker's position that it "continues to believe that we comprehensively fulfilled our obligations under capital markets law and that the claims are unjustified." There was little reaction on the Frankfurt stock market to the news, with Volkswagen shares gaining around 1.3 percent by 1030 GMT.

FRANKFURT: In this file photo taken on October 1, 2015 in a car workshop in Frankfurt an der Oder, eastern Germany, shows a measuring tube sticking in the exhaust pipe of a Volkswagen Golf 2,0 TDI car during an emissions test. —AFP

Mounting costs

Volkswagen's troubles began after it admitted in September 2015 to installing so-called "defeat devices" in 11 million diesel-powered vehicles worldwide, which increase exhaust treatment when the car detects it is undergoing regulatory tests. The software deactivates the emissions system when the car is on the road, leading to levels of harmful nitrogen oxides in the exhaust many times higher than allowed. The admission led to a string of legal claims and investigations around the world. The VW group has set aside 18 billion euros to pay for the legal costs of the crisis, and has so far agreed to pay $15 billion in compensation and fines in the United States alone. Analysts estimate the final bill could reach up to 35 billion euros.

'Difficult to prove'

Investors had rushed to file compensation claims at the Brunswick court ahead of what they believe to be a one-year deadline to lodge complaints. On Monday alone 750 new claims were registered. The court said it has taken on extra staff and hired additional storage space to cope-as the avalanche represents half the number of cases the tribunal normally hears in a year. "The complete registration of the claims arrived up to now should be finished in four weeks," it said.

A single plaintiff will be designated "in the fourth quarter of 2016 at the earliest," it went on, to represent all the investors wishing to join forces in a common case designed to save legal costs. German law does not allow for class-action suits. The case's prospects for success may be limited, however. "History has shown that it's very difficult to prove damages of this type in Germany and win a legal case like this," analyst Frank Schwope of Nord/LB bank told AFP.

VW might strike out-of-court settlements with some plaintiffs, while the court is unlikely to award the full amount of compensation investors seek, he said. The carmaker will not find itself reaching for its pocketbook soon as "the case could last for years," he went on. Volkswagen's share price remains around 20 percent lower than it was before the crisis broke. But while the financial pain bites deep for the firm, recent figures show sales are holding up despite the blow to its reputation. —AFP

Russian parliament faces tougher economic times

Election win might prove a poisoned chalice

MOSCOW: A crushing victory for Russia's ruling party at parliamentary polls has been hailed as a big win for President Vladimir Putin-but for the deputies elected it might just prove a poisoned chalice. With Russia locked in a damaging economic crisis and its cash piles dwindling, the authorities are facing a balancing act-juggling the need to slash spending against keeping Putin's popularity high ahead of presidential elections set for 2018.

Eventually, analysts agree, the country will need to carry out tough reforms-potentially increasing the age of retirement, cutting back on job security and raising taxes. But for now there is little doubt which way the wind is blowing-ensuring Putin gains a fourth term is the priority and any radical changes are on ice until then. "Changes are definitely coming. They will be unpopular and controversial but they are now inevitable as the country can no longer afford not to make these changes," said economist Chris Weafer of Macro Advisory told AFP. "But I don't see any possibility of any of these measures being even publicly debated until after Putin is re-elected in March 2018."

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, takes part in a live video link at the Novo-Ogaryov residence yesterday. Putin had the video call to officially open a new oil and natural gas field in the Yamalo-Nenets region in Siberia. Russian state-controlled natural gas giant Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller looks, second right. Igor Sechin, Russian oil giant Rosneft CEO is on a screen. —AP

'Unpopular but necessary'

Analyst Alexei Makarkin wrote in Vedomosti business daily Tuesday that the new Duma-which is entirely subservient to the Kremlin-will be forced to adopt "unpopular but necessary" measures, but only following the 2018 elections. Austerity measures already adopted in the past few years have included major job cuts in the public sector and caused the purchasing power of state employees and pensioners to fall.

Although the measures did not undermine Putin's popularity, they resulted in a string of small-scale protests and strikes in different parts of the vast country-a rarity as protest activity stands at an all-time low. Russia's economy contracted 3.7 percent in 2015, mostly due to a crash in global oil prices, and is expected to drop by at least 0.5 percent this year before a small bounce back in 2017.

The crisis has seen Russians' living conditions slip, with the population's real earnings last month falling 8.3 percent year-on-year. Putin has pledged to push forward with liberal reforms but has dismissed the possibility of "shock therapy" changes like those in the 1990s that swiftly transformed Russia into a market economy but wiped out savings and jobs.

Power struggles

While major reforms are not on the cards for now, some in the Russian government appear to be pushing for spending cuts to go further faster. The Russian press has reported that the country's finance ministry could be lobbying for the next budget-to be debated in the legislature next month-to include spending cuts for the oil industry, state media, space programs and the military.

Suggestions of slashing the military budget-which already represents more than five percent of GDP and has considerably increased in the past decade — seem to be have unleashed a power struggle between different factions of the Russian government and business community. Russia's Kommersant daily reported that Finance Minister Anton Siluanov and Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu had heated exchanges at a recent government meeting addressing the rearmament of the Russian military, which is conducting a bombing campaign in Syria in support of the regime.

These behind-the-scenes power struggles come as the finance ministry has warned the government against depleting its financial reserves built up from oil export revenue in previous years when crude prices were high. "As always it will be Putin who will act as arbitrator in this battle," Weafer said. Putin will be reluctant to cut spending on defense and social programs-precisely what the finance ministry has reportedly been calling for-but would also dread weakening the country's already fragile financial situation which could spur higher inflation that would quickly hit the pocketbooks of Russians. "He will not want to risk Russia being placed in a vulnerable financial position," Weafer said. "To be seen by the West to be in that position would undermine his geopolitical bargaining position as well as risk losing public support at home." —AFP

Mylan set to defend EpiPen prices amid public outcry

WASHINGTON: The head of pharmaceutical company Mylan is defending the cost for life-saving EpiPens, signaling the company has no plans to lower prices despite a public outcry and questions from skeptical lawmakers. "Price and access exist in a balance, and we believe we have struck that balance," Heather Bresch says in prepared testimony released by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee ahead of her Wednesday appearance before the panel.

The price of EpiPens has grown to $608 for a two-pack, an increase of more than 500 percent since 2007. Republicans and Democrats have said families struggling to pay for the emergency allergy shots have every right to be outraged by Mylan, a company whose sales are in excess of $11 billion. Bresch says in the testimony that she wishes the company had "better anticipated the magnitude and acceleration" of the rising prices for some families.

"We never intended this," she says. But she says investments are necessary to ensure more access for those who need it and the company has made strides to more widely distribute the drug to schools and others.

"We don't want to go back to a time - not that long ago - when awareness of anaphylaxis was much lower and epinephrine auto injectors were only available in schools with a prescription for an individual child," she says. "Achieving this level of expansion of awareness requires significant investment."

'Critical medications'

House Oversight chairman Rep Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, and the panel's top Democrat, Rep Elijah Cummings of Maryland, have said they also want to examine ways to encourage greater competition in the EpiPen market. "Our goal is to work together to ensure that critical medications, like the EpiPen, are accessible and affordable for all of our constituents," Chaffetz and Cummings said in a joint statement last week.

Bresch has some familiarity with Capitol Hill - she is the daughter of Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va. But lawmakers so far haven't given any deference to her because she is related to a colleague. Several other committees have called for investigations into the matter. EpiPens are used in emergencies to stop potentially fatal allergic reactions to insect bites and stings, and foods like nuts and eggs. People usually keep multiple EpiPens handy at home, school or work, but the syringes, prefilled with the hormone epinephrine, expire after a year.

Bresch noted that Mylan has said it will begin selling its generic version for $300 for a pair. That will still bring Mylan tens of millions of dollars while helping it retain market share against current and future brand-name and generic competition. The company has also offered coupon cards and has doubled the limit for eligibility for its patient assistance program.

Critics have said the coupons, discount cards and patient assistance programs aren't real solutions because many customers won't use them or won't qualify for them. In her testimony, Bresch says she understands there is considerable concern and skepticism about the pricing. She says some think the company makes $600 off each EpiPen, but that is not true. She says the company makes about $50 per pen after rebates, fees, materials and other costs are subtracted. —AP

Proposal to revive royal yacht draws fans and foes in Britain

LONDON: The UK may be sailing into an uncertain future outside the European Union, but if campaigners have their way, Britannia will rule the waves again. A Conservative lawmaker and the Daily Telegraph newspaper are proposing to re-commission the royal yacht Britannia , former berth of Queen Elizabeth II, and send it around the world as a floating trade mission.

The yacht was retired in 1997, and is now a tourist attraction moored in Edinburgh. Legislator Jake Berry says it should either be brought back into service or a new yacht built to help "bring in billions of pounds' worth of trade deals for post-Brexit Britain." Anticipating that some will label his idea "a vanity project," he says it should be funded by donations, rather than taxpayers.

Former Foreign Secretary William Hague has backed Berry's proposal, saying that when he was in government he found that no one, however wealthy or powerful, could resist an invitation onto the royal yacht. "Leaving the EU means we need to communicate the advantages and attractions of our country more than ever," Hague wrote in the Telegraph. "That will take a lot more than a yacht, but we need all the reach and profile that we can get."

Others, however, said bringing back a symbol of empire and monarchy would send the wrong signals about Britain to the world. "Britannia was always a wisp of denial because, essentially, she sailed through imperial decline," wrote columnist Tanya Gold in yesterday's Guardian newspaper. "Her power was cosmetic. She floated on nostalgia."

Floating monument

Launched in 1953, Britannia was the last in three centuries of royal yachts, a floating monument to a nation that built an empire on naval power - an empire it was then in the process of losing. The 412-foot yacht, with its teak deck and brass fittings, traveled more than 1 million miles as transport for royal visits and vacations, a reception venue for dignitaries and the honeymoon vessel for royal couples including Prince Charles and Princess Diana. Her final voyage was to collect the last British governor from Hong Kong when the former British colony returned to China in 1997.

BANGKOK: In this Friday, May 9, 1997 file photo, a long-tailed boat passes by the British Royal Yacht HMY Britannia as it is tugged to port. —AP

The government of then-Prime Minister Tony Blair decided the cost of replacing Britannia was too high. The royal family, whose popularity was then at a low ebb after a series of scandals, acquiesced - though the queen wiped away tears at the decommissioning ceremony. Berry has secured a House of Commons debate on the yacht on Oct 11, though his plan is unlikely to become a reality without government support. Prime Minister Theresa May has not backed the idea, though when asked about it she said she recognized Britain's "proud heritage" as a trading nation. "The important question is how do we get out there and promote Britain, promote Britain as being open for business, promote the interests of people investing in Britain and for our businesses actually exporting overseas," she said. —AP

World stocks get a lift from BOJ

LONDON: World stocks rose yesterday, led by a surge in bank shares, after the Bank of Japan overhauled its monetary policy to target interest rates, though the yen recovered initial losses against the dollar on skepticism those moves would stoke inflation.

With the global economy showing few signs of rebounding and investors fretting about the limits of monetary easing by major central banks, the BOJ's move initially came as a welcome relief for markets, particularly financial sector shares. Investors' focus now shifts to the US Federal Reserve policy decision later yesterday. Expectations of a rate increase have all but evaporated after some weak economic data, and Wall Street looked set to follow Europe higher.

Europe's STOXX 600 rose 1 percent as euro zone banking shares rallied nearly 3 percent. The bank shares were poised for their best day in more than two months. Futures on Wall Street were up 0.4 percent. The BOJ maintained its 0.1 percent negative interest rate, but abandoned its base money target. Instead, it set a "yield curve control" under which it will buy long-term government bonds to keep 10-year bond yields around their current zero percent.

"The fact that the flattening of the yield curve has gotten to a point where it has elicited a policy response could mark the beginning of the end of quantitative easing," said Michael Metcalfe, head of global macro strategy at State Street Global Markets. "Just as interest rates have reached their lower bound, asset purchases, in government bonds at least, may have reached their upper bound. Other central banks, the ECB especially, will take close note." A similar move would solve many of the European Central Bank's own problems but would probably pose even more, making the policy difficult to emulate.

Doubts about the sustainability of the market's moves crept in quickly, particularly for the yen, which reversed direction against the dollar hours after the BOJ decision. "Markets seem a bit confused by today, and rightly so," said Aberdeen Asset Management investment manager James Athey. The fact that the BOJ is trying to overshoot an inflation target it has struggled to hit has raised eyebrows, Athey said. "The Bank has effectively told markets that it has a royal flush, and the markets are questioning Kuroda's poker face," he said. The US dollar rose as high as 102.78 yen, but had slipped back to 101.36 yen by midday in Europe. —Reuters

NEW YORK: In this Oct 8, 2014, file photo, people walk to work on Wall Street beneath a statue of George Washington. —AP

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report

At 02:00 PM Previous Day

Global Stock Indices

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Dow Jones	18,120.17	18,129.96	9.79	▲	0.05	4.05
NASDAQ	5,235.03	5,241.35	6.32	▲	0.12	4.67
S&P 500	2,139.12	2,139.76	0.64	▲	0.03	4.69
Financial Times	6,830.79	6,857.25	26.46	▲	0.39	9.85
DAX	10,393.86	10,516.01	122.15	▲	1.18	-2.11
CAC 40	4,388.60	4,444.88	56.28	▲	1.28	-4.14
Swiss	8,237.54	8,252.85	15.31	▲	0.19	-6.41
Nikkei 225	16,492.15	16,807.62	315.47	▲	1.91	-11.70
Topix	1,316.97	1,352.67	35.70	▲	2.71	-12.58
Hang Seng	23,530.86	23,669.90	139.04	▲	0.59	8.01
Straits Times	2,854.69	2,850.74	-3.95	▼	-0.14	-1.11

MENA Stock Indices

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	5,398.02	5,390.79	-7.23	▼	-0.13	-4.02
Saudi Arabia	5,925.14	5,929.01	3.87	▲	0.07	-14.27
Dubai	3,455.18	3,446.08	-9.10	▼	-0.26	9.65
Abu Dhabi	4,463.86	4,470.40	6.54	▲	0.15	3.64
Bahrain	1,131.95	1,134.12	2.17	▲	0.19	-6.90
Qatar	10,256.52	10,234.04	-22.48	▼	-0.22	-1.66
Oman	5,752.11	5,750.15	-1.96	▼	-0.03	6.40
Lebanon	1,148.22	1,148.50	0.28	▲	0.02	-1.82
Jordan	2,112.79	2,133.30	20.51	▲	0.97	-1.10
Egypt	8,048.69	8,013.01	-35.68	▼	-0.44	14.88
Morocco	9,977.56	9,965.71	-11.85	▼	-0.12	11.78
Tunisia	5,402.04	5,389.64	-12.40	▼	-0.23	7.14

Global Currencies Exchange Rate

Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.3105	3.2960	2.9566	2.5348	3.2198	334.38	4.3380
Saudi Riyal	0.08123		0.2677	0.2402	0.2059	0.2616	27.16	0.3524
US Dollar	0.30340	3.7350		0.8970	0.7691	0.9769	101.45	1.3161
Euro	0.33823	4.1638	1.1148		0.8574	1.0890	113.12	1.4674
Sterling Pound	0.39451	4.8566	1.3003	1.1663		1.2705	131.92	1.7117
Swiss Franc	0.31057	3.8233	1.0236	0.9183	0.7871		103.89	1.3473
Japanese Yen	0.00299	0.0368	0.0099	0.0088	0.0076	0.0096		0.0130
Australian Dollar	0.23052	2.8379	0.7598	0.6815	0.5842	0.7422	77.08	

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate

Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dollar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30340	3.7350	0.3740	3.6266	0.3832	3.6571	8.7700
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2960		12.3105	1.2328	11.9532	1.2630	12.0537	28.9057
Saudi Riyal	0.2677	0.08123		0.1001	0.9710	0.1026	0.9791	2.3481
Bahraini Dinar	2.6735	0.81114	9.9856		9.6958	1.0245	9.7773	23.4467
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08366	1.0299	0.1031		0.1057	1.0084	2.4182
Omani Riyal	2.6096	0.79175	9.7469	0.9761	9.4640		9.5436	22.8862
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08296	1.0213	0.1023	0.9917	0.1048		2.3981
Egyptian Pound	0.1140	0.03460	0.4259	0.0426	0.4135	0.0437	0.4170	

Global Interest Rates

Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.00	1.19	1.44	1.63	1.94
US Dollar	0.45	0.54	0.86	1.25	1.57
Euro	-0.38	-0.37	-0.32	-0.21	-0.07
Sterling Pound	0.24	0.26	0.37	0.52	0.74
Swiss Franc	-0.80	-0.80	-0.74	-0.64	-0.48
Australian Dollar	1.60	1.67	1.61	1.58	1.55
Canadian Dollar	0.00	0.88	0.90	1.02	1.12

Global Bond Yields

Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	0.79	1.21	1.69	2.44
Europe	-0.68	-0.51	-0.02	0.56
United Kingdom	0.10	0.25	0.81	1.55

Commodities

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	40.79	40.78	-0.01	▼	-0.02	29.52
Brent	45.65	46.24	0.59	▲	1.29	17.66
West Texas	43.90	43.80	-0.10	▼	-0.23	15.42
Gold	1314.60	1319.67	5.07	▲	0.39	19.27
Silver	19.26	19.39	0.13	▲	0.67	28.09

Source: National Bank of Kuwait

Warba Bank activates e-signature services & unveils 'Express Finance'

— Photos by Joseph Shagra

KUWAIT: Warba Bank announced, during a press conference, the signing of a cooperation agreement with the Public Authority for Civil Information to activate the e-signature service for the bank's staff and the banking services it provides. The bank also announced the release of a unique and exclusive service called "Express Finance" which came as a result of this agreement. It allows clients to authorize the bank through the e-signature to view their information in the credit network (Ci-net) without having to be present personally in the branch. As a result, Warba Bank has taken the extra mile to be the first bank in Kuwait that releases services based on this technology, thus adding to its list of leading achievements.

The e-signature is considered a person's electronic identity. It represents a digital certificate that allows for him to confirm his identity through online transactions. Based on that, Warba Bank released this leading agreement in the field of information technology, which is provided by the Public Authority for Civil Information, and helps save time and effort in performing banking transactions and procedures. The e-signature can be used in confirming the person's identity online when accessing personal data, in addition to finishing online transactions with security for personal data without having to go to the bank. The e-signature is also used to sign most online documents such as contracts, agreements and transactions, with the option to encrypt them. It also can be used to sign e-mails in order to confirm the sender's identity.

Commenting on the agreement, Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanem, Warba Bank's CEO said: "We are glad to cooperate with the Public Authority for Civil Information to activate the e-signature for staff and banking transactions by using smart IDs and digital certificates. Based on this agreement, we are proud to be the first in Kuwait's banking sector to have the initiative to present an innovative service, which is the "Express Finance" that is based on the e-signature service."

Faster than before

"This service allows the client to authorize the bank through the e-signature to view his information on Ci-net without having to be personally present to sign the application. With this service, financing transactions can be done faster than before, and require less number of visits to the bank's branches to complete the transaction," he noted.

Al-Ghanim further explained that those who desire to obtain financing from Warba Bank can visit the bank's website, click on the "Express Finance" page and fill in the required information. The client will then be transferred to a gateway to the Public Authority for Civil Information's website in which his personal information are confirmed, and where he can perform his e-signature on the application.

Meanwhile, Musa'ed Mahmoud Al-Asousi, General Director of the Public Authority for Civil Information said: "This cooperation with Warba Bank comes as part of efforts to improve electronic connection between the public and private sectors, and the transformation towards electronic transactions." Al-Asousi also noted to the efforts exerted by the Public Authority for Civil Information and Warba Bank to remove all obstacles in order to finish this step. He emphasized that his cooperation can help provide extra benefit to a larger number of clients, and save them the need of visiting the branch to finish their transactions. This also helps reduce pressure on branches and improve service quality there.

Al- Asousi elaborated that PACI welcomes all cooperation meant to facilitate the transactions in both public and private sectors according to law number 20 for 2014 with relevance to electronic transactions which states in its 23rd clause that PACI is to handle the surveillance on the e signature infrastructure design and management for the nation of Kuwait. All authorized entities are committed to coordinate with PACI according to its terms and conditions which have been elaborated in collaboration with specialized entities in this regards. Clients can obtain the e-signature by visiting the e-signature registration office at the head office of the Public Authority for Civil Information, where they can sign the e-signature use agreement before the e-signature certificate is uploaded to their civil ID with a password.

Warba Bank strives to improve its electronic services, as it recently upgraded its interactive and easy to use website. It also revealed the Express Account service, the first of its kind of Kuwait, which allows clients to open an account online within five minutes without having to visit the branch. The bank also plans to activate the e-signature service in this service in order to save time and effort in finishing banking transactions. The bank continues its approach in development by being a pioneer in presenting innovative and unique service and products that establish a new era for the Islamic banking sector characterized by modernity, flexibility and innovating while complying with the Islamic Sharia.

India to fund major gas pipeline to boost states

NEW DELHI: India's government will partly fund a $2 billion gas pipeline project linking five eastern states to help kick-start economic growth in a region that has trailed the rest of the country, the oil minister said yesterday. The 2,500-km pipeline is to be built by state-run GAIL (India) Ltd, and this will be the first time the government has offered finance for such a project as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan for more balanced development.

Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the government will meet 40 percent of the cost of the pipeline that will run through the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha, which together account for nearly 40 percent of India's 1.3 billion population. It will be the biggest pipeline project in the country and had won government approval in 2007 but could not move forward.

"This will be the first time that government spending will be made for pipeline infrastructure. This will help in achieving the prime minister's vision of the economic development of the eastern states," Pradhan told reporters after a cabinet meeting. "The prime minister wants energy justice for all," he said. India's economic development has been concentrated in the western and southern states, where there is better infrastructure and more accessible energy supplies. These states get piped gas supplies for household and transportation.

Pradhan said the government was hoping the new pipeline would help attract investment in the agro processing industry in the eastern region. The government has already removed the cap on foreign direct investment in the sector. The new pipeline will also help in efforts to revive three fertilizer plants, which Modi's campaign had promised to do in his 2014 election run.

India's gas demand is expected to go up by as much as 10 million cubic meters a day once the pipeline is completed in a little more than two years. Natural gas accounts for about 6.5 percent of India's overall energy needs, far lower than the global average. India plans to raise the share of gas in its energy mix to 15 percent over the next three years. — Reuters

Japan tweaks policy, but keeps minus interest rate unchanged

Aggressive moves look to perk up sluggish growth

TOKYO: Japan's central bank opted yesterday to keep its policies mostly unchanged, with some technical adjustments to how it controls interest rates. World stocks rose after the decision by the Bank of Japan, with Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index jumping 1.9 percent to 16,807.62. The adjustments to the BOJ's policies were widely anticipated, though many analysts had been expecting an interest rate cut or other more aggressive moves to perk up sluggish growth in the world's No 3 economy.

The BOJ meeting wrapped up just hours before the US Federal Reserve was due to announce its latest policy decision. Economists expected the Fed to leave rates unchanged after the end of its two-day meeting yesterday. While the Fed is weighing an eventual increase in rates, the BOJ's policy statement said its short-term policy rate will remain at negative 0.1 percent. The central bank is charging that rate on excess reserves it holds for banks to encourage them to lend more and said it might cut it further.

The central bank said it will continue its asset purchases at a rate of about 80 trillion yen ($787 billion) a year. But it will aim to push yields on long-term Japanese government bonds higher, while keeping short-term rates low. For now that means at zero percent or below. The tinkering with policy highlights the limits of the central bank's options but may alleviate concern the BOJ is "crowding out" other investors with its massive purchases of government bonds.

'New framework'

Pushing yields on longer-term securities higher will be a boon to life insurers and other big institutional investors that have seen investment returns plunge after the BOJ imposed its negative interest rate policy in February. The BOJ's "new framework" to strengthen monetary easing also it to pushing past the 2 percent inflation target it set more than three years ago.

In a 61-page assessment, the BOJ said its "quantitative and qualitative easing," monetary policy, known as QQE, had succeeded in ending deflation, or falling prices. But it said that fostering the scale of "inflation expectations" that might encourage consumers and businesses to spend more was taking time. "With regard to the outlook, sluggishness is expected to remain in exports and production for some time, and the pace of economic recovery is likely to remain slow," it said. Analysts expect the BOJ to eventually slash its policy rate further.

"With underlying inflation set to fall to zero in coming months, we expect the policy rate to eventually fall to minus 0.4 percent," Marcel Thieliant of Capital Economics said in a commentary. The world's other major central banks have spent years struggling to rejuvenate their economies, to raise inflation and get businesses and consumers to spend more. In the United States, the Federal Reserve is expected to raise short-term US interest rates - but probably not before a meeting in December.

In December 2015, the US central bank raised rates for the first time since 2006. It was widely expected to hike rates several more times this year, has held off as the US economy sputtered, hobbled by weak global growth and a strong dollar that makes American goods pricier in foreign markets.

Meanwhile, European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi is asking for help from the governments of the 19 counties that use the euro currency. The ECB on Sept. 8 left its aggressive stimulus measures unchanged. It called on European governments to spend more on infrastructure projects and to enact reforms to make their economies more efficient and business-friendly. — AP

SHINJUKU: In this Tuesday, Sept 13, 2016 photo, people walk through a street in Kabukicho in Tokyo's Shinjuku entertainment district. — AP

Thailand, China agree on $5bn for rail project's first phase

BANGKOK: China and Thailand agreed yesterday that the first phase of a planned high-speed railway project will cost 179 billion baht ($5.15 billion), Thailand's transport minister said, with both countries calling for closer ties following rocky negotiations. The 873 km rail line will link Thailand's border with Laos to the ports and industrial zones in Thailand's east.

Beijing has ambitious railway plans to connect the southwestern Chinese city of Kunming to Thailand, through Laos, and Thailand wants to modernize its ageing rail network. Earlier this year China put the project cost at 560 billion baht ($16.09 billion), which Thailand said was too high. Agreement over the project's framework comes after months of sometimes tense negotiations, officials said.

"This project will cost 179 billion baht. This is what we agreed upon," Thai Transport Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith told reporters in Bangkok after a three-day meeting between China and Thailand. Arkhom said Thailand will bear full construction costs, while China will provide funds for technical systems. The first phase will focus on a 250 km track from Bangkok to the northeastern Thai province of Nakhon Ratchasima, with construction starting in December.

"Both countries want to begin this project by the end of the year and there is limited time remaining," said Wang Xiaotao, vice chairman of China's National Development and Reform Commission, who was present at Wednesday's talks in Bangkok. Thailand's junta has targeted infrastructure spending as a long-term fix to help boost the economy in light of weak exports and consumer confidence.

Thailand has moved closer to China and away from its traditional ally the United States, following a 2014 coup by the Thai army, through an increase in diplomatic visits and joint Thai-China military exercises. But disagreements over details of the rail project, such as the currency of payment, threatened future negotiations. "We will have to work through any disagreements or misunderstandings," Arkhom said. — Reuters

Ride-hailing firm Grab pulls gory Indonesia ad

JAKARTA: Ride-hailing startup Grab has withdrawn an advertisement in Indonesia after the video's portrayal of a woman covered in blood sparked an online furore and drew comparisons with a zombie movie. Singapore-based Grab is considered the leading ride-hailing platform in Southeast Asia and plans to expand its presence in densely-populated Indonesia.

The ad, released online as part of a campaign to highlight Grab's safety standards, shows the young woman becoming progressively blood-spattered as she walks down a street, with a voiceover saying she is about to make a "big decision". By the time she reaches a group of motorbike taxi drivers-a common form of transport in Indonesia's traffic-choked cities-she is dripping with gore. But when the woman refuses to use the drivers not working for Grab, the app appears on her phone and the blood disappears.

The 45-second ad ends with her walking towards a motorbike taxi driven by a man working for Grab. Netizens were shocked at the graphic ad, however, and the video was pulled late Tuesday. It was replaced on Grab Indonesia's YouTube channel with a 15-second, blood-free clip. The original sparked a storm on Twitter, with many saying it looked more like a trailer for a zombie movie than part of a safety campaign.

"Why are you making a scary ad? Is it for zombies or for a service," said @Imanakbar08. User @AroonP added: "So Grab campaigns for #ChooseSafety with an ad full of blood." Mediko Azwar, marketing director for Grab Indonesia, said the firm had hoped the video would be "thought-provoking" but added: "We acknowledge that the graphics may have been grim and disturbing."

"Our intention was not to shock, but to reinforce the consequences of accepting lower safety standards," he added in a statement. The controversy over the video came as the firm announced it had raised $750 million from investors to expand in burgeoning Southeast Asian markets, where it aims to build its lead over US-based rival Uber. In addition to Indonesia-one of Grab's key markets-the firm also operates in Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Its core product platform includes private cars, motorbikes and taxi-hailing services. — AFP

ABK CEO Michel Accad named 'Bank CEO of the Year'

KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) proudly announced that ABK CEO Michel Accad was named 'Bank CEO of the Year' by CEO Magazine, an ITP affiliate. Mr Accad received his award at the 'CEO Middle East Awards 2016' ceremony, which was held in Dubai, on 20 September, 2016. The CEO Middle East Awards recognize and reward the most successful and innovative CEOs in the Middle East. This year's awards honored top CEOs that have delivered outstanding results, as well as those that have made a vital contribution to the vibrancy of business across the region. The awards represent the benchmark of success for senior executives in the Middle East.

Commenting on this achievement, Michel Accad said: "I am honored to receive this recognition. We have come a long way over the past couple of years and I am proud to be part of this financial institution, and more importantly, part of the exceptionally talented team that has made it possible to put into action the ideas and strategies developed."

"Today ABK has taken its operations to a whole new level, from the innovative solutions it delivers through its new 'Simpler Banking' strategy, to its expansion to the Egypt market. I can confidently say that we have marked the start of a new era for ABK and we will spare no efforts to make this journey a rewarding and successful one", Accad added.

"I would like to thank the organizers for this event. This is not a testament to what I have achieved as a CEO, but rather to what we have achieved as a team at ABK, and I thank each and every one of our staff for their hard work and commitment", Accad concluded. ABK's 'Simpler Banking' strategy aims to create a Simpler Banking model

for its customers, which revolves around offering more security, convenience and speed. In line with this strategy, major enhancements and developments have been made to the Bank's systems and processes that have yielded significant improvements in the ways ABK delivers its products and services.

Moreover, ABK recently also won the Africa Region 'Deal of the Year' award by The Banker, an FT affiliate, under the Merger and Acquisition category, for the acquisition of Piraeus Bank Egypt (PBE), which was finalized in November, 2015 as well as 'Best Bank Transformation' in the Middle East by Euromoney. The Bank's new identity is being rolled-out in Egypt over the entire 39 branch network. This acquisition is part of ABK's efforts to expand its presence across the region and further solidify its role as a leading regional bank.

New focus on investor relations amid regulatory change discussed at MEIRA

DUBAI: Capital market stakeholders attended the eighth annual Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA) Conference and Awards, held at The Address, Dubai Mall, reflecting the growth of professional investor relations practice in response to changing market regulation. The conference is the regional flagship platform for investor relations professionals to discuss regional developments in response to rapidly maturing capital markets, and drive change through collaboration and the implementation of best practice, while providing members with networking opportunities.

Influential market players from listed and private companies, investors, family offices, the exchanges and regulatory authorities were among the participants addressing this year's theme "Forward shift in MENA: a new vision beyond oil". Speakers at the event explored recent industry developments including the opening of Saudi Arabia's exchange, ongoing macroeconomic challenges and the outlook for regional capital markets, as well as the impact of competition for capital, and how IR professionals can best drive forward best practice.

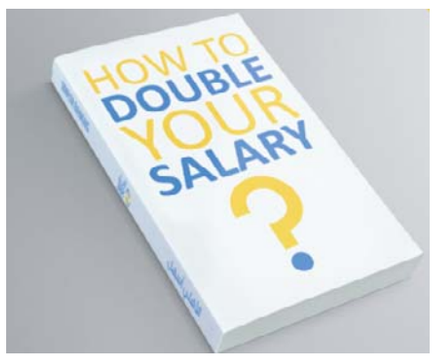
To coincide with the event, Alex MacDonald Vitale, chairman of MEIRA, announced the society's move to become a registered professional association, reflected in its new name of The Middle East Investor Relations Association (MEIRA). "Regional markets are rapidly adapting to the changing economic landscape, and working hard to attract interest from foreign investors. With this change comes an expectation of best practice in IR and investor engagement. The move to become a registered member of the Dubai Association Centre is welcomed by the industry and our members, as we take the organization to the next level."

The 2016 Investor Relations Awards Ceremony also recognized the region's leading investor relations professionals, acknowledging their contribution to developing and raising investor relations standards across the region. A full list of nominees and winners can be found on the Association's website at www.me-irsociety.com. MEIRA is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to promoting best practice IR in the region. The Association benefits from the support of its sponsors, partners and members.

ABK announces winners of 20th & 21st 'Double Your Salary' weekly draws

KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its 20th & 21st 'Double Your Salary' weekly draws on 20thSeptember, 2016 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, announced the names of the winners for this period. The promotion includes weekly draws, with two winners per draw.

New customers who transfer their salary to ABK receive KD 100 and will automatically be entered into the weekly draws to double their salaries. Existing customers who are already transferring their salary to ABK are entered into a separate draw.



The next 'Double Your Salary' draw will be held on 27th September 2016, where two new lucky winners will be announced. All winners will be contacted personally and a weekly announcement will be made through the media with the winners' names. For more information about ABK please visit eahli.com or contact an ABK customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.

Burgan Bank wins prestigious Thomson Reuters Lipper award

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday that its Burgan Equity Fund has been named as the 'Best Equity Fund over 10 years' in the prestigious Thomson Reuters Lipper Award MENA Markets. For more than three decades and in over 20 countries worldwide, the Thomson Reuters Lipper Fund Awards have honored funds and fund management firms that have excelled in providing consistently strong risk-adjusted performance relative to their peers.

In a joint press release, Burgan Bank and KAMCO Investment Company declared that The Burgan Equity Fund follows a balanced investment policy that targets long-term capital gains with minimum risk. The fund invests across a wide range of sectors including consumer services, oil & gas, telecommunications, basic materials, consumer goods, real estate, financial services, industrial, and banking. Burgan Equity Fund's cumulative return since inception on 9 December 2001 has increased in value by 115.9% as of end of December 2015, while in 2016 till August 2016, the fund has outperformed the Kuwaiti Stock Exchange weighted index by approximately 7%.

The 'Best Equity Fund over 10 years' award is a recognition of the Fund's consistent long-term outperformance compared to its benchmark, which is a result of efficient asset allocation where Burgan Bank played the role of fund manager, in collaboration with KAMCO Investment Company, as external advisor of the fund.

Burgan Equity Fund, a collaboration between the fund manager Burgan Bank and the external advisor KAMCO, focuses to provide unit holders with excellent returns by investing the Fund's assets in shares of companies listed on Kuwait Stock Exchange ("KSE"). Within the 5-year period, which started in July 2011 until July 2016, the Fund generated cumulative alpha of 16.4% over the KSE weighted index. The Fund is considered one of the best performing funds on a risk adjusted return basis (based on a basket of 10 funds with minimum asset under management of KD 10 million).

Etihad Airways launches children's activity packs for young explorers

ABU DHABI: With millions of families planning and looking forward to their next holiday or trip abroad, Etihad Airways has introduced a new range of 'Etihad Explorers' children's activity packs and a Flying Nanny Kit, to keep its younger guests occupied while onboard. Etihad Explorers is the airline's new children's brand and will feature on activity packs and meal items, and aims to instill a sense of excitement and anticipation during their journey. The new kits were launched at a colorful children's tea party hosted by the airline at its state-of-the-art Innovation Training Academy in Abu Dhabi.

On inbound flights to Abu Dhabi, a new collectable character bag for three to eight year-olds contains an activity booklet, crayons, card games and a color-in mask. The pack on flights from Abu Dhabi includes a unique suitcase boardgame which allows parents and children to play together, a foam lion character, color-in postcards, crayons, and a handy waterproof travel wallet. Having a different pack on each leg ensures that children are kept well entertained on both journeys.

For nine to 13 year olds there is a more mature activity pack which is guaranteed to puzzle and delight, containing Sudoku, mazes, lined notes and join-the-dot games. These packs also contain an Abu Dhabi themed pencil case, pencil, a dual-function bookmark and ruler, and a notepad. Tech savvy tots can also enjoy a range of films, television programs, games, and child-friendly albums and CDs through the dedicated 'Just 4 Kids' section on the Etihad Airways E-BOX in-flight entertainment system, all of which can be enjoyed on the touchscreen and/or handset.

For guests flying long-haul, every aircraft is staffed by a Flying Nanny. Trained by the UK's world renowned Norland College, Flying Nannies were introduced by Etihad Airways in September 2013, and are onboard to provide an extra pair of hands and allow parents more personal time while they entertain the children. The new Flying Nanny Kit promotes greater interaction between nanny and child and contains an extensive range of fun items including Origami, games, pom-poms, flight certificates, tools for magic tricks and face-painting, and a 'Flying Nanny stamp of approval' which the nanny can use to reward children during their in-flight activities.

'Family-friendly products'

Calum Laming, Etihad Airways' Vice President Guest Experience, said: "We understand that flying as a family can often prove daunting for parents and children alike, especially when travelling long-haul. That's why we're continually looking for new ways to develop family-friendly products, like the new children's activity packs, so everyone can be fully entertained from the moment they board.

"This is just a part of our wider efforts to provide enhanced service and hospitality to our valued family fliers, an effort which is also brought to life by our amazing Flying Nannies. The new kits will help these talented crew members with the tools they need to provide our young guests, and ultimately their parents, with a truly memorable flight."

The new kits were created by Milk Jnr's & Kidworks, a UK headquartered agency which specialises in creating engaging kids activity packs for some of the world's biggest family brands, in partnership with Etihad Airways' Flying Nannies and product development team. The project also saw the agency re-illustrate and incorporate four existing Etihad Airways characters: Kundai the Lion, Zoe the Bee, Jamool the Camel and Boo the Panda. Milk Jnr's incorporated elements of Etihad's recent livery and staff uniform rebrand into the children's brand and logo including geometric shapes to reflect the Abu Dhabi landscape. As part of Etihad Airways' ongoing commitment to ensuring all passengers enjoy a truly exceptional hospitality experience, a new Children's menu will be launched in December focusing on healthy choices for younger fliers.

Zoe Telfer, Milk Jnr's Client Services Director, said: "The aim of this project was to create an engagement solution for families travelling with children on Etihad Airways flights. We created kids packs for long and short haul flights that really stand out and reflect Etihad's premium service and reputation, while paying careful attention to the airline's distinctive brand."

7 days remaining for Al Danah's KD 500,000 draw on Marina FM

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced that its KD 500,000 draw is scheduled to take place 7 days from yesterday at 1pm, 29 September 2016, on Marina FM's Diwaniya Show.

The Al Danah draw will be for a cash prize of KD 500,000. In addition, the Salary & Red Account draws will be taking place and include a brand new Cadillac and cash prizes up to KD 1,000. The draw event will be held in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

To participate in the Al Danah draws, customers must have an Al Danah account containing at least KD 200. Customers can open a new Al Danah account at any one of the 56 Gulf Bank branches in Kuwait. Those who already have an account can increase their chances of winning by increasing their deposits. This will also increase their chances of winning one of the two KD 1,000 prizes, which are drawn each working day.

For further information about the Al Danah, Salary and Red accounts and prize draws, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, or call Gulf Bank's Customer Contact Center on 1805805. General information about Gulf Bank's products and services, can also be found at the Bank's website at www.e-gulfbank.com

KFH launches 'Ratbi-Link' online inquiry service

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has launched a new online service titled "Ratbi-link" as one of the new innovative electronic solutions applied by KFH to better serve its customers by using modern technology. Service provides through links on KFH web pages and KFH web site kfh.com contain all available information concerning salaries and benefits credited in customers' accounts. The service aims to provide easy and fast response to all customers inquiries in this respect.

KFH had conducted a study on the most question asked through social media by customers and realized that inquiries about salaries and benefits are the most asked questions made by the majority of customers during the last third of the month. Considering the major market share which KFH enjoys in this field and the speedy credit of customers salaries in their accounts KFH has designed and launched a new service that provides rapid and immediate answers and information to customers concerning the salaries and benefits credited in their accounts at KFH.

The new free service "Ratbi-link" which can be accessed at any time enables customers to obtain updates on their salaries and benefits credited in their accounts at KFH. The services saves customers the time and effort and minimizes the usage of other communication means to obtain this service.

Accordingly the bank provides a better high level service and enables the bank to focus on marketing other KFH products. Indications and results show that this service has achieved remarkable success since day one as the above link is being used by nearly 10 Thousand customers daily.

Google's smart messaging app hits market

NY Times teams with Google parent to tame comments

SAN FRANCISCO: US Internet giant Google launched yesterday a smart messaging app aimed at muscling into a busy market with popular rivals such as WhatsApp and Facebook's messenger. Allo's "smart" capabilities aims to make it easier to respond to messages and over time adjusts to users' own style, Google said in an official blog. The app introduces Google Assistant where users just type @google to ask the US search engine questions and have it help you directly in chats, it said.

"You no longer need to leave a conversation with friends just to grab an address, share your favorite YouTube video, or pick a dinner spot," it said. The app works on phones using Google's Android system and Apple's iOS. "Google Allo can help you make plans, find information, and express yourself more easily in chat. And the more you use it, the more it improves over time," Google said.

It said, for instance, the app will adjust according to whether its user's style is usually an emoji or written response. Like other messaging apps, it has tools for personalizing chats including changing the size of emojis and a choice of stickers. Allo was unveiled by Google in May at the same time as Google Duo, an app for video calls, which hit the market last month. Google faces carving a place in a sector with already popular messaging apps such as WhatsApp.

Apple has also sought to catch up with rivals, upgrading its own messaging app in its latest iOS 10 launched last week. In July, Facebook said the number of users of its Messenger application had topped one billion. WhatsApp, which was acquired by Facebook for some $20 billion in 2014, also counts more than a billion users.

Meanwhile, The New York Times said Tuesday it was teaming with Google parent Alphabet in an effort to help filter its online reader comments to maintain a "civil and thoughtful" atmosphere. The newspaper said it would work with Jigsaw, a technology incubator at Alphabet, to improve and expand its comments section. The move comes amid frustration at many media organizations which have been seeking to boost reader engagement without allowing abusive and offensive comments.

"Maintaining a civil and thoughtful comments section is no easy undertaking, as evidenced by the number of publishers who have shut down their comment capabilities in recent years," said Kinsey Wilson, the editor for innovation and strategy at the Times. "But the Times has been and will continue to be dedicated to providing our readers with a safe online community to discuss the most important issues." Currently, the prestigious daily employs a team of 14 moderators who manually review some 11,000 comments each day. Only about 10 percent of Times articles are open to comments because of the time required for review. Jigsaw uses algorithms to help this process, based on the moderated comments in the newspaper's archives. The open-source system will also be made available to other online publishers, according to the statement.

"We believe open sourcing nearly a decade of Times comment archives will benefit the entire journalism industry and potentially make it easier for other publishers to manage comments on their sites," Wilson said. The Times "hopes that the project will expand viewpoints, provide a safe platform for diverse communities to have diverse discussions and allow readers' voices to be an integral part of nearly every piece of reporting," according to a Times statement.

In 2014, The Washington Post and The New York Times agreed to work together on a project funded by the Knight Foundation to create open-source software that can be adapted for news websites to get a better handle on online discussions. — Agencies

Smart Link, six clients sweep top honours at MECC Awards

DUBAI: Smart Link Contact Centers, a leading business process and contact centre outsourcing provider in Saudi Arabia, yesterday announced that it has received two prestigious awards at the Middle East Call Centre Awards (MECC) 2016 held in Dubai recently. Smart Link's efforts were also recognised as their clients - Saudi Arabia's Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF), Saudi Electricity Company, Saudi Credit and Savings Bank, National Aviation Service, Saudi Post, General Authority for Civil Aviation (GACA) also won top honours in a diverse range of categories.

The MECC 2016 Awards, organized by Insights, recognizes the performance and service excellence of the best contact centres in the Middle East. Smart Link won the Best Business Development & Sales Strategy Award and the Best Sales Leads Generation Program Award under the Outsourced Services Provider Commercial Growth Category.

In addition to these recognitions for the Company, Eng. Safwan Al Khatib, Managing Director of Smart Link was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his role and overall contributions towards the development, support and commitment of the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and Customer Care Contact Centres industry in the Middle East. Eng. Khatib's efforts in showcasing how the BPO industry can be both a commercial as well as profitable investment were lauded.

Smart Link was recognized for its ongoing excellence in terms of customer services and providing unparalleled high quality services as well as its flexibility in expansion, growth and diversification in various sectors. Smart Link has managed to build a highly integrated, sophisticated service structure in a very short period of time, across diversified sectors in terms of service, technical expertise and operational excellence.

Smart Link's efforts were also appreciated when six of its clients won awards at the event.

• The Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) was awarded the Best Mega sized Government Contact Centre - Operationally ≥ 400 Seats under the Best Government Contact Centre Category and the Mega Size Contact Centre Manager Of The Year in the Individual awards category.

• The Saudi Electricity Company (SEC) won the Best Government Utilities Contact Centre under the Best Government Contact Centre Category.

• Saudi Credit and Savings Bank (Saudi SCSB) won the Best Government Finance Contact Centre - Lifestyle under the Best Industry Contact Centre Categories and the Best CRM Analytics Award in the Operational Excellence Category.

• Flynas won the Best Industry Contact Centre Award - Airlines in the Industry Specific Areas of Expertise Category and the Best Service to Sales Program Award in the Commercial Excellence Category.

• Saudi Post (KSA-SP) won the Best Government Monopoly Contact Centre under Best Government Contact Centre Category.

• Saudi General Authority for Civil Aviation (GACA) won the Best Government Contact Centre - Critical Services Award in the Best Government Contact Centre Category.

US drone case tests rights to air space

Whose sky is it anyway?

LONDON/WASHINGTON: When a small town American roofer took legal action against a neighbour for shooting down his drone, the local dispute sparked a case that could help shape the newest frontier of property rights law - who owns the air. Drone owner David Boggs filed a claim for declaratory judgment and damages in the Federal Court after his neighbour William Merideth from Hillview in the southern state of Kentucky blasted his $1,800 drone with a shotgun in July last year.

Boggs argued to the District Court in Kentucky that the action was not justified as the drone was not trespassing nor invading anyone's privacy, while Merideth - who dubs himself the "drone slayer" - said it was over his garden and his daughter. After a year of counter argument, a decision on which court jurisdiction should hear the complaint is expected within weeks and this could set new precedents for US law.

Experts are watching the case closely as the burgeoning drone industry, fuelled both by hobbyists and commercial operators, highlights the lack of regulation governing lower altitude air space not just in the United States but globally. "We are in an interesting time now when technology has surpassed the law," said Boggs' lawyer, James Mackler, a former Blackhawk pilot and partner at Frost Brown Todd and one of a handful of attorneys specializing in unmanned aircraft law.

"Operators need to know where they can fly and owners must know when they can reasonably expect privacy and be free of prying eyes," said Mackler whose work involves advising both corporate and government clients planning commercial drone use. The landmark case comes amid a sharp increase in the global market for drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles, with research firm, Markets and Markets estimating an annual growth rate of 32 percent every year to a $5.6 billion industry by 2020.

Rights Above?

The U.S. Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) forecasts about 2.5 million drones will be buzzing in US skies by the end of 2016 - and that number will more than triple by 2020. But with the global industry surging, all parties, including Merideth, and Boggs' lawyer, Mackler, agree the use of drones in lower air space urgently needs to be clarified and defined. "To be honest with you, at the time I did what I did I was reacting as most homeowners would, protecting their property, their kids ... I didn't know who was operating the drone or for what purpose," Merideth told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"In the end, I'm hoping that laws can be put into place to protect not just the home owner but the individual who owns the drone. They have rights too. It is a huge grey area and for now nobody knows what they are allowed to do." Mackler estimates about a drone a month is shot down in the United States as residents grapple with the legal confusion about what constitutes their property and their rights. "What happens typically is that law enforcement doesn't know what to do and civil suits are uncommon as most people don't want to get involved due to the costs," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a telephone interview.

Boggs' complaint states that the drone was flying at about 200 feet (60 m) above ground level for around two minutes over residential Bullitt County when it was blasted out of the sky. The height at which the drone was flying is disputed as Merideth insists it was much lower - an integral part of the legal case because higher airspace used by commercial planes is clearly defined in law.

For now, there is no real agreement on who owns the air space below that height and there are also no rules that identify who has the right to say how it can be used. The court challenge filed by Boggs in January shows Merideth's defense for downing the drone hinged on his belief it may have been taking video or still images of his daughter. When Boggs challenged his neighbor, Merideth warned him that not only was he was protecting his family's rights but he was not to come any further.

Police were called and Merideth was charged with felony, wanton endangerment and criminal mischief but Kentucky District Court Judge Rebecca Ward last October dismissed the criminal charges, saying he "had a right to shoot at the aircraft". Boggs' lawyer Mackler said the case is not about payment for the damaged drone but about carving legally clear boundaries between unregulated lower air space and personal property. If the case is heard in the District Court, he said, it will not be binding in other federal court jurisdictions but will be influential in other courts. However, if it is appealed and sent to a higher court, it could create a precedent for the country.

Opening the Skies

Despite the lack of legal clarity over air space, the United States moved to free up the use of small drones on Aug 30 by relaxing rules requiring drone operators to have a manned pilots licence and specific FAA approval. These have been replaced with a new class of FAA license which is much less onerous and less expensive, allowing the use of drones weighing less than 25 kg for routine educational or commercial use such as power line and antenna inspections.

The rules stopped short of allowing package deliveries, as proposed by Amazon.com Inc, and currently drones can only be used in sight of the operator and not over people. The FAA expects within a year 600,000 drones will be used commercially - up from 20,000 registered now for commercial use. Anglo-American property law scholars trace the first principles of law for the air back more than 800 years to the Latin "cujus est solum ejus est usque ad coelom et ad infernos".

This effectively meant that earthly property ownership was deemed to include everything below land to the centre of the earth and upwards in the sky to heaven. But with the advent of commercial air travel this principle was laid to rest because property owners could not be considered as owners of the air thousands of feet above their homes if air travel was to prosper. In the United States, the legal principles that emerged over the 20th century focused on nuisance: flights at great heights came to be permitted without regard to the rights of property owners, while low altitude flights, including take-offs and landings, had to factor in the impact on nearby property. — Reuters

Kaspersky announces machine readable threat intel platform

DUBAI: Kaspersky Lab announces completion and full availability of its Machine-Readable Threat Intelligence Platform, part of the Kaspersky Security Intelligence Services product range. Machine-Readable Threat Intelligence provides Threat Data Feeds and tools to integrate with the world's most popular SIEM platforms. This combination gives enterprises an unprecedent view of the threat landscape and supplies their Security Operations Centers with Indicators of Compromise needed to identify and block a multitude of cyber attacks as fast as possible. Within the Threat Data Feeds package of malware indicators for desktops and mobiles, malicious URLs has been amended with IP Reputation - a new data stream that helps customers bring their threat intelligence to a new level.

According to Kaspersky Lab's "Measuring the Financial Impact of IT Security on Businesses" report, the fast discovery of security breaches has a direct and measurable impact on recovery costs. Based on feedback from more than 4,000 company representatives from 25 countries, Kaspersky Lab estimated that every day a security breach goes undetected costs large businesses US$100K on average. The overall recovery bill for a security breach that remained undetected for a week can be as high as US$1.1 million, while an average cost of recovery from a breach detected within hours is less than US$400K. This monetary proof calls for an efficient detection strategy of active security breaches based on the modern concept of the Security Operations Center.

"Threat intelligence gathering is the very nature of our business. In some cases it becomes much easier to integrate Kaspersky Threat Data Feeds into customer's SIEM, than run migration to change existing anti-malware products. These feeds allow our customers to be protected by Kaspersky Lab without any significant changes to their enterprise security system. Threat Intelligence is more than just prevention: we provide machine-readable data which empowers enterprise SOCs with the ability to identify and remediate even the most sophisticated and targeted attacks. Finally, with the completion of support for three world-leading SIEM systems, our Threat Intelligence Platform can be deployed swiftly within the majority of enterprises," said Veniamin Levtsov, Kaspersky Lab's Vice President, Enterprise Business.

Threat Data Feeds: expanded and running at full power.

The optimum solution to the problem of fast incident discovery is actionable security intelligence. This means being able to spot an attack at any point using a variety of methods. While typical prevention tools focus on analyzing activitity on endpoints, an additional layer of security has to be in place. In case endpoint protection is circumvented for some reason, a security system has to be able to spot an attack on other levels. This is exactly what Kaspersky Threat Data Feeds provide:

• Indicators of malicious programs (Malware hashes). Regular updates of this feed provide enterprises with the right insight into the threat landscape in almost real time.

• Malicious URLs, Phishing and Command & Control URLs. This data stream may serve as the first clue to discern regular activity from a well-hidden cyber attack. Includes data about URLs associated with malware, phishing and botnet operation targeting PCs and mobile devices.

• Mobile Threats. A special package aimed at the telecoms industry with information about the latest malicious programs for mobile devices.

ª IP Reputation data. This is a new feature available from August 2016. The IP Reputation feed is invaluable in identifying active breaches thanks to Kaspersky Lab's worldwide, constantly updated data on command and control servers and sources of cyber attacks.

All feeds include additional contextual data that helps enterprises to fine-tune their threat detection algorithms, define priorities of their Security Operation Centers and speed up incident response. These include timestamps of a recorded event, the list of the most affected countries, related IPs for URLs and domains and other information.

In addition to previously announced support for Splunk, Threat Data Feeds can now be integrated with IBM QRadar and HP ARCsight SIEM systems. Kaspersky Lab is working to expand the availability of its Machine-Readable Threat Intelligence on more enterprise platforms to help businesses enhance the capabilities of their Security Operations Centers.

PITTSBURGH: Waze system operation engineer Gil Disatnik holds a Waze beacon in this city, where the beacons have been installed in two tunnels. — AP

Waze sets out to eliminate 'tunnel blindness' on maps

SAN FRANCISCO: The popular navigation app Waze is putting a new twist on the phrase "tunnel vision." It's trying to ensure drivers relying on digital maps don't lose their way when their GPS signal disappears in tunnels. Waze plans to keep drivers connected in those GPS-less situations by installing low-cost, battery-powered beacons that will transmit to smartphones and tablets in tunnels that the company has it its database, covering about 12,000 km around the world. The beacons can maintain map connections, as long as the drivers turn on their Bluetooth signal.

The beacons will be turned on Wednesday in two Pittsburgh tunnels, Fort Pitt and Liberty, and another in Israel, where Waze was founded before Google bought it in 2013 for $969 million. Waze is trying to persuade all tunnel operators, mostly government agencies, to buy and install the beacons that it designed to address the problem. It costs about $1,200 for the 42 beacons required to provide coverage for every mile (1.6 km) within a tunnel. Each beacon is guaranteed under warranty for four years.

Plans already are being drawn up to install the Waze beacons in tunnels in Rio de Janeiro and Paris, too. Waze isn't projecting how long it will take to realize its goal of blanketing all tunnels with the beacons. The transmissions from the beacons will be unencrypted so other digital map services, including Google's and Apple's, can also connect to them through Bluetooth when there isn't a GPS signal.

Waze's solution for tunnel blindness was developed by one of its systems operations engineers, Gil Disatnik. He got the idea after losing his GPS signal in 2014 while driving through a Boston tunnel and missing the turn he needed to take to get to the airport. After working on the tunnel beacons, Disatnik also got a new nickname: "Waze Mole." — AP

Kuwait PHFS launches 'Fashion for Hope' ovarian cancer awareness

KUWAIT: Some of the biggest names in Kuwaiti fashion have joined "Fashion for Hope", a nationwide campaign launched by Patients Helping Fund Society (PHFS) in Kuwait, in partnership with AstraZeneca Gulf under the ovarian cancer awareness initiative, Listen To Your Body. The campaign, launched to coincide with ovarian cancer awareness month this September, invites women in Kuwait to vote for their favorite teal colored garment, the color of hope and survivorship for ovarian cancer, through PHFS official Facebook page.

The campaign was launched following the alarming findings from a nationwide survey commissioned by AstraZeneca Gulf, which revealed 79% of women living in Kuwait were unable to correctly identify the symptoms of the disease. Ovarian cancer has often been referred to as a 'silent killer' affecting 250,0002 women worldwide - meaning women are less likely to be diagnosed until the cancer has spread, significantly reducing the chances of survival.

In the GCC, it is estimated that around 1,350 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer each year, with 750 dying from the disease3. Ovarian cancer can occur at any age, although women 55 years and older are at higher risk. Dr Mohammad Al-Sharhan,Chairman of Patients Helping Fund Society said the survey highlighted the challenge of detecting ovarian cancer in the early stages. "Unfortunately, the symptoms women experience with early ovarian cancer often mimics non-serious causes, such as the menstrual cycle or indigestion.

This means women may delay visiting their doctor until symptoms progress to the late stages and chances for survival are reduced to a five-year survival rate of 30-50%5," he said. "Kuwait is a hub for fashion design and Kuwaiti women are known for their love for fashion, through which we hope to spread the needed awareness of ovarian cancer, a disease that causes more deaths than any other cancer of the female reproductive cancers, and for which the need for early diagnosis and treatment is vital", Dr Al-Sharhan added.

Lioness Couture, CharbelZoe, and Anfal Al Saleh are of the top notch local and international fashion designers in Kuwait who have donated their time to produce exclusive teal garments and share their support for ovarian cancer awareness. Speaking on her participation, Anfal Al Saleh, Kuwaiti fashion designer, said: "I am honored to design an exclusive teal item to raise awareness of ovarian cancer in recognition for all the women out there who suffer from this disease and their families who support them. I hope this initiative encourages Kuwaiti women to educate themselves on the subtle symptoms that shouldn't be overlooked, and of course potentially be one of the lucky winners of the exclusive items."

To be part of Fashion for Hope, women in Kuwait are invited to like the PHFS Facebook page www.facebook.com/PatientsHelpingFundSocietyand click on the 'Fashion For Hope' tab to vote for their preferred garment throughout the month of September, during which awareness and educational Listen to Your Body messaging will run in parallel to equip women with all the information they need to know about the disease. Voting will close at the end of the month and Fashion for Hope winners will then be announced.

Commenting on the collaboration, Samer Al Hallaq, Area Vice President for AstraZeneca Middle East, said: "AstraZeneca Gulf is delighted to be working closely with Patient Helping Fund Society to help increase awareness of ovarian cancer," he said. "This year's Fashion for Hope campaign under the "Listen To Your Body" initiative aims to encourage women to do just that through awareness activities and resources being made available across Kuwait over the coming months."

"AstraZeneca has a deep-rooted heritage in ovarian cancer therapy and together with the Society, we hope to make a real impact in helping women in Kuwait understand their risks and take control of their health," Hallaq added. Dr Mohammad Al-Sharhan said "As there is no specific diagnostic tool for ovarian cancer, symptom awareness remains of key importance. Some of the common symptoms of ovarian cancer are bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, difficulty eating, or feeling full quickly," he said.

"Obviously not every woman who has these symptoms will have ovarian cancer, but those are the symptoms to watch out for and women are recommended to visit their doctor if they experience symptoms more than 12 times during the course of one month." Another concerning result from the survey was that more than a third of the respondents did not know why it was important for them to find out whether they had inherited the BRCA gene mutation. Dr [name] highlighted that this further demonstrated that more awareness was needed, as women with BRCA gene mutations are more likely to develop ovarian or breast cancer.

"A BRCA mutation is a mutation in either one of the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, which are tumor suppressor genes. It's recommended for women who have a strong family history of cancer to be tested for BRCA mutations to help inform medical professionals and patients about monitoring and prevention strategies,"Dr. Mohammad Al-Sharhan added. For more information on ovarian cancer or to take part in the Fashion for Hope initiative visit www.facebook.com/PatientsHelpingFundSociety and click on the 'Fashion for Hope' tab.

Ovarian cancer

5 things women should learn about ovarian cancer:

(1) All women are at risk of ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer can occur at any age, although women 55 years and older are at higher risk.

(2) Awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer can help women to receive an earlier diagnosis, when the disease is more easily treatable. When the cancer is detected and treated at an early stage (when it's confined to the ovary) it is possible to overcome it so it's essential to learn and to be attentive to the symptoms. Every woman is different and might experience different symptoms. The most common are: Pelvic/ abdominal pain; Bloating; Urinary frequency/ urgency; Feeling full after eating a small amount.

(3) Diagnosis at an early stage vastly improves a woman's chance of survival. When caught in its earliest stages, ovarian cancer survival rates can be as high as 90 percent. Regrettably, however, early symptoms of ovarian cancer are difficult to diagnose, or go undetected, which leads to nearly 75% of all ovarian cancer patients being diagnosed in advanced stages.

(4) Ovarian cancer is often diagnosed at a late stage. Ovarian cancer is frequently diagnosed when the cancer is already at an advanced stage and women often delay seeking help. This may be because the woman confuses the symptoms with other common stomach and digestive complaints.

(5) Knowing your family history of cancer could help with early diagnoses and treatment - If you are at high risk for ovarian cancer because of personal or family history, your doctor may ask you to have more tests, including some that give information about your genes. These tests may help you make important decisions about cancer prevention for yourself and your children. There are benefits and risks with genetic testing, which you should discuss with your doctor. Blood tests can find out if you have a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene, which can cause ovarian cancer as well as breast cancer.

World leaders pushing to end overuse of antibiotics

Rising concern over drug-resistant germs prompts UN response

NEW YORK: World leaders are pushing to end the overuse of antibiotics and to encourage the development of new medicines, driven by concern that drug-resistant germs could lead to millions of deaths and undermine the global economy. For only the fourth time in its 70 year history, the United Nations is holding a special meeting yesterday devoted to a health issue: This time, on the rise of untreatable infections that is being propelled by the way drugs are overused and misused in both people and animals. Health experts have long worried about the issue, but it is getting more alarming because germs are getting ever more difficult to treat, few new antibiotics are being developed, and the problem appears to be global already. "We believe it's probably everywhere," said Dr Keiji Fukuda of the World Health Organization, of the resistance to drugs. Here's more on the issue, and why world leaders believe it's so important.

What's the problem?

Germs have higher chances of developing resistance to a drug if the drug is not used properly. If a drug is not used long enough or taken for the wrong reason, or if low levels of the drug are common in the environment, the germs can survive and adapt. Doctors are already facing situations in which they are helpless against infections that used to be easily treated with antibiotics, Fukuda said. All types of microbes, including bacteria, viruses and fungi have been shrugging off attacks from the medicines designed to stop them. Experts estimate that 700,000 people die around the world each year from drug-resistant germs, and they expect the number to grow sharply. Dr Tom Frieden, director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said the problem may also affect doctors' willingness to do chemotherapy, organ transplants, or other treatments that might put a patient at risk of uncontrollable infections. "It can undermine modern medicine," he said.

This illustration shows a group of carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae bacteria. The image was based on scanning electron micrographic imagery. In 2016, for only the fourth time in its 70 year history, the United Nations is holding a special meeting devoted to a health issue: This time, on the rise of untreatable infections that is being propelled by the way we over-use and misuse drugs in both people and animals. — AP

Why these drugs?

Often because of good intentions and bad decisions. For example, antibiotics don't work against viral illnesses like colds and flu. But doctors often prescribe them anyway to patients looking for some kind of treatment for their respiratory infections, experts say. Companies that raise livestock routinely prescribe antibiotics to try to stave off costly infections in herds and flocks.

Few new antibiotics

A major reason is that it is very hard for drugmakers to earn any money selling new antibiotics, so they don't want to spend the money needed to develop them. Patients don't need to be on antibiotics for very long, which means they won't be buying large amounts of the drug. And doctors are likely to prescribe any new antibiotics only in cases where older, cheaper ones don't work first.

Why now?

One factor is that world leaders are starting to worry about the economic threats from the problem. A 2014 report commissioned by the United Kingdom projected that by 2050 it will kill more people each year than cancer and cost the world as much as $100 trillion in lost economic output. The World Bank this week released a report saying drug-resistant infections have the potential to cause at least as much economic damage as the 2008 financial crisis. — AP

This undated handout shows an adult female brown widow (Latrodectus geometricus). Widow spider males, known for their tendency to end up as a post-coital snack, have developed a rather gruesome method of saving their own skins, scientists revealed. — AFP

Science reveals male widow spider's dastardly deeds

PARIS: Whenever the "widow" spider is mentioned, people tend to sympathize with the hapless male-best known for its tendency to end up as a post-coital snack. Well, pity them no more. Widow spider males have developed a rather gruesome method of saving their own skins, scientists revealed on Wednesday. To avoid becoming the lunch of adult females, some males have taken to inseminating juveniles which have no external genitalia yet-penetrating right through their exoskeletons to deposit sperm.

The females retain the sperm and produce offspring later, when they have matured. Unlike mating with adults, this option "rarely ends in cannibalism" of the males, the research team wrote in the Royal Society Journal Biology Letters. "This means that many males actually have the chance to mate more than once," study co-author Maydianne Andrade of the University of Toronto Scarborough told AFP-boosting their chances of reproductive success.

Andrade and a team were conducting unrelated research on two species in the "Latrodectus" or widow spider genus, when they observed the behavior. In both the Australian redback spider (L hasselti), and the brown widow (L geometricus), there is high competition among males for mating rights with females, which are several times larger than them. Many males get to copulate only once in their life before being eaten-sometimes even during the encounter. Females, on the other hand, may mate more than once-thus reducing their original male partners' chances of fatherhood.

Precision required

The researchers noticed that in the laboratory, and in nature, males mounted immature females whose genital organs and openings were still covered by a shell-like exoskeleton, which is shed before the creature reaches adulthood. It appeared the males used their fangs to cut through the shell, then deposit their seed in the females' sperm receptacles, called spermathecae. "They manage to do this quite carefully, opening only this part of the shell, and as far as we can tell, without causing any injury to the female," said Andrade. And they had to do it at just the right time-as soon as the genitalia and sperm storage organs are fully developed but not yet exposed-just a few days before the final moulting. — AFP

Nothing to see here: Southeast Asia flummoxed by haze study

JAKARTA: Indonesian, Malaysian and Singaporean authorities have dismissed research that smoky haze from catastrophic forest fires in Indonesia last year caused 100,000 deaths. Some even contend the haze caused no serious health problems, but experts say those assertions contradict well-established science. Last year's fires in Sumatra and the Indonesian part of Borneo were the worst since 1997, burning about 261,000 hectares of forests and peatland and sending haze across the region for weeks. Many were deliberately set by companies to clear land for palm oil and pulpwood plantations.

The study in the journal Environmental Research Letters by Harvard and Columbia researchers estimated the amount of health-threatening fine particles, often referred to as PM2.5, released by the fires that burned from July to October and tracked their spread across Southeast Asia using satellite observations. In Indonesia, a spokesman for the country's disaster mitigation agency said the research "could be baseless or they have the wrong information." Indonesia officially counted 24 deaths from the haze including people killed fighting the fires.

Singapore's Ministry of Health said short-term exposure to haze will generally not cause serious health problems. The study was "not reflective of the actual situation," it said, and the overall death rate hadn't changed last year. In Malaysia, Health Minister Subramaniam Sathasivam said officials are still studying the research, which is "computer generated, not based on hard data." "People have died but to what extent the haze contributed to it, it's hard to say," he said. "If an 80-year-old fellow with high blood pressure, diabetes, heart problem and exposure to haze died, what did he die of? This is hell of a difficult question to answer."

The dry season fires are an annual irritant in Indonesia's relations with its neighbors Singapore and Malaysia and the finding of a huge public health burden has the potential to worsen those strains. The 2015 burning season, which was worsened by El Nino's dry conditions, also tainted Indonesia's reputation globally by releasing a vast amount of atmosphere-warming carbon. The Indonesian government has stepped up efforts to prosecute companies and individuals who set fires and also strengthened its fire-fighting response. This year's fires have affected a smaller area in large part due to unseasonal rains.

Jamal Hisham Hashim, research fellow with the International Institute for Global Health in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, said governments should not dismiss the study even if the estimated deaths are arguable. He said decades of air pollution research that followed London's killer smog in 1952 has established the relationship between fine particulate matter and premature deaths, particularly in people with existing respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

"The pollution level that occurred during the haze is severe enough to cause premature deaths. That is indisputable," he said. "The study is a wake-up call. We need to be shaken; we have become too complacent with the haze." Joel Schwartz, an author of the study who is regarded by his peers as one of the world's top experts on the health effects of air pollution, said authorities in the affected countries have not offered any details of how they reached conclusions critical of the study. During the haze, Malaysia suffered air pollution at 10 times the level that the World Health Organization says causes premature deaths, he said, while Singapore's claim that short-term exposure does not have serious effects is factually incorrect.

SOUTH SUMATRA: A woman disembarks from a boat as the Ampera Bridge is shrouded in haze from wildfires in Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia. — AP

The Singaporean statement that its death rate was unchanged from 2014 did not demonstrate anything, Schwartz said, due to a worldwide trend for declining mortality. The study's premise is that deaths are higher than what they would be without the haze rather than a comparison to a particular year, he said. Separately, Singapore's health ministry did not respond to a question on why heart disease and pneumonia, both of which can be bought to fatal conclusion by fine particle exposure, had increased as a percentage of deaths in 2015. — AP

Entrepreneur sells the 'untouchable' foods to challenge Indian caste bias

MUMBAI: A former rebel fighter and member of India's "untouchable" caste is taking on caste-based discrimination with packaged foods that would have been regarded as impure just decades ago. Chandra Bhan Prasad, 58, was born into the Dalit Pasi community of pig rearers in northern India, considered untouchable in the ancient Hindu social hierarchy. Prasad and his wife recently launched 'Dalit Foods' online to sell spices, pickles and grains. "I was born impure. But I have the right to sell pure," Prasad said by phone from his office in New Delhi.

"I grew up with segregation and untouchability, but India has changed. I want to see how those who are born pure respond to my offering," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. India banned caste-based discrimination in 1955, but centuries-old attitudes persist, and lower-caste groups including Dalits are among the most marginalized communities. Dalits were barred from public places including temples and water tanks frequented by higher-caste Hindus. Many higher-caste Hindus considered food cooked or served by Dalits to be impure.

It is this custom that Prasad is taking aim at. Dalit Foods sells a small range of spices and grains, including chilli powder, turmeric powder, mango pickle, barley flour and lentils. More products will be added, Prasad said. For three years, Prasad was a fighter with India's Maoist insurgency that claims to fight for the rights of poor farmers and landless indigenous people. He became a Dalit campaigner and a champion of economic empowerment to end caste bias.

He became interested in food after three members of his family died of cancer. "Food adulteration is a big problem, and is probably the biggest reason for our health problems today," he said. "And yet, I saw 80-year-old Dalits who were healthy and doing hard labor, largely because of what they were eating: pure, unprocessed food," he said.

'Superfoods'

The domestic packaged food market is forecast to be worth $50 billion by 2017 from about $32 billion last year, according to the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India. Recent food-safety scares have led to greater awareness of adulteration. While growing up, Prasad said he and others in his community were forced to eat coarse foods that were reserved for cattle and for servants. These included unpolished rice and millets. "Millets were considered inferior food then. Today, they are called a superfood," he said. "We want to make Dalit foods like these popular," he said.

A large hotel chain is buying Dalit Foods on a trial basis, and the number of customers - largely urban Indians - is rising, Prasad said. Dalits are still often the targets of violence, with tens of thousands of crimes reported each year. Last month, thousands of Dalits in Gujarat state pledged to boycott the dirty jobs traditionally thrust upon them in protest against the lynching of Dalit men by upper-caste Hindus. "We have made a lot of progress, but Dalits are still not equal to the upper caste," Prasad said. "My business is a social experiment to see if India has really transformed, to see if people are willing to overcome their biases and customs for food that is pure," he said. — Reuters

Study: FTO gene 'not obesity life sentence'

PARIS: People who carry a variant in the so-called obesity gene, FTO, react just as well to diet and exercise as those without it, a research paper said yesterday. This means that people with the variant, which appears to be linked to a higher risk for being overweight, are not necessarily doomed to remain so, according to a meta-analysis published in The BMJ medical journal. "Individuals carrying the (variant) respond equally well to dietary, physical activity, or drug based weight loss interventions," wrote the authors of the review of eight studies involving some 10,000 people. This meant that genetic predisposition to obesity "can be at least partly counteracted through such interventions."

Scientists have previously shown an association between a variant of the FTO gene and surplus body fat, but little is understood about how the link works. The relative contribution of genetics and lifestyle to the global obesity epidemic is still very much in dispute. The latest review showed that participants in weight loss programs who had the FTO variant started out almost a kilo (about two pounds) heavier on average than those without it. But changes in weight were similar in people with the variant and those without it, regardless of other factors such as ethnicity or gender, the authors said.

In 2014, according to the World Health Organization, more than 1.9 billion adults globally were overweight. Of those, more than 600 million were obese. Carrying excess weight has been linked to heart disease, stroke and certain cancers. Commenting on the latest research, Public Health England agency chief nutritionist Alison Tedstone said the causes of the obesity epidemic may have little to do with genes. The study, she said, "adds to the evidence suggesting that environmental factors might dominate over at least common obesity linked genes". Such factors could include a high-sugar diet or insufficient physical exercise. — AFP

SILVER SPRING: Photo shows the Food and Drug Administration campus in Silver Spring, Md. In the last two years, the FDA has placed several limitations on opioids, including adding new warning language to immediate-release opioids such as Vicodin and Percocet. But prescriber training remains optional, even after a second FDA advisory panel again recommended the step in 2016. — AP

Tribal leaders push against opioid abuse

Northern New Mexico devastated by heroin, addiction

ALBUQUERQUE: American Indian tribal leaders from northern New Mexico - an area of the country devastated by heroin and opioid addiction - met with the US Justice Department over ways to combat opioid abuse amid high overdose deaths among Native Americans. And both sides say much more needs to be done. Associate Deputy Attorney General Bruce Ohris spoke with representatives and police chiefs from the eight northern New Mexico Native American pueblos Tuesday as part of a push to combat heroin-related deaths across the state, including Indian Country.

They discussed ways for better treatment, the need for more law enforcement resources and the desire for an educational blitz targeting American Indian children as young as 8. "Here in New Mexico we are facing an epidemic," US Attorney Damon Martinez said. "One of the (pueblo) governors brought pictures of these hypodermic needles they are picking up on a daily basis."

New Mexico's drug overdose death rate was the second highest in the nation in 2014, according to the latest available numbers. For years, the northern New Mexico city of Espanola and northern Rio Arriba County have had some of the nation's highest heroin-related death rates. The crisis has overwhelmed cash-strapped law enforcement agencies and emergency workers who often struggle to combat Mexican traffickers who provide users lethal "black tar" heroin via a sophisticated system that resembles pizza delivery.

"It's a wildfire that's taking off," Pueblo of Pojoaque Gov Joseph Talachy said. "It started off small, but then it took off." But now the users have gone underground, and the pueblo struggles to bring non-American Indians to justice because of jurisdiction, Talachy said. According to the new numbers released Tuesday by the New Mexico Department of Health, Rio Arriba County had the highest drug overdose death rate in the state with 81.4 deaths per 100,000 residents last year.

"The fact is, our state continues to suffer from drug abuse. One overdose death is one too many," New Mexico Health Secretary Designate Lynn Gallagher said. But health officials say heroin and opioid addiction especially has hit American Indian communities across the country as the number of overdose deaths from prescription painkillers has soared overall, claiming the lives of 165,000 people in the US since 2000. A National Institute on Drug Abuse survey found that American Indian students' annual heroin and OxyContin use was about two to three times higher than the national averages from 2009 to 2012.

Heroin and opioid abuse have even stuck in the most remote parts of the country among American Indians. In Alaska's Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region, for example, state health officials say the isolated area of Alaska Native villages and 25,000 residents has around 500 people addicted to opioids. Most of these Alaska villages don't have treatment centers for drug users. Earlier this month, tribal officials in the southwestern Alaska village of Quinhagak banished six people over illegal drugs and alcohol. The move came after the village of 700 residents saw four apparent heroin overdoses in one day.

Meanwhile, a nonprofit prescription drug abuse prevention program in Maine is helping make available the drug Narcan to the state's five Native American tribes. Narcan, whose generic name is naloxone, is a prescription drug that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose. The program set up five clinics on tribal land thanks to a federal grant. The Justice Department meeting in Albuquerque is part of the New Mexico Heroin and Opioid Prevention and Education Initiative — AP

ALBUQUERQUE: US Associate Deputy Attorney General Bruce Ohris (left) talks with Santa Clara Pueblo Gov J Michael Chavarria during a forum on opioid addiction at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque. — AP

Greetings

Happy 6th Birthday to our dear son Joshua

Wish you dear son a very happy and blessed birthday. May Lord shower His blessings upon you in the years to come and may you be a blessing to others around you. Stay smiling and joyous like ever. With lotsa' love and blessing to our little Joshua.

Best wishes come, from : Appa, Amma and Chechy (Joana Angelina John)

Rimal celebrates Eid Al-Adha

Rimal Hotel and Resort celebrated Eid Al-Adha with a range of recreational activities and special events for children such as face painting, competitions and entertaining games and playgrounds soap, handicrafts and cartoon characters popular for children, such as Barney and also henna and awards inscription.

This allowed Rimal's clientele to enjoy the green spaces and swimming pools. The Director General of the resort Yaseen Mahdi provided complete luxury and privacy away from the routine of everyday life.

Abeer Qouta, Director of Public Relations and Information, said that the experienced team insured their utmost to ensure a memorable holiday feast for family and commensurate with the atmosphere of the summer.

Commemorating second anniversary of HH the Amir being named Humanity leader

Under the auspices of Sheikha Fareeha Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, writer Abdullah Abbas Bowair will hold a special reception at the Crowne Plaza on Monday, September 26 to commemorate the second anniversary of UN naming of HH the Amir as 'Humanity Leader' and Kuwait as 'Humanity Center'.

Sebamed participates in an MOH ceremony to mark World Alzheimer's Day.

A traditional Tajik music ceremony took place in Abdel Hussian Abd Al Reda Stage with the presence of diplomats.

Honoring distinguished artists under the patronage of Sheikh Duaij Al-Khalifa Al-Sabah at Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Eid Al-Adha celebrations at ICSK-Khaitan

A special assembly was conducted on Monday, 19th September, 2016 by the students of ICSK Khaitan to celebrate Eid Al-Adha. Beautiful and informative charts were displayed on the school notice boards to mark the auspicious occasion. A large number of pupils took part in the special Eid Assembly. Speeches, videos, Power-Point presentations and group songs by the students acquainted the School with the religious significance and history of this solemn festival. Eid Al-Adha is celebrated as the sacrificial feast to spread the message of charity and love to the less fortunate. Muslims throughout the world greet each other "Eid Mubarak" on this day. At the end of the programme a delicious treat was also organized by the staff.

ASDA'A B-M wins PR Agency of the Year in MENA for 6th year running

ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller won Public Relations Agency of the Year in the Middle East and Africa for the 6th year running at this year's International Business Awards, while the 8th Annual Arab Youth Survey 2016 won three Gold Medals, as the PR Campaign of the Year in the categories of Reputation / Brand Management, Public Service and Global Issues.

In the agency's best performance ever at the IBAs - known as "the Stevies" - ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller dominated the PR categories, winning 23 trophies in total, including four golds, 7 silvers and 12 bronzes, resulting in being awarded a coveted Best of the IBAs Award for the first time.

The 'Grand Stevie' ranked the Agency in third-place in terms of total awards, tied globally with the tech heavyweight Cisco Systems.

Sunil John, Founder and CEO of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller, said: "This is a tremendous result for us, and it is wonderful to see our ground-breaking work on behalf of our clients recognised on the international stage. This unprecedented win is a testament to the hard work and creative energy of our teams across all of our Practices."

The International Business Awards are the world's premier business awards programme. The 2016 International Business Awards received 3,800 entries from more than 60 nations and territories. The award ceremony will take place in Rome, Italy on 21 October.

The campaign for the Global Education & Skills Forum and Global Teacher Prize 2016 won Silver in three categories: Public Services, Global Issues, and Events & Occurrences; while Warriors in Pink for Ford took two Silvers, in Community Relations and Public Service, and a Bronze for Social Media. Ford & Lincoln own the 2015 Dubai International Motor Show took a Silver in Events & Observances, and two bronzes, one for Media Relations and one for Consumer Product marketing.

The Agency's campaign for the Federal National Council Elections 2015 won a silver in Public Affairs, as well as a Bronze in community relations, while the campaign for Emaar's Launch of Dubai's New Icon at Dubai Creek Harbour, won three bronzes, in Events & Occurrences, New Product Launch and Reputation/Brand Management.

The Islamic Banking Index for Emirates Islamic won two Bronzes, in Marketing - Business-to-Business and Investor Relations, and 'Minds + Machines' - GE's Digital Industrial Transformation in MENAT, also took two Bronzes, for Marketing: Business-to-Business and Reputation/Brand Management. Finally, the campaign for the Initial Public Offering of L'azurde - the largest gold and jewellery designer, manufacturer and distributor in the Middle East - took a Bronze for Investor Relations.

Embassy of India Kuwait

Indian Embassy Auditorium is available to various Indian Associations in Kuwait for holding their socio-cultural activities, etc. Some guidelines for Auditorium use are:

* Use of Auditorium is available to Indian associations registered with Embassy for bonafide activities.

* The interested Indian association can approach Embassy for booking the Auditorium. Contact persons for this purpose are Shri Yashwant Chatpalliwar, SS (HOC) (Mobile: 97229915) Mail:hoc@indembkwt.org and Shri K.S.S. Naidu (Mobile: 65668644) indcommunity@indembkwt.org.

* User fee is: KD 350/- for maximum 4 hour event (with food served) or KD 300/- for maximum 4 hour event (without food served).

* Two weeks advance intimation is required for booking Auditorium. Once the booking is confirmed by Embassy, the concerned association shall deposit the requisite user fee in cash.

* In the event of cancellation of booking of Auditorium by an Indian Association, the amount deposited will not be refunded. However, if the Embassy cancels the booking the user fee deposited will be refunded.

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

09:15 Batman Unlimited: Monster Mayhem
11:00 Non-Stop
13:00 Unstoppable
15:00 Heatstroke
17:00 The Hobbit: The Battle Of The Five Armies
19:45 Non-Stop
21:45 Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes
00:15 Heatstroke
02:00 Sabotage
04:00 Innocence

BBC FIRST

09:25 Orphan Black
10:15 Doctors
10:45 Eastenders
11:15 Stella
12:00 Doctors
12:30 Eastenders
13:00 Holby City
14:00 New Tricks
14:55 Doctor Who
15:45 Stella
16:35 Doctors
17:05 Eastenders
17:40 New Tricks
18:35 Doctor Who
19:25 Stella
20:15 Doctors
20:45 Eastenders
21:20 New Tricks
22:15 Doctor Who
23:10 Stella
00:00 Doctors
00:30 Eastenders
01:05 New Tricks
02:00 Holby City
03:00 Friday Night Dinner
03:30 The Detectorists
04:00 Pramface
04:30 Pramface
05:30 Threesome

crime & investigation network

09:00 Celebrity Ghost Stories
10:00 My Haunted House
11:00 Who Was I? My Past Lives
12:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
13:00 Beyond Scared Straight
14:00 Homicide Hunter
15:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
16:00 Monster In My Family
17:00 The First 48
18:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
19:00 Beyond Scared Straight
20:00 Homicide Hunter
21:00 Monster In My Family
22:00 The First 48
23:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
00:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
01:00 Beyond Scared Straight
02:00 Monster In My Family
03:00 Homicide Hunter
04:00 Forensic Squad
05:00 Homicide Hunter

COMEDY CENTRAL

09:00 Lip Sync Battle
09:25 Catch A Contractor
09:50 Ridiculousness
10:15 Ridiculousness
10:40 Ridiculousness
11:05 Ridiculousness
11:30 Impractical Jokers
11:55 Impractical Jokers
12:20 Tosh.0
12:50 Tosh.0
13:15 MLE Chowdown: The Turkey Bowl
14:05 Ridiculousness
14:30 Ridiculousness
14:55 Impractical Jokers
15:20 Impractical Jokers
15:45 Key And Peele
16:10 Key And Peele
16:35 Ridiculousness
17:00 Ridiculousness

INNOCENCE ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

17:25 MLE Chowdown: The Turkey Bowl
18:15 Key And Peele
18:40 Key And Peele
19:05 Impractical Jokers
19:30 Impractical Jokers
19:55 Ridiculousness
20:20 Ridiculousness
20:45 MLE Chowdown: The Turkey Bowl
21:35 Tosh.0
22:00 Tosh.0
22:30 Key And Peele
22:55 Key And Peele
23:25 Workaholics
23:50 Impractical Jokers
00:15 Impractical Jokers
00:39 Ridiculousness
01:03 Ridiculousness
01:27 Hungry Investors
02:13 MLE Chowdown: The Turkey Bowl
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:30 Kyle Kinane: Whiskey Icarus
04:18 Inside Amy Schumer
04:42 South Park
05:05 Underground With Dave Attell
05:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

09:00 Destroyed In Seconds
09:25 Destroyed In Seconds
09:50 Ultimate Survival
10:40 How It's Made
11:05 How It's Made
11:30 Storm Chasers
12:20 Mythbusters
13:00 Doki
13:25 Adventure 8: Zoo Games
13:50 My Cat From Hell
14:40 How It's Made
15:05 How It's Made
15:30 Science Of The Movies
16:20 Mythbusters
17:10 Animal Airport
17:35 Animal Airport
18:00 My Cat From Hell
18:50 Ultimate Survival
19:40 How It's Made
20:05 How It's Made
20:30 Storm Chasers
21:20 Mythbusters
22:10 Doki
22:35 Adventure 8: Zoo Games
23:00 Space Voyages
23:50 NASA's Unexplained Files
00:40 Science Of The Movies
01:30 Mythbusters
02:20 How It's Made
02:45 How It's Made
03:10 Space Voyages
04:00 NASA's Unexplained Files
04:50 Destroyed In Seconds
05:15 Destroyed In Seconds
05:40 Ultimate Survival

ID X

09:00 Hostage: Deadly Demands
09:48 I Almost Got Away With It
10:36 On The Case With Paula Zahn
11:24 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
11:49 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
12:12 I'd Kill For You
13:00 Web Of Lies
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 On The Case With Paula Zahn
15:30 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
15:55 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
16:20 I'd Kill For You
17:10 Murder Comes To Town
18:00 Web Of Lies
18:50 I Almost Got Away With It
19:40 On The Case With Paula Zahn
20:30 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
20:55 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
21:20 I'd Kill For You
22:10 Swamp Murders
23:00 Web Of Lies
23:50 I Almost Got Away With It
00:40 On The Case With Paula Zahn
01:30 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
01:55 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
02:20 I'd Kill For You
03:10 California Investigator
03:35 California Investigator
04:00 Murder Book
04:50 I Am Homicide
05:40 Betrayed

Disney Channel HD

09:15 The Hive
09:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
09:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
10:10 Hank Zipzer
10:35 Binny And The Ghost
11:00 Violetta
11:45 The Hive
11:50 Mouk
12:00 Jessie
12:25 Jessie
12:50 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
13:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
13:20 Liv And Maddie
13:45 Bunk'd
14:10 Austin & Ally
14:35 Shake It Up
15:00 A.N.T. Farm
15:25 A.N.T. Farm
15:50 That's So Raven
16:15 That's So Raven
16:40 Good Luck Charlie
17:05 Good Luck Charlie
17:30 Jessie
17:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:00 The 7D
18:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
14:30 Goldie & Bear
14:40 PJ Masks
14:55 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
15:10 Doc McStuffins
15:20 Miles From Tomorrow
15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
15:45 Goldie & Bear
16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 The Lion Guard
16:55 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
17:20 Minnie's Bow-Toons
17:25 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
17:50 The Hive
18:00 Doc McStuffins
18:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
19:00 The Lion Guard
19:30 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
19:45 Aladdin
20:15 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
20:45 Doc McStuffins
21:15 Minnie's Bow-Toons
21:20 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
21:50 Miles From Tomorrow
22:15 Sofia The First
22:45 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
23:00 The Lion Guard
23:30 Goldie & Bear
23:55 Unbungalievable
00:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
00:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
01:00 PJ Masks
01:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
02:00 Sofia The First
02:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
03:00 PJ Masks
03:25 Doc McStuffins
03:55 Aladdin
04:20 Gummi Bears
04:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons
04:50 Zou
05:05 Henry Hugglemonster
05:20 Calimero
05:35 Zou
05:50 Loopdidoo

Disney XD

12:00 Boyster
12:10 Super Matrak
12:35 Super Matrak
13:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
13:25 K.C. Undercover
13:50 Supa Strikas
14:15 Danger Mouse
14:40 Phineas And Ferb
15:05 Counterfeit Cat
15:10 Gravity Falls
15:35 Lab Rats
16:00 Rocket Monkeys
16:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
16:50 Boyster
17:20 Boyster
17:45 Pair Of Kings
18:10 Pair Of Kings
18:35 Lab Rats
19:00 Lab Rats
19:30 Phineas And Ferb
19:55 Phineas And Ferb
20:20 Kickin' It
20:45 Kickin' It
21:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:15 Supa Strikas
21:40 Supa Strikas
22:05 Lab Rats
22:30 Danger Mouse
22:55 Kirby Buckets
23:25 K.C. Undercover
23:50 Annedroids
00:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
00:40 K.C. Undercover
01:05 Counterfeit Cat
01:10 Gravity Falls
01:35 Pickle And Peanut
01:45 Pickle And Peanut
02:00 Lab Rats
02:25 Supa Strikas
02:55 K.C. Undercover
03:20 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
03:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
04:10 Marvel Avengers Assemble
04:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
05:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

Discovery Channel HD

09:15 Magic Of Science
09:40 Fast N' Loud
10:30 Garage Gold
11:00 How Stuff Works
11:30 How Do They Do It?
12:00 Deadliest Catch
12:50 Misfit Garage
13:40 Fast N' Loud
14:30 Gold Divers
15:20 Garage Gold
15:45 How Stuff Works
16:10 How Do They Do It?
16:35 You Have Been Warned
17:25 World's Top 5
18:15 Magic Of Science
18:40 Magic Of Science
19:05 How Stuff Works
19:30 Storm Hunters
19:55 Garage Gold
20:20 Gold Divers
21:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier
22:00 Deadliest Catch
22:50 Fast N' Loud
23:40 Misfit Garage
00:30 How Stuff Works
00:55 How Do They Do It?
01:20 Gold Divers
02:10 Storm Hunters
02:35 Garage Gold
03:00 Biketacular
03:50 Countdown To Collision
04:40 Fire In the Hole
05:30 Fast N' Loud

BIG GAME ON OSN MOVIES HD

E HD

10:35 WAGs
11:30 Fashion Bloggers
12:00 Botched
12:55 E! News
13:10 Botched
14:10 E! News
15:10 Botched
16:10 Live From The Red Carpet: The 2016...
18:00 E! News
18:15 Fashion Police
19:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
20:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
21:00 E! News
21:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
22:15 Live From The Red Carpet: The 2016...
00:05 Fashion Police
01:00 E! News
02:00 Rob & Chyna
03:00 LA Clippers Dance Squad
04:00 Botched
05:00 E! News

ITV HD CHOICE

09:25 Grantchester
10:20 The Jonathan Ross Show
11:15 Murdoch Mysteries
12:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
13:05 The Chase
14:00 Grantchester
15:00 The Jonathan Ross Show
16:00 Murdoch Mysteries
16:55 Who's Doing The Dishes?
17:50 The Chase
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?
21:10 The Chase
22:00 Prince Philip: The Plot To Make A King
22:55 Paul O'grady's Animal Orphans
23:50 Murdoch Mysteries
00:45 Emmerdale
01:15 Coronation Street
01:45 Coronation Street
02:10 The Chase
03:00 Prince Philip: The Plot To Make A King
03:55 Paul O'grady's Animal Orphans
04:50 Emmerdale
05:15 Coronation Street
05:40 Coronation Street

NAT GEO people HD

09:05 Great Escapes
09:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
09:55 Tales From The Bush Larder
10:20 Raw Travel
10:45 Raw Travel
11:10 David Rocco's Dolce India
11:35 Chefs Run Wild
12:00 Chefs Run Wild
12:25 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
12:50 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
13:15 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
13:40 Grandma's Boy
14:05 Eat Street
14:30 What's For Sale?
14:55 Great Escapes
15:20 Tales From The Bush Larder
15:45 Tales From The Bush Larder
16:10 Raw Travel
16:35 Raw Travel
17:00 David Rocco's Dolce India
17:25 Chefs Run Wild
17:50 Chefs Run Wild
18:15 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
18:40 A Model Adventure
19:35 Grandma's Boy
20:00 Eat Street
20:55 Great Escapes
21:25 Tales From The Bush Larder
21:50 Tales From The Bush Larder
22:20 Raw Travel
22:45 Raw Travel
23:15 David Rocco's Dolce India
23:40 Chefs Run Wild
00:10 Chefs Run Wild
00:35 Street Food Around The World
01:05 Great Escapes
01:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
02:00 Tales From The Bush Larder
02:25 Raw Travel
02:50 Raw Travel
03:15 David Rocco's Dolce India
03:40 Chefs Run Wild
04:05 Chefs Run Wild
04:30 Street Food Around The World
04:55 A Model Adventure

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

09:50 Innovation Nation
10:15 Innovation Nation
10:45 Incredibly Small World
11:40 Abandoned
12:05 Abandoned
12:35 Brain Games
13:30 Hacking The System
13:55 Going Deep With David Rees
14:25 UFOs: The Untold Stories
15:20 Incredibly Small World
16:15 Machine Impossible
17:10 No Man Left Behind
18:05 Locked Up Abroad
19:00 UFOs: The Untold Stories
20:00 Operation Sumatran Rhino
21:00 Brain Games
22:00 Machine Impossible
23:00 No Man Left Behind
00:00 Operation Sumatran Rhino
01:00 Innovation Nation
01:30 Innovation Nation
02:00 Machine Impossible
02:50 No Man Left Behind
03:40 Locked Up Abroad

NAT GEO WILD HD

09:45 The Lion Whisperer
10:40 Expedition Wild
11:35 Hyena Coast
12:30 Grizzly Empire
13:25 The Lion Whisperer
14:20 Expedition Wild
15:15 Baby Animals In The Wild
16:10 Alien Crab
17:05 Extreme Survivors
18:00 Birthplace Of The Giants
19:00 Big Cat Wars
20:00 Operation Sumatran Rhino
20:50 Chasing Rhinos
21:40 Bear Nomad
22:35 Baby Animals In The Wild
23:30 The Pack
00:25 Night Of The Lion
01:20 Chasing Rhinos
02:10 Bear Nomad
03:00 Baby Animals In The Wild
03:50 The Pack
04:40 Night Of The Lion
05:30 Birthplace Of The Giants

nickelodeon HD

09:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:48 Henry Danger
10:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
10:36 The Haunted Hathaways
11:00 Max & Shred
11:24 Henry Danger
11:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
12:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
12:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
13:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
13:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
13:48 Winx Club
14:12 Harvey Beaks
14:36 Breadwinners
15:00 Get Blake
15:24 Rabbids Invasion
15:48 Henry Danger
16:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
16:36 The Haunted Hathaways
17:00 Winx Club
17:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
17:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
18:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
18:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
19:00 Breadwinners
19:24 The Loud House
19:48 Harvey Beaks
20:12 Rabbids Invasion
20:36 Henry Danger
21:00 Game Shakers
21:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
21:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
22:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
22:36 The Loud House
23:00 Sanjay And Craig
23:24 Harvey Beaks
23:48 Breadwinners
00:12 Henry Danger
00:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
01:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
01:24 Game Shakers
01:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
02:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:24 Breadwinners
03:48 Breadwinners
04:12 Sanjay And Craig
04:36 Sanjay And Craig
05:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
05:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
05:48 Henry Danger

nick jr.

09:01 Paw Patrol
09:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
09:35 Dora The Explorer
09:59 Max & Ruby
10:07 Bubble Guppies
10:29 Little Charmers
10:41 Shimmer And Shine
11:05 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
11:27 Zack & Quack
11:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
12:00 Paw Patrol
12:13 Paw Patrol
12:36 Dora The Explorer
13:00 Wanda And The Alien
13:11 Zack & Quack
13:22 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
13:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:10 Paw Patrol
14:35 Shimmer And Shine
14:58 Dora The Explorer
15:21 Paw Patrol
15:45 Little Charmers
15:57 Bubble Guppies
16:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
16:40 Zack & Quack
16:52 Team Umizoomi
17:15 Louie
17:22 Louie
17:30 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
17:53 Olive The Ostrich
17:58 Olive The Ostrich
18:03 Max & Ruby
18:26 Wanda And The Alien
18:37 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
18:48 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
19:00 Blaze And The Monster Machines
19:22 Blaze And The Monster Machines
19:45 Zack & Quack
19:55 Zack & Quack
20:05 Team Umizoomi
20:28 Louie
20:35 Louie
20:40 Olive The Ostrich
20:44 Olive The Ostrich
20:49 Paw Patrol
21:01 Paw Patrol
21:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
21:35 Dora The Explorer
21:59 Max & Ruby
22:07 Bubble Guppies
22:29 Little Charmers
22:41 Shimmer And Shine
23:05 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
23:27 Zack & Quack
23:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
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00:13 Paw Patrol
00:36 Dora The Explorer
01:00 Wanda And The Alien
01:11 Zack & Quack
01:22 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
01:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:10 Paw Patrol
02:35 Shimmer And Shine
02:58 Dora The Explorer
03:21 Paw Patrol
03:45 Little Charmers
03:57 Bubble Guppies
04:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
04:40 Zack & Quack
04:52 Team Umizoomi
05:15 Louie
05:22 Louie
05:30 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
05:53 Olive The Ostrich
05:58 Olive The Ostrich

OSN MOVIES DRAMA

09:00 Lullaby
11:00 Experimenter
12:45 Mood Indigo
15:00 Rosewater
17:00 Shanghai Calling
19:00 Red Wing
21:00 Escape (2012)
23:00 Rosewater
01:00 Frank
03:00 5 To 7
05:00 Only God Forgives

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY

09:00 Dr. Ken
09:30 Last Man Standing
10:00 Living With Fran
10:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
11:30 George Lopez
12:00 The Bernie Mac Show
12:30 $#*! My Dad Says
13:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
14:00 Living With Fran
14:30 George Lopez
15:00 Dr. Ken
15:30 Young & Hungry
16:00 Young & Hungry
16:30 $#*! My Dad Says
17:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
18:00 The Bernie Mac Show
18:30 Living With Fran
19:00 George Lopez
19:30 $#*! My Dad Says
20:00 Last Man Standing
20:30 Young & Hungry
21:00 Young & Hungry
21:30 2 Broke Girls
22:00 2 Broke Girls
22:30 The Bernie Mac Show
23:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
00:00 Hot In Cleveland
00:30 Last Man Standing
01:00 Uncle Buck
01:30 Uncle Buck
02:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
03:00 The Simpsons
03:30 The Simpsons
04:00 Getting On
04:30 The Big C
05:00 The League
05:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

OSN FIRST HD

09:00 Better Call Saul
10:00 Good Morning America
13:00 C.S.I. Cyber
14:00 Stitchers
15:00 The Voice
17:00 C.S.I. Cyber
18:00 Stitchers
19:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
20:00 Live Good Morning America
23:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
00:00 Stitchers
01:00 The Amazing Race

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

09:00 The Game Plan
11:00 Pocahontas
13:00 Dunston Checks In
15:00 Earth To Echo
17:00 G-Force
19:00 The Princess And The Frog
21:00 101 Dalmatians
23:00 102 Dalmatians
01:00 The Kid
03:00 Beyond The Mask
05:00 101 Dalmatians

OSN MOVIES HD

10:30 Pixels
12:30 Still Alice
14:15 Life Of A King
16:00 Pixels
17:45 The Walk
20:00 Big Game
21:30 Believe
23:15 Inside Out
01:00 Project Almanac
03:00 The 5th Wave
05:00 Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

10:00 Bubble Boy
12:00 Win A Date With Tad Hamilton!
14:00 Father Hood
16:00 Bubble Boy
18:00 Spy Hard
20:00 Serial (Bad) Weddings
22:00 Father Hood
00:00 Just Married
02:00 Wish I Was Here
04:00 The Hooligan Factory

OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

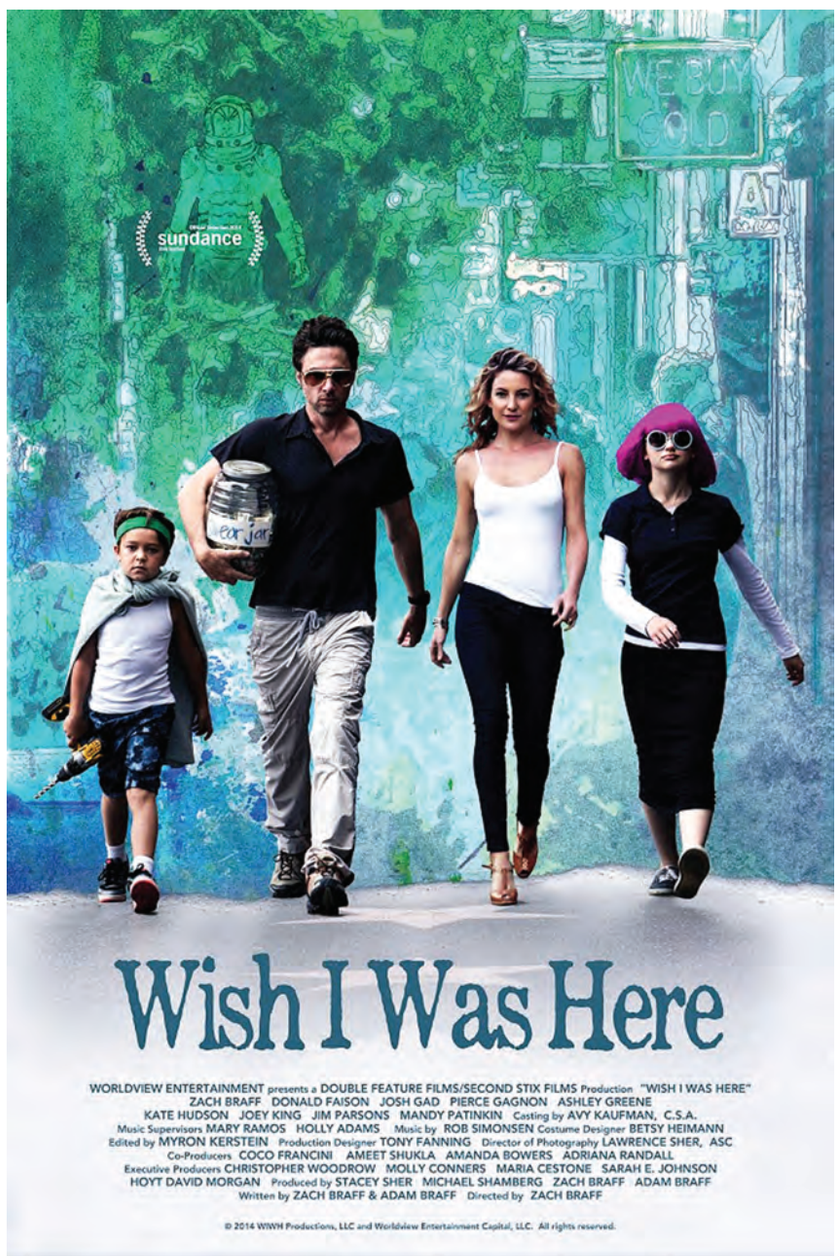
10:00 Hitting The Apex
12:30 Foxcatcher
15:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost
17:30 The Railway Man
20:00 Steve Jobs: The Man In The Machine
22:30 The Guardian
01:00 What Maisie Knew
03:00 Nixon

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

10:15 Marco Macaco
12:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
13:45 Goat Story 2
15:45 Gladiators Of Rome
17:30 Miffy The Movie
19:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
20:30 Memory Loss
22:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
00:00 Gladiators Of Rome
02:00 Harriet The Spy
04:00 Memory Loss
05:30 Mamma Moo And Crow

OSN MOVIES PREMIERE

09:45 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
12:15 Perfect Match
14:00 Make Your Move
16:00 From Up On Poppy Hill
18:00 Upside Down
20:00 Paranoia
22:00 Make Your Move
00:00 Cut Bank
02:00 A Little Chaos
04:00 The World Made Straight



WISH I WAS HERE ON OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 , 2016

Kuwait CINEMA

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (22/09/2016 TO 28/09/2016)

SHARQIA-1

SULLY	12:45 PM
SULLY	2:45 PM
PETE'S DRAGON	4:45 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	7:00 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	8:45 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	11:00 PM
SULLY	1:00 AM

SHARQIA-2

PETE'S DRAGON	11:30 AM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	1:45 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	4:30 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	7:15 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	10:00 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	12:45 AM

SHARQIA-3

THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	12:15 PM
HAVENHURST	3:00 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	5:00 PM
HAVENHURST	7:45 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	9:45 PM
HAVENHURST	12:30 AM

MUHALAB-1

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	11:30 AM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	2:00 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	4:45 PM
PETE'S DRAGON	6:45 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	9:00 PM
HAVENHURST	10:45 PM
HAVENHURST	12:45 AM

MUHALAB-2

SULLY	12:45 PM
SULLY	3:00 PM
PINK - Hindi	5:00 PM
MAJNU - Telugu	5:00 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	8:00 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	10:15 PM
SULLY	12:30 AM

MUHALAB-3

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	1:00 PM
PETE'S DRAGON	1:30 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	3:45 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	6:30 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	9:15 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	12:05 AM

FANAR-1

SULLY	11:45 AM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	1:45 PM
PETE'S DRAGON	4:30 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	6:45 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	9:30 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	12:15 AM

FANAR-2

AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	11:30 AM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	1:30 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	3:15 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	5:30 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	7:30 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	9:45 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	11:45 PM

FANAR-3

HAVENHURST	12:00 PM
HAVENHURST	1:45 PM
HELLIONS	3:45 PM
PETE'S DRAGON	5:45 PM
HAVENHURST	8:00 PM
HELLIONS	10:00 PM
HAVENHURST	12:05 AM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	12:30 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	3:15 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	6:00 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	8:45 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	11:30 PM

FANAR-5

SULLY	12:45 PM
SULLY	2:45 PM
SULLY	4:45 PM
PINK - Hindi	6:45 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	9:45 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	12:30 AM

MARINA-1

SULLY	12:30 PM
SNOWDEN	2:30 PM
BEN-HUR	5:00 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	7:30 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	9:45 PM
SULLY	12:05 AM

MARINA-2

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	12:45 PM
ASHAN KHARGEN	1:30 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	3:30 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	6:15 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	9:00 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	11:45 PM

MARINA-3

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	11:30 AM
SULLY	2:15 PM
PETE'S DRAGON	4:15 PM
PETE'S DRAGON	6:30 PM
SULLY	8:45 PM
HAVENHURST	10:45 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	12:45 AM

AVENUES-1

LIGHTS OUT	12:00 PM
LIGHTS OUT	2:00 PM
PINK - Hindi	4:00 PM
OOZHAM - Malayalam	7:00 PM
BOGET FAKARA (Kuwaiti Film)	10:00 PM
BOGET FAKARA (Kuwaiti Film)	12:15 AM

AVENUES-2

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN -2D- 4DX	1:30 PM
PETE'S DRAGON -3D- 4DX	4:15 PM
PETE'S DRAGON -3D- 4DX	6:30 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN -2D- 4DX	8:45 PM
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN -2D- 4DX	11:30 PM

AVENUES-3

THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	1:15 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	4:00 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	6:45 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	9:30 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	12:15 AM

360 °- 1

THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	12:15 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	3:00 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	5:45 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	8:30 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	11:15 PM
Premiere Show "Bilal: A New Breed of Hero"	9:00 PM
THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS	11:45 PM

360º 2

AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	12:15 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	2:15 PM
AL BAB YEFAWET AMAL	4:15 PM

NOTICE

August 28, 2016

Mr. Modapothala Haranadh son of Late Mr.Modapothala Narasimhulu, resident of Mudrapalli, Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh and Miss Radha Dhanyasi, daughter of Late Mr. Ayyavari Reddy Dhanyasi, resident of KM Palli, Veeraballi, YSR Dist. Pincode: 516268, Andhra Pradesh, both Indian nationals presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date or publication of this notice.

(Krishan Kumar Pahel)
First Secretary (Consular)
and Marriage Officer

Embassy of India, Kuwait.
Ph.00965-22533315

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Mrs Fatima Mary Lancy Fernandes daughter of Joseph Fernandes, holder of Indian Passport No: K4564810 & Civil ID No: 265011009768 has changed my name to Violet Mary D'souza hereinafter in all my dealings and documents, I will be known by name of Violet Mary D'souza. **(C 5216) 22-9-2016**

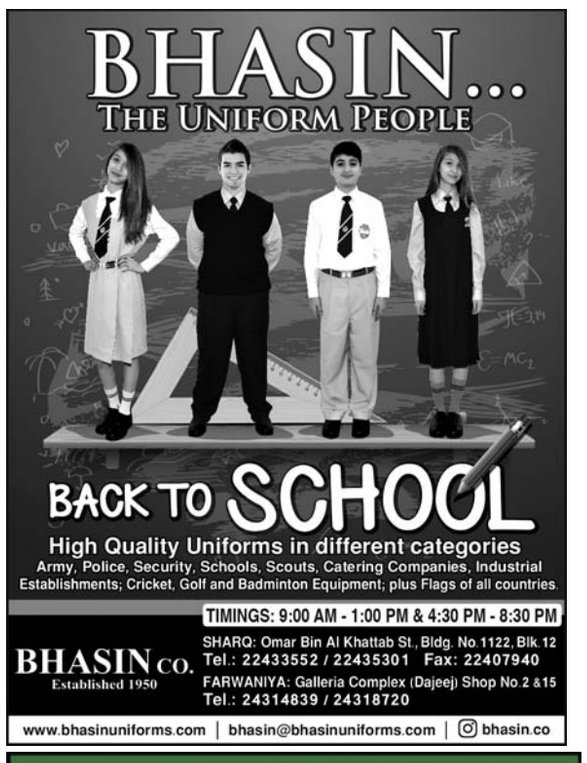
T. Marimuthu S/o K. Thiyagarajan, holder of Indian Passport No: J0364840 and Civil ID No: 277062006098, has changed my name Farhan. Hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of Farhan. **(C 5214) 21-92016**

I, Shahabuddin holder of Indian Passport No. J4437667, Civil ID No. 270123001513, have changed my name to Shaik Navab Shahabuddin.

Moshes Kota S/o Chandranna, holder of Indian Passport No. P0376514, Civil ID No. 267010141109 has changed my name from Kota Rajendra Kumar to Moshes Kota old name hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of Kota Rajendr Kumar (old name Moshes Kota) (new name Kota Rajendr Kumar) **(C 5211)**

SITUATION WANTED

A well-qualified (MBA, CPA), Indian Finance Professional is looking for a change in job. 12 years of experience in Investment Banking, Real Estate & FMCG in the middle level position in Kuwait. Excellent communicator and adaptable. Please call 65094498. **(C 5213) 21-9-2016**



MATRIMONIAL

Alliance invited for a 28 year old Marthoma boy with master degree in mechatronics from University of Victoria - Canada, and currently working in Canada. Proposal invited from parents of educational girls. Email: sobinthomas0007@gmail.com **(C 5215)**

22-9-2016

Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

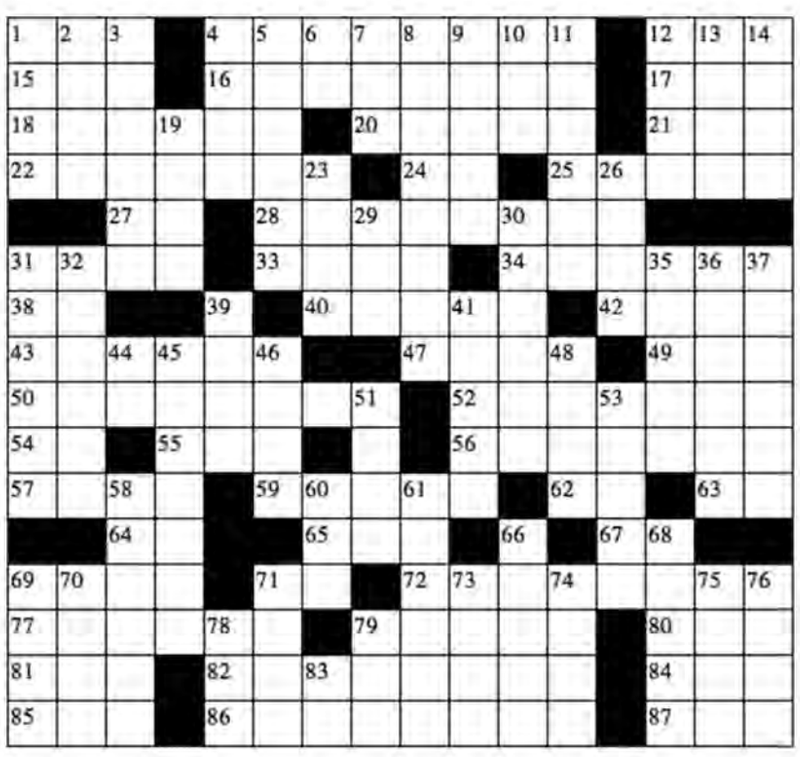
Arrival Flights on Thursday 22/9/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10
JZR	239	Amman	00:20
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20
KAC	1802	Cairo	01:30
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50
AXB	395	Kozhikode	01:50
JZR	555	Alexandria	04:15
AVV	653	Alexandria	04:30
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00
THY	1414	TZX	05:05
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15
QTR	8511	Doha	05:25
JZR	529	Asyut	06:00
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
JZR	1541	Cairo	07:10
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
IRA	673	Ahwaz	07:15
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25
JZR	1333	Al Najaf	08:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:05
IRM	1180	Mashhad	09:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20
RJA	648	Amman	09:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
SAW	703	Damascus	09:45
SYR	341	Damascus	10:05
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30
ABY	129	Sharjah	11:35
JZR	1329	Al Najaf	11:40
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50
AVV	651	Alexandria	12:05
FDK	801	Damascus	12:15
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
JZR	241	Amman	12:30
MEA	406	Beirut	12:35
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45
FEG	933	Sohag	12:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
KAC	620	Doha	13:10
THY	766	Istanbul	13:10
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:30
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:55
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:55
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05
KAC	672	Dubai	14:05
KAC	178	Vienna	14:15
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30
KAC	742	Dammam	14:55
OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10
FDB	8069	Dubai	15:20
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
JZR	359	Mashhad	15:40
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
NIA	251	Alexandria	15:50
RJA	640	Amman	16:00
FDB	051	Dubai	16:10
JZR	1331	Al Najaf	16:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
JZR	535	Cairo	16:20
KNE	531	Jeddah	16:35
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:45
KAC	562	Amman	16:55
KAC	118	New York	17:00
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
FDB	8053	Dubai	17:45
JZR	177	Dubai	17:45
KAC	678	Muscat/Abu Dhabi	17:50
QTR	1080	Doha	17:55
KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	18:20
JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35
KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35
KAC	502	Beirut	18:35
JAV	621	Amman	18:45
KAC	542	Cairo	18:55
KAC	618	Doha	18:55
KAC	104	London	19:00
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:15
JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
KAC	154	Istanbul	19:45
FDB	059	Dubai	19:50
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:05
KNE	381	Taif	20:10
ABY	121	Sharjah	20:10
MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
JZR	189	Dubai	20:25
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:30
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:55
KAC	174	Munich	20:55
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:05
UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
ALK	229	Colombo	21:20
KLM	417	Amsterdam	21:25
THY	764	Istanbul	21:30
KAC	676	Dubai	21:35
QTR	1082	Doha	21:55
GFA	219	Bahrain	22:00
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
NIA	151	Cairo	22:10
JZR	125	Bahrain	22:15
AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25
MSC	501	Alexandria	22:30
JZR	185	Dubai	22:55
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:05
MSC	403	Asyut	23:10
MSR	614	Cairo	23:30
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	23:30
FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
JAD	301	Amman	23:45

Departure Flights on Thursday 22/9/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC 976	Goa/Chennai		00:05
BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:10
MSC	404	Asyut	00:10
JZR	1540	Cairo	00:20
MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
MSC	416	Sohag	01:05
KLM	411	Amsterdam	01:05
JZR	502	Luxor	01:15
THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
PGT	859	Istanbul	02:40
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
THY	765	Istanbul	02:45
AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:50
KKK	6505	Istanbul	02:55
KAC	177	Vienna	02:55
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
THY	769	Istanbul	03:45
RJA	645	Amman	03:55
OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
FDB	068	Dubai	04:05
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
PGT	861	Istanbul	04:30
QTR	1077	Doha	04:35
RBG	552	Alexandria	04:45
JZR	560	Sohag	05:00
LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
JZR	1332	Al Najaf	05:15
AVV	654	Sohag	05:30
FEG	934	Sohag	06:00
THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
RJA	643	Amman	06:25
QTR	1087	Doha	06:30
THY	771	Istanbul	06:45
GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
JZR	240	Amman	06:55
FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
JZR	164	Dubai	07:15
QTR	8512	Doha	07:25
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
JZR	1328	Al Najaf	08:00
IRA	672	Ahwaz	08:15
BAW	156	London	08:25
FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
KAC	173	Munich	08:35
SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50
KAC	671	Dubai	09:30
KAC	619	Doha	09:30
JZR	534	Cairo	09:30
JZR	482	Istanbul	09:45
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
JZR	358	Mashhad	09:50
UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
KAC	100	London/New York	10:00
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:05
IRA	668	Mashhad	10:05
RJA	649	Amman	10:15
IRM	1181	Mashhad	10:25
QTR	1071	Doha	10:35
FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
SAW	704	Damascus	10:45
KAC	677	Abu Dhabi/Muscat	10:50
KAC	153	Istanbul	11:00
KAC	501	Beirut	11:00
SYR	342	Damascus	11:05
KAC	561	Amman	11:20
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:25
KAC	741	Dammam	11:35
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
MEA	405	Beirut	12:00
KAC	541	Cairo	12:05
UAE	874	Dubai	12:10
RBG	554	Alexandria	12:10
ABY	120	Sharjah	12:15
JZR	1330	Al Najaf	12:30
KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
AVV	652	Asyut	13:05
JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
FDK	802	Damascus	13:15
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:20
MEA	407	Beirut	13:35
FEG	932	Alexandria	13:55
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
THY	767	Istanbul	14:10
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
FBA	832	Al Najaf	14:30
AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:45
PAL	669	Manila	14:45
KNE	382	Taif	14:55
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
FDB	058	Dubai	15:05
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	617	Doha	15:15
JZR	188	Dubai	15:50
KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
SVA	505	Jeddah	16:00
BON	102	Sarajevo	16:05
OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
FDB	8070	Dubai	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
NIA	252	Alexandria	16:50
RJA	641	Amman	16:55
FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
JZR	266	Beirut	17:10
JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	17:15
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
FDB	8054	Dubai	18:40
KAC	1801	Cairo	18:55
KAC	563	Amman	19:00
QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
JZR	238	Amman	19:15
JZR	124	Bahrain	19:20
MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40
JAV	622	Amman	19:45
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
DLH	634	Doha	20:50
ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
KAC	353	BLR	20:55
KAC	343	Chennai	20:55
KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
JZR	554	Alexandria	21:15
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
MSR	619	Alexandria	21:30
QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
KLM	417	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
THY	1401	ADB	22:25
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05

CROSSWORD 1378



ACROSS

1. A licensed medical practitioner.
4. Discharge from the external ear.
12. The seventh and last day of the week.
15. A corporation's first offer to sell stock to the public.
16. Principles of the founders of the Oxford movement.
17. Electronic equipment that provides visual images of varying electrical quantities.
18. An oral cephalosporin (trade names Keflex and Keflin and Keftab) commonly prescribe for mild to moderately severe infections of the skin or ears or throat or lungs or urinary tract.
20. 100 sente equal 1 loti.
21. The month following July and preceding September.
22. Important European leguminous forage plant with trifoliate leaves and blue-violet flowers grown widely as a pasture and hay crop.
24. A ductile silvery-white ductile ferromagnetic trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
25. (folklore) A corpse that rises at night to drink the blood of the living.
27. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
28. An extinct Semitic language of northern Syria.
31. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
33. Rock that in its molten form (as magma) issues from volcanos.
34. (prosody) Of or consisting of iambs.
38. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
40. Any of a class of solid or semisolid viscous substances obtained either as exudations from certain plants or prepared by polymerization of simple molecules.
42. A genus of Mustelidae.
43. Beat through cleverness and wit.
47. A sodium salt of carbonic acid.
49. Adult female chicken.
50. Having lost freshness or brilliance of color.
52. A writ from a court commanding police to perform specified acts.
54. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
55. Fish eggs or egg-filled ovary.
56. A republic in northwestern Africa on the Mediterranean Sea.
57. A small cake leavened with yeast.
59. Someone whose business is advertising.
62. In operation or operational.
63. Being one hundred more than three hundred.
64. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
65. The rate at which red blood cells settle out in a tube of blood under standardized conditions.
67. A public promotion of some product or service.
69. A former copper coin of Pakistan.
72. A flask that holds spirits.
77. Hawthorn of southern United States bearing juicy acid scarlet fruit often used in jellies or preserves.
80. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
81. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
82. Having a sophisticated charm.
84. A barrier constructed to contain the flow or water or to keep out the sea.
85. Imperial dynasty that ruled China (most of the time) from 206 BC to 221 and expanded its boundaries and developed its bureaucracy.
86. The widening of the chambers of the heart between two contractions when the chambers fill with blood.
87. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. African tree with edible yellow fruit resembling mangos.
2. German industrialist who was the first in Germany to use an assembly line in manufacturing automobiles (1871-1948).
3. Coffee trees.
4. A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
5. The amount that a tub will hold.
6. A mouth or mouthlike opening.
7. A widely distributed system consisting of all the cells able to ingest bacteria or colloidal particles etc, except for certain white blood cells.
8. Any of several annual or perennial Eurasian grasses.
9. Of or relating to or supporting Hinduism.
10. Standard time in the 5th time zone west of Greenwich, reckoned at the 75th meridian.
11. Congenital absence of an arm or leg.
12. A fraudulent business scheme.
13. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
14. A one-piece cloak worn by men in ancient Rome.
19. An official language of the Republic of South Africa.
23. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
26. The highest level or degree attainable.
29. 100 avos equal 1 pataca.
30. English translator and Protestant martyr.
32. A loss of will power.
35. A state of northeastern India.
36. Conducive to peace.
37. Departing or being caused to depart from the true vertical or horizontal.
39. Law intended to eradicate organized crime by establishing strong sanctions and forfeiture provisions.
41. A resident of Iowa.
44. A brittle silver-white metalloid element that is related to selenium and sulfur.
45. Straggling shrub with narrow leaves and conspicuous red flowers in dense globular racemes.
46. (Greek mythology) The Titaness who was mother of Helios and Selene and Eos in ancient mythology.
48. Formerly a large constellation in the southern hemisphere between Canis Major and the Southern Cross.
51. A software system that facilitates the creation and maintenance and use of an electronic database.
53. Of or relating to the kidneys.
58. East Indian tree that puts out aerial shoots that grow down into the soil forming additional trunks.
60. A young woman making her debut into society.
61. A Buddhist who has attained nirvana.
66. A British doctorate.
68. (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
70. Kamarupan languages spoken in northeastern India and western Burma.
71. 100 lwei equal 1 kwanza.
73. The United Nations agency concerned with civil aviation.
74. An agenda of things to do.
75. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
76. God of love and erotic desire.
78. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
79. An operating system that is on a disk.
83. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

Yesterday's Solution

F	D	A	■	F	I	R	S	T	L	Y	■	G	E	A	N
L	E	U	■	A	N	A	P	H	O	R	■	R	A	G	I
A	L	T	■	T	U	P	E	L	O	■	S	A	R	A	N
S	H	O	V	E	L	■	C	A	■	B	O	N	E	T	E
K	I	B	E	■	A	P	I	S	■	■	U	D	D	E	R
■	■	A	T	■	■	S	A	P	H	E	A	D	■	■	■
B	P	H	■	A	B	E	L	I	A	■	R	A	M	I	E
L	I	N	E	C	U	T	■	■	E	V	I	D	E	N	T
A	C	■	M	I	D	T	E	R	M	■	■	■	D	A	H
S	U	L	I	N	D	A	C	■	■	A	D	■	O	N	E
E	L	■	L	A	H	■	F	M	R	I	■	A	C	E	R
■	■	D	I	R	A	C	■	A	A	R	O	N	■	■	■
G	A	E	A	■	■	A	C	R	E	S	■	O	M	S	K
A	B	A	■	S	E	U	R	A	T	■	C	R	A	K	E
B	E	T	■	P	E	D	I	C	A	B	■	A	M	I	R
A	D	H	■	A	L	A	B	A	M	A	■	K	A	M	A

STAR TRACK

Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may be especially dynamic and assertive. There is a lot of enthusiasm and drive available for whatever you want to accomplish. You could be most persuasive with others and may find that the ideas or feelings you have will get great reception. The situation is a natural for self-expression and lends itself to your particular ideas. There has been an increase in your physical and mental energies recently, giving you a boost in your confidence. You may feel ready to conquer anything put in front of you today. Shopping with a friend, you are curious about some new invention. Wait a while longer before purchasing new electronic products-a hard-to-resist sale may tempt you; however, even new and better products are on the horizon.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

There could be some worry about not being useful or being left out of the scheme of things today. This can be eased by jumping in with both feet and putting your thoughts into action. This is a time to take risks and dare to be a little eccentric. You will prosper through new insights and an independent point of view. Your career could open up now-keep your ears and eyes open so that you do not miss some important opportunity. Beyond whatever external considerations may be present, you exude a contagious thankfulness and fondness for things and people. These inner, loving qualities are experienced as a very real good. The light in your eyes says it all: your mind and ideas are central to your inner and philosophical life. Someone new is coming into your life.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

The energies are working in your favor in all areas of your life. If you are not a boss or owner of a company, you might consider this a good time to request a raise or promotion. You naturally gravitate toward positions of power and authority. Others see in you a great practical ability and will easily accept you as a leader or authority figure. You value fairness in all things and go out of your way to be just. You have an innate sense of how to work with and guide others in making decisions. You understand the choices and can spot the right ones. You may be able to complete some of those projects that have been left hanging the past few days. Communication with superiors is positive. A time with loved ones this evening is fulfilling.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may not appreciate the emotional energy of someone you meet today-patience. You may be in the mood for deep and penetrating conversations or thoughts, especially with a close friend, but you are wise to wait and allow things to develop on their own. You may be pleasantly surprised at what one or two positive words will do to help move things into a positive direction. This is a good time, when your efforts in the workplace can really pay off. This afternoon you have an opportunity to work without any interruptions thereby producing many good results. It is your turn to cook and you may decide to show off a little by cooking several choices of foods that are intriguing, healthy and fun. You can teach healthy habits through your efforts.

Leo (July 23-August 22)

The middle of this week may find you daydreaming. Be particularly vigilant when signing contracts or performing duties that are made up of little details. You may have a hard time being clearheaded right now. Thoughts and ideas that come may be inappropriate or misleading. Give yourself time to think things through and refrain from making rash decisions, including those that pertain to spending money. Eat light meals today and find a way to insert some exercise activity into your day-perhaps a long walk. Look for the funny side of life and laugh as much as possible-you will cheer yourself and others. Visiting with neighbors or friends is enjoyable this evening. Music or a comedy movie on a dvd may be the perfect end to your day.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You can be an aggressive prime mover in the workplace and today is your opportunity to show your talent in this respect. You are able to initiate and get things moving so that others can pick up the slack and move forward. You are never happier than when fully engaged in productive work. There could be some times of introspection and a break now and then is a good idea. A difficult co-worker is easy for you to understand . . . You do not feel threatened and you are not condescending. Others learn from your techniques. Higher-ups and supervisors are impressed. This evening is a time to laugh, interact with friends and loved ones and celebrate the adventure of life. Tonight you might absorb and take in new impressions. Enjoy!

Libra (September 23-October 22)

General good feelings with a sense of support and harmony make this a happy time. If it makes sense you love it and if it does not you feel guilty about it: that's what it's like now. A loving attention to details and a sense of satisfaction in doing what is right are some of the qualities that come to your attention now. Discovering what you truly believe in-fighting for it, even-is a high personal priority now. Religion, law, politics, travel and higher education are some of the arenas where this takes place. This is a time of testing your limits to see how far you can go. You are able to grasp and appreciate new trends and concepts at the very forefront of technology. A new item of technology may keep you busy studying this evening. Communication improves.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You could find it difficult to gain any free time for yourself today. The pressure is on in the workplace. Time limits and time schedules may have you huffing and puffing. You have probably noticed that this may not be the best time to chat on the phone to your lover. There will, however, soon be a time to relax and sit back and see the productive success of your efforts. There is an opportunity to increase your earnings but now is not time for a raise in salary; make sure you make notes in your work diary that today is the day you made great headway for the company and succeeded in whatever was necessary to have positive results. When it is time for that pay raise, you will have a report of your successes. Make sure the outside birds have water.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Before you act on a new idea today, consider the sources of your information. Make sure a new method or idea is a sound one by checking facts. When it comes to mental work, you are an expert at research and investigation. You enjoy examining and analyzing, particularly when it comes to psychological areas of the mind. Your ability to sift through the debris and come up with what is essential every time is exceptional. You like to discuss and communicate, again always at a psychological and very personal level. Others may find you very focused. Your career always seems to get the support you need. This is the area of life that usually runs smoothly. You seem to understand what the public wants. Mass marketing could be considered.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

There could be some communications difficulty with a customer today. You realize that if you are not challenged you cannot grow-you swallow hard and move forward. You learn from the difficult situations that seem to call out to you for your aptness. You may feel like exercising or getting out during the noon hour today. By the end of the day you will see much progress. There is good eye-hand coordination and a sustained effort that makes almost any task run well. Consider a new picture for your wall or nook while shopping this afternoon. A new or renewed love relationship in your life creates an upbeat type of mood for you all day long. Nothing disturbs your good feelings. There is much laughter in your heart.

Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a special time when you may notice that everything is going your way. Circumstances seem to bend to your will and things have a way of working out smoothly. There are real opportunities to complete and work out difficulties and projects that require both long-term effort and a high degree of discipline. Listening to other people talk about their investments you may pick up some good advice. Be careful of the quick-win type of investment; this almost never works out. A good investment can start small and grow beyond your wildest dreams-be on the lookout for opportunities that are reliable and come from a reliable source. You may be in the mood for fun conversations this evening: a good time to enjoy a family meal away from home.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You need to live in an ordered environment, whether it is a work, school or home situation. You can become quite frustrated when too many different matters grab your attention. This is a time to realize that unless there is a fire, you will have time to think through each matter separately. Perhaps by writing out a plan, you will become more focused on the steps you need to take. Learn methods of planning and organization by reading a guidebook, or taking a class in some management skills. As a high achiever, you can turn some of your business associates into friends-they will help you progress in your career and teach you the art of focusing. A successful businessperson is developing-you! There are some photo opportunities this evening.

WORD SEARCH

Songs From the Year 2002

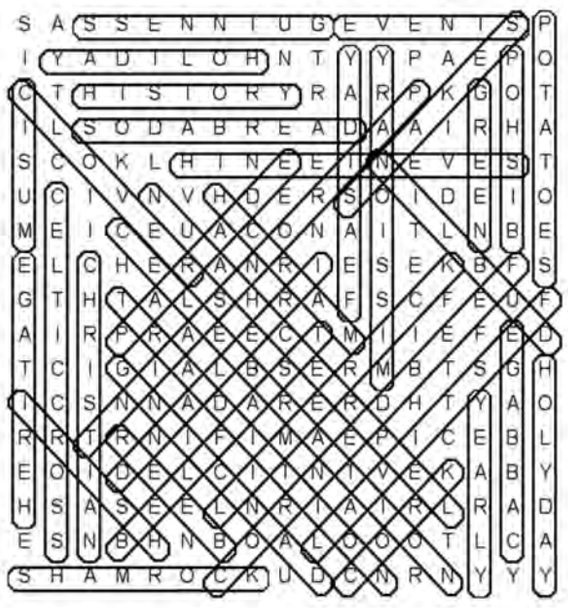
Find and circle all of the songs from 2002 that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 21 letters spell an additional song title from 2002.

N	E	V	A	E	H	G	I	R	L	F	R	I	E	N	D	C	E
E	M	T	U	O	H	T	I	W	A	H	S	I	L	O	O	F	L
A	N	D	H	Z	Y	D	E	T	A	C	I	L	P	M	O	C	D
T	L	B	I	P	Y	S	E	L	G	N	E	H	U	A	F	A	D
T	O	L	P	L	C	A	F	C	A	T	L	U	O	E	U	D	I
Y	O	A	M	A	E	C	D	E	I	O	Y	H	Y	R	L	D	M
H	H	X	P	Y	R	M	L	Y	S	F	O	H	R	I	L	I	E
B	E	E	I	A	L	C	M	E	N	Y	I	U	O	A	M	C	H
Y	U	L	Z	C	S	I	Y	A	O	I	B	R	F	L	O	T	T
T	A	Y	L	D	I	O	F	G	I	S	A	O	C	S	O	I	S
H	O	D	N	A	U	T	I	E	T	T	M	R	G	A	N	V	I
E	N	A	Y	R	G	R	Y	I	A	I	Y	U	T	S	S	E	L
W	H	I	S	R	L	O	K	O	V	L	E	B	A	B	Y	Y	Y
A	S	E	H	T	E	R	O	H	I	L	H	E	R	E	I	A	M
Y	L	P	A	T	O	V	E	D	T	F	B	L	U	R	R	Y	D
F	F	L	I	W	O	R	E	M	O	L	D	I	S	E	A	S	E
Y	K	H	E	N	O	N	I	N	M	Y	P	L	A	C	E	A	D

ADDICTIVE
AERIALS
ALL MY LIFE
BABY
BLURRY
BY THE WAY
COMPLICATED
DAYS GO BY
DILEMMA
DISEASE
ESCAPE
EVERYDAY
FOOLISH
FOR YOU
FULL MOON
GIRL TALK
GIRLFRIEND
HALFCRAZY
HANDS CLEAN
HAPPY
HEAVEN
HELLA GOOD
HERE I AM
HERO
HEY MA
IN MY PLACE
LOSE YOURSELF
MOTIVATION
MY LIST
MY SACRIFICE
NOTHIN'
OH BOY
RAINY DAYZ
SPIN
STILL FLY
THE MIDDLE
TOXICITY
UH HUH
WITHOUT ME
WORK IT

Yesterday Solution

St. Patrick's Day



BEER
BELFAST
BISHOP
CABBAGE
CELEBRATION
CELTIC CROSS
CHRISTIAN
CLOVER
CORK
CORNED BEEF
DANCING
DUBLIN
EVENTS
FEAST DAY
FESTIVAL
GREEN
GUINNESS
HERITAGE
HISTORY
HOLIDAY
HOLY DAY
IRELAND
IRISH
LEPRECHAUN
LIMERICK
MARCH
MISSIONARY
MUSIC
PARADE
PATRON SAINT
POTATOES
SEVENTEENTH
SHAMROCK
SNAKES
SODA BREAD
TRADITION
YEARLY

The hidden message is: SAINT PATRICK LIVED IN THE FIFTH CENTURY

Daily SuDoku

1			4				9	
				9				5
			3		6		4	
6					5	3		
		3		2		1		
		1	6					8
	8		2		1			
9				3				
	5				7			3

Yesterday's Solution

6	3	1	2	8	9	4	7	5
8	7	5	4	6	1	9	3	2
4	2	9	5	3	7	8	1	6
9	5	8	3	7	6	2	4	1
2	6	7	1	4	8	3	5	9
1	4	3	9	2	5	7	6	8
5	1	2	7	9	3	6	8	4
7	8	4	6	5	2	1	9	3
3	9	6	8	1	4	5	2	7

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

PHARMACIES
ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan	Fahaeel Makka St	23915883
	Abu Halaifa	Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd	23715414
	Danat Al-Sultan	Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1	24575518
	Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 92	24566622
Capital	Ahlam	Fahad Al-Salem St	22436184
	Khaldiya Coop	Khaldiya Coop	24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa	Farwaniya Block 40	24734000
	Ferdous Coop	Ferdous Coop	24881201
	Modern Safwan	Old Kheitan Block 11	24726638
Hawally	Tariq	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25726265
	Hana	Salmiya-Amman St	25647075
	Ikhlas	Hawally-Beirut St	22625999
	Hawally & Rawdha	Hawally & Rawdha Coop	22564549
	Ghadeer	Jabriya-Block 1A	25340559
	Kindy	Jabriya-Block 3B	25326554
	Ibn Al-Nafis	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25721264
	Mishrif Coop	Mishrif Coop	25380581
	Salwa Coop	Salwa Coop	25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

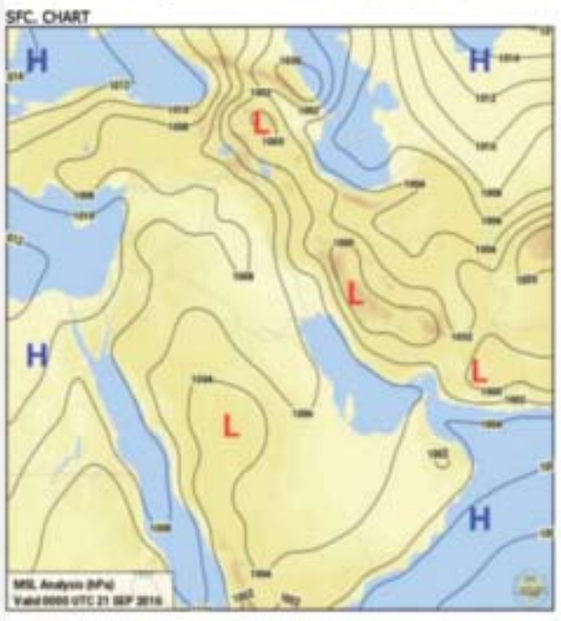
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours
Issued 21/09/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 42 °C

By Day : Hot with light to moderate freshening gradually at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h causing raising dust over open areas
By Night : Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 30 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Expected Weather	hot + raising dust	hot	hot	hot
Min Temp °C	25	25	25	26
Max Temp °C	43	43	43	40
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly to northerly	north westerly to northerly
Wind Speed km/h	15 - 40	15 - 35	12 - 35	15 - 38

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches
no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	30	41
KUWAIT AIRPORT	24	42
ABDALY	22	41
BUBIYAN	23	41
JAHRA	28	42
FAILAKA ISLAND	24	40
SALMIYAH	30	38
AHMADI	31	39
JAL ALIYAH	24	42
QAROH ISLAND	33	37
UMM AL-MARADEM	32	37
NUWAISIB	24	42
WAFRA	21	42
MANAGISH	23	41
SALMY	23	40
MUTRIBA	23	43

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	41
Min Temp (°C)	23
Max Rel Hum (%)	27
Min Rel Hum (%)	08
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	57 N
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:37
Sunset	17:47

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:17
Sunrise	05:37
Zuhr	11:41
Asr	15:09
Sunset	17:47
Isha	19:05

INTERNATIONAL CALLS

Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Nigar	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tone	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists

Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223

Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)

Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daaory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426

General Practitioners

Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501

Urologists

Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons

Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60

Family Doctor

Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581

Psychiatrists

Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0

Gynaecologists & Obstetricians

DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787

General Surgeons

Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148

Internists, Chest & Heart

Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians

Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maaroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282

Dermatology

Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955

Dentists

Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111

Neurologists

Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875

Gastrologists

Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist

Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924

Physiotherapists & VD

Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Musaed Faraj Khamees	22666288

Rheumatologists:

Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290

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NASA's black female mathematicians hit the big screen

Janelle Monae

During the era of US racial segregation, a handful of black female mathematicians managed to break social barriers and propel the US space agency to new heights - and soon their story will be a major motion picture. This remarkable story has been told in the book "Hidden Figures" by Margot Lee Shetterly, which was published in September.

The movie comes out in January, starring Taraji P Henson-known for her role in the TV series "Empire" and for her Oscar nomination in the 2008 film "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"-and Octavia Spencer, who won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor in 2011 film "The Help." Some of the female mathematicians worked with the author's father, an engineer at NASA's Langley Research Center in Virginia, a southern US state where racial segregation was the norm. Shetterly, herself an African-American, was born in 1969, and remembers the women as "normal" middle-class types, the mothers of friends who serve peanut butter sandwiches to kids.

The mathematicians provided pivotal contributions to the US space program, starting in the 1940s through to the 1960s, when the nation first sent men to orbit and then walk on the Moon. It was not until Shetterly's husband heard about the women, during a visit with Shetterly's father, that she realized their story could-and should-be written in book form. "My husband was like, 'Wait a minute, I cannot believe this. How can nobody knows the story'?" she recalled in an interview with AFP.

Urgent need for mathematicians

The heroines of the story are Dorothy Vaughan, Katherine Johnson and Mary Jackson. The US involvement in World War II in 1941 opened the door to them, Shetterly said. The country needed engineers and scientists to come up with new technologies to help planes fly higher and faster. But segregation was still a reality. There were dozens of African-Americans, both male and female, working as mathematicians and physicists for the US space program, even as they were forced to use separate bathrooms from whites, and were barred from the same restaurants and schools frequented by whites.

The black women mathematicians at the center of "Hidden Figures" were nicknamed "colored computers," working apart from the rest of the math unit in the west wing of the Langley Research Center. By the end of the war, there were around 25 black women and two white managers in the unit. Soon however there was a new war, as the Cold War broke out between the United States and the Soviet Union. The USSR launched its first satellite, Sputnik, in 1957, raising the stakes for the United States in the space race.

By 1958 NASA was formed, gathering all the nation's space activities, and the Langley Research Center was in charge of the Mercury project, the first US manned space program. It was then that the black mathematicians were integrated with the rest of NASA and tasked with making complex calculations about rocket launches. In 1959, Katherine Johnson-played in the movie by Henson-and a white colleague were the first to calculate the parameters of the first suborbital flight in 1961 of astronaut Alan Shepard, the first American in space. They also calculated John Glenn's course, as the first American to orbit the Earth in 1962.

According to the book, in 1962, Glenn asked that Johnson herself re-check the figures one last time before he embarked on the mission. Johnson's math talents later helped determine the trajectory of the Apollo 11 flight that landed Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on the Moon in July 1969. The women in the story are among about 80 black female mathematicians who worked for the US space program from 1943 to 1980 — a time period that saw about 1,000 women employed there, far fewer than the number of men.

Medal of Freedom

In November 2015, US President Barack Obama gave Johnson, who is now 98, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States. Dorothy Vaughan, played in the movie by Octavia Spencer, died in 2008. Mary Jackson, who died in 2005, was an aeronautical engineer and is played by Janelle Monae. "Talent is distributed among all populations, whatever the color of their skin," said Shetterly. "Given a chance, people can excel in these fields." She described the story of these women as "powerful source of inspiration" that "we can learn from the past, in terms of opening the doors for people to excel today." — AFP

LEONARD COHEN AT 82, DARKER AND SOLITARY BEFORE GOD

Leonard Cohen has spent a lifetime meditating on his relationship to God and, at 82, he finds himself solitary as he wrestles with the ultimate metaphysical questions. "You Want It Darker," the 14th album by the Canadian singer and poet, brings out Cohen at his most classic and at his most probing as he ponders the nature of the individual and of the Almighty. Celebrating his 82nd birthday yesterday, his record label announced that "You Want It Darker," produced by his musician son Adam Cohen, would come out on October 21.

The album immediately opens with a flashback to the cultural icon's Montreal childhood with a rich yet mournful chorus from his hometown's Cantor Gideon Zelermyer and Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue choir. Yet the signature sound on "You Want It Darker" is sparse, with resonant acoustic guitar and string bass, the music reinforcing Cohen's lonesome spiritual quest. Cohen-whose best-known song, the oft-covered "Hallelujah," explored God and the meaning of music-returns to biblical heritage on the title track of "You Want It Darker."

"Hineni, hineni / I'm ready, my Lord," Cohen intones in his husky voice, employing Hebrew to say "Here I Am." Cohen in the song struggles to reconcile with the existence of evil-and how his life's own bourgeois concerns stack up in comparison. "They're lining up the prisoners / The guards are taking aim / I struggled with some demons / They were middle-class and tame / Didn't know I had permission to murder and to maim," he sings.

'I'm leaving the table'

The album reaches its most powerful heights with Cohen's melody-forceful, yet made lighter with a dash of jazz-on "Treaty," which appears twice on the album, the second time with a string quartet. Cohen on the song questions the volatility of the heart, using a treaty as a metaphor for a truce between lovers. "I wish there was a treaty we could sign / I don't care who takes this bloody hill," he sings. Repeatedly on "You Want It Darker," Cohen appears to be reflecting on his own mortality yet, paradoxically, questioning the heaviness of the burden of assessing one's life.

"I don't need a reason for what I became / I've got these excuses / They are tired and lame. "I don't need a pardon / No, no, there's no one left to blame / I'm leaving the table / I'm out of the game," he sings to a dark waltz.

Late-career burst of creativity

Cohen, his influence and legacy undisputed, had unofficially retired in the 1990s and retreated to a Buddhist monastery in the Los Angeles area. He initially resumed music for an unspiritual reason-his longtime manager was found to have stolen much of his savings. But Cohen has found a new burst of creative energy since his return, with "You Want It Darker" following the emotionally intense yet more musically diverse album "Popular Problems" in 2014.

Cohen, who has been quiet on the public stage for the year until releasing the album, has made clear in ways other than his music that he is aware of his advancing age. After the death in July of Marianne Ihlen-the Norwegian woman with whom he lived on the Greek island of Hydra and who inspired his song "So Long, Marianne"-her friend revealed a final letter from Cohen in which he declared his "endless love" and wrote, "I think I will follow you very soon." With the seriousness on "You Want It Darker," Cohen shows little of the more ironic side that gave him a pop culture mystique in the 1980s.

Yet there may be a hint of his old playful side. After releasing his last album, he joked that his resolution at age 80 was to resume smoking after years of depriving himself for health reasons. The cover of "You Want It Darker" shows a grim, unshaven Cohen sporting a top hat-and a cigarette dangling between his fingers. — AFP

This file photo shows musician Leonard Cohen as he performs at Madison Square Garden in New York City. — AFP

Master chef of Canton 8 restaurant, Jie Ming Jian poses with his cheapest dish of 'prawn dumplings' in front of the restaurant, which was awarded two Michelin stars.

Master chef of Tíang Court, Justin Tan reacts on stage after the announcement of his three stars award of the Michelin Guide Shanghai yesterday. — AFP photos

Master chef of Canton 8 restaurant, Jie Ming Jian cooks vegetables in the kitchen of the restaurant, which was awarded two Michelin stars.

The 'prawn dumplings' is the cheapest dish of the Canton 8 restaurant.

Michelin launches first mainland China guide in Shanghai

The famed Michelin food guide launched its first edition in mainland China yesterday, awarding stars to elegant luxury establishments as well as a humble haunt serving up Cantonese staples. The inaugural edition covers the commercial hub of Shanghai and gives stars to 26 restaurants, including the world's least expensive two-star establishment Canton 8 — a popular lunchtime spot catering to local families. "Canton 8 is a reflection of what can be found in Shanghai-masterful, delicious and very good-quality cooking," said Michael Ellis, international director of the Michelin guides.

Lunch there can cost as little as 48 yuan ($7), Michelin said. Chef Jian Jieming of Canton 8 said he had "never dreamed" of making the list. He credited the fresh ingredients and "comfortable atmosphere" of the restaurant for its two-star award. The publication of the inaugural mainland China edition follows the company's first guide to Singapore in July, when Michelin inspectors gave stars to the city-state's famous street food stalls.

The guides, first published in France more than a century ago to promote automobile travel, now cover 28 countries and spotlight diverse cuisines including Brazilian, Burmese, Cajun, Peruvian, and Tibetan. But they are not without their critics, who question whether the quality of street fare in places like Hong Kong and Singapore can compare to the French haute cuisine on which the guide's reputation was made. "We have to adapt to the country," Claire Dorland-Clauzel, executive vice president at Michelin, told AFP.

Master chef of Tíang Court, Justin Tan, prepares a desert in his kitchen at the Tíang Court restaurant.

"Our role is to promote quality food everywhere, not (only) French food." The China guide awarded its highest three-star rating to T'ang Court, a cosy six-table Cantonese restaurant in The Langham hotel, famous for dishes that include braised sea cucumber and Wagyu beef. "The talented and creative chef Justin Tan offers cuisine in which traditional Cantonese dishes rub shoulders with some very modern dishes," Ellis said.

After learning of the award, chef Tan told AFP he "never imagined" winning three stars, adding that he was now "very nervous". Restaurants that have won a star from the culinary bible have in the past built big businesses after being recognized, with Hong Kong's Tim Ho Wan and Taiwan's Din Tai Fung turning into international franchises. Canton 8 can likely expect to see a similar surge in customers. On Tuesday night, before the release of the guide, the inexpensive two-storey restaurant was filled with only around 20 diners feasting on crystal prawn dumplings and lobster porridge. Regular patrons expressed pride Wednesday in the recognition of their local favorite, where tables were packed and reservations required for lunch.

'Overdue' recognition

A cosmopolitan city with a sprawling, tree-lined French Quarter, Shanghai is the latest Asian city to feature in the guide following the launch of editions focusing on Hong Kong, Taipei and Singapore. "What makes Shanghai particularly exciting is it's been an economic and cultural crossroads for decades and the gastronomy of Shanghai really reflects that rich history," Ellis told AFP. International recognition of Chinese cuisine is "overdue", said Fuchsia Dunlop, a cook and food writer specializing in Chinese cuisine. "China has the most amazing gastronomic culture, and for historic reasons it has not been at the forefront of international gastronomy," she said. But she was not convinced Michelin's approach of sending individual reviewers could truly identify the country's best restaurants. Chinese cuisine traditionally caters to groups, with family-style meals consisting of several shared dishes, she said. "If you have one person going out to eat, it's impossible for them to get a sense of a full, balanced Chinese meal," she said. "Even if you went 10 times, you wouldn't get a sense of a meal with all the contrasts." — AFP

'Misery' actress Kathy Bates gets Walk of Fame star

US actress Kathy Bates, best known for her portrayal of an obsessed fan in "Misery," accepted a star on Tuesday on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and dedicated the honor to a young girl battling an illness. The 68-year-old actress spoke emotionally at the ceremony, recounting how she believed her career was over several years ago until she was offered a role on the series "American Horror Story." She said the award-winning show created by Ryan Murphy had "literally brought me back to life," coming at a time when she was dealing with health issues and the cancellation of her NBC show "Harry's Law."

She also recalled her big breakout in Hollywood at age 42 thanks to her memorable Oscar-winning performance as a deranged nurse obsessed with an author played by James Caan in the 1990 film "Misery," based on the Stephen King novel. "Sixty years ago I stood not far from this very spot with my beloved aunt Lee," she recalled, speaking in front of the TLC Chinese Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard. "We were going to see 'The King and I.' And then 34 years later I came back to this very theatre with another king by the name of Stephen with a movie called 'Misery' that changed my life."

Shirley MacLaine and Billy Bob Thornton-who will share the screen with Bates in the upcoming "Bad Santa 2"-also spoke at the ceremony praising Bates for her talent and charity work. "She is the type of actor who is not only loved by the public, the fans and the critics but also actors who know how good she is and what she can do," Thornton said. "I'm gonna keep this short and tell you that if I could be a woman, I'd be Kathy Bates."

The actress who has survived both ovarian and breast cancer dedicated her star on Tuesday to an eight-year-old girl named Emma, whom she said was like her battling lymphedema, a condition often associated with cancer patients and which causes swelling of the limbs. — AFP

(From left) Actors Shirley MacLaine, Kathy Bates and Billy Bob Thornton attend the Hollywood Walk of Fame ceremony honoring actress Kathy Bates with a star, in Hollywood, California. — AFP

Indian fashion designer Suket Dhir sits looking at his creations in his studio in New Delhi. — AFP photos

An Indian tailor works in the studio factory unit of fashion designer Suket Dhir in New Delhi.

An Indian man pushes a garment rack in the studio of fashion designer Suket Dhir in New Delhi.

India's prize-winning designer steadies for world stage

He shot onto the world stage after winning a glittering international fashion prize previously given to design icons Yves Saint Laurent and Karl Lagerfeld. Yet India's Suket Dhir-hailed by Vogue as a potential "global fashion superstar in the making"-is uneasy about the sudden attention that has come with winning the International Woolmark Prize for menswear this year. "I never thought of myself as a top designer, more of a glorified tailor," Dhir told AFP at his small, busy design studio in the backblocks of New Delhi.

Dhir is now in a race against time to deliver his award-winning collection to prominent department stores in New York, Paris, Tokyo, Seoul and Sydney from next month-as well as around $75,000 in prizemoney to build up his business, he also gets to provide a capsule collection for key retailers worldwide. The 37-year-old faces challenges unique to India in preparing the collection of contemporary Western menswear with an Indian twist. Dhir uses traditional weavers located close to the villages that they come from, along with dyers and block printers from all over the vast country to make his clothes.

But the artisans are not used to working with the wool that is required for the collection and which can change shape in India's blistering heat and humid monsoons. "This was my first experience weaving with such difficult fabric on such a tight deadline. These designs were one-off pieces and (now) I'm reproducing this collection for five or six stores," he said. "We've successfully managed to do that (although) we are a little behind schedule."

The judges of the prize, awarded in January, noted Dhir's attention to detail in his collection of tailored jackets, shirts and loose pants which were inspired by his childhood spent with his grandfather in Punjab state. The linings of his jackets are block-printed with small motifs such as umbrellas, and the buttons on his shirts are sewn on with different types of thread. Dhir said his clothes, some of which are mixed with silk and use the traditional ikat technique-hand-tied and dyed yarn-to pattern textiles, are meant to be worn every day.

'Don't do bling'

"When I think of my grandfather, I think of these beautiful jackets and blazers that you could pass on from one generation to the next," the father-of-one said. "I can't do anything blingy," he added. Indian menswear often involves garish outfits such as heavily embroidered jackets and bright silk kurtas or long shirts. Leading fashion journalist and author Shefalee Vasudev hailed Dhir as one of an increasing number of Indian designers making subtle, contemporary clothes.

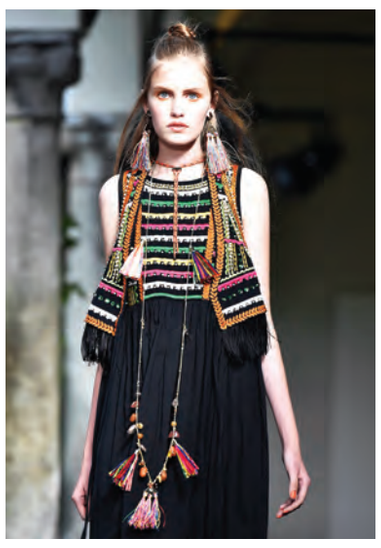
"His fashion is meaningful. It's not screaming for attention. It's not saying 'look at me, I'm so great' and that's refreshing in Indian fashion," said Vasudev. She said the coming months would be critical for Dhir-and will determine whether he can become one of only a small number of Indians sought after in international stores. "More than a handful are stocked but only a handful have been noticed and get consistent business," she said of Indian designers.

"It's a very significant prize because the door has been knocked down for you. (But) You need to be able to manage your quality, your numbers, your deliveries," Vasudev added. She pointed to the international success of Indian designer Rahul Mishra, who won the same prize for womenswear in 2014, as an example of what was possible. On the road to becoming a recognized designer, Dhir worked in a call center and sold mobile phones and also spent several unsuccessful years in college, infuriating his family.

"I was clueless about what to do with my life," he said. He then enrolled at the National Institute of Fashion Technology in Delhi before starting his own label in 2010. Dhir said the first few years were rocky financially, largely because he refused to design outfits to cater for India's lavish annual wedding season, which many designers rely upon for income. "I don't do wedding gear and that's where the money is. But this acknowledgement, this recognition (of winning the award) has happened because I have stuck to my aesthetic," said Dhir, the first Indian to win the award for menswear. "We are breaking even at the moment which is really good. I wish I had a swankier office and a swankier car but we'll get there."—AFP

Indian fashion designer Suket Dhir looks at one of his creation, as he holds a garment in his studio.

An Indian tailor works in the studio factory unit of fashion designer Suket Dhir in New Delhi.



Youth to the fore as Milan fashion week opens

Milan fashion week kicked off yesterday with collections from Italian labels Grinko and Blugirl setting a youth-orientated tone for six days of catwalk creativity. Blugirl, the sexy younger sister of designer Anna Molinari's main womenswear brand Blumarine, served up a typically irreverent, mix-and-match collection on the opening morning. Bohemian romanticism was to the fore in the form of 70s-style off-the-shoulder tops with puffball sleeves.

But the look was hardened sometimes with biker boots and sharp fringes helping to create a 'rock chick' edge, while a military theme was balanced out by ultra-feminine, delicate touches including frilly neckties. Next up were newcomers Wunderkind, the youth-targeted branch of Germany's Joop which is one of three Milan debutants among the 71 catwalk shows scheduled between now and Monday.

Paris-based couture star Giambattista Valli has shown his own younger line, Giamba, in Milan before but Friday's show will be the first time it has been included in the official program. The other newcomers are Chinese label Ricostru, the latest up-and-coming talent to benefit from the patronage of Giorgio Armani. They will display their 2017 Spring/Summer collection on Monday at the Teatro Armani, which has been entirely given over to young designers in a move that has been branded something of a gamble.

Armani himself usually presents his main collection on the final day of Milan, thereby helping to delay the departure of hundreds of buyers and media for the next leg of the global fashion circuit, in Paris. This year however the veteran designer is showing his main line on Friday and his Emporio Armani collection in Paris, generating fears the whole circus will decamp to the French capital on Sunday evening, after Dolce and Gabbana's afternoon show. Carlo Capasa, the head of Italy's Chamber of Fashion, defended the decision. "I have a very high regard for young designers and I think it is right that we have a day just for them: the day of the future," he told reporters.

Gender-bending

Alessandro Michele's latest offering for Gucci was set to be the highlight of an opening day on which Alberta Ferretti, Roberto Cavalli and Philipp Plein are also showing. The future of fashion's system of twice-yearly menswear and womenswear shows is up in the air because of trends towards unisex collections and clothes being made available to buy immediately, rather than four months after the catwalk show.

For Milan that could have significant consequences. "The indirect benefits to the city of the last fashion week in September were estimated at 48 million euros," said deputy mayor Cristina Tajani, who said the industry could do more to help its host city. "We have done our bit by putting some of the city's symbolic venues at the disposal of young designers for their shows," she said, urging fashion houses to get involved in organizing events that are accessible to the general public rather than just fashion insiders.

Capasa said his organization was already doing that. "We are putting a lot of emphasis on the special events that will take place in the city in parallel with the shows," he said. One event that will be strictly invitation only will be Bottega Veneta's show in Milan's Academy of Fine Art. For the first time in its history, the couture house will show its menswear and womenswear collections together amid the artworks to celebrate its 50th anniversary and designer Tomas Maier's 15 years as its artistic director. Gucci, whose look has taken a gender-bending turn under Michele, has already announced it will show its men and women's collections together from September 2017, as has Antonio Marras. — AFP

Models present creations for fashion house Blugirl as part of the 2017 Women's Spring / Summer collections shows at Milan Fashion Week yesterday in Milan. — AFP photos

In this May 5, 2014 file photo, Tom Brady, left, and Gisele Bundchen attend The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala celebrating 'Charles James: Beyond Fashion' in New York. — AP photos

In this Dec 1, 2014 file photo, David Beckham, left, and Victoria Beckham pose for photographers upon arrival at The British Fashion Awards 2014, in London.

In this Jan 10, 2016 file photo, Jada Pinkett Smith, left, and Will Smith arrive at the 73rd annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif.

In this Feb 1, 2016 file photo, Amal Clooney, left, and George Clooney arrive at the world premiere of 'Hail, Caesar!' in Los Angeles.

Farewell, Brangelina, but wait: Celeb royalty abounds

Don't worry, celeb watchers: With the unraveling of Brangelina, you've still got plenty of reigning couples to obsess over. Some cases in point:

The Wests

He, Kanye West, puts on fashion shows that try the patience of some critics, drops new Yeezy shoe designs that sell out in minutes and is currently performing high above devotees on a platform during his "Life of Pablo" tour. She, Kim Kardashian West, poses now-routinely in the nude for magazines and on her massively popular Instagram account (because she loves her body). She lays her life bare on her own app and her family's popular "Keeping Up With the Kardashians" reality show.

Together, they're Kimye, and they rarely make a move that isn't heavily documented on social media, either by themselves, their fans or all those people who love to hate them. The two married on May 24, 2014, in a lavish ceremony in Florence, Italy. They have two young children, including 3-year-old fashionista North West.

The Carters

He, Shawn Corey Carter, is Jay Z, a high-living rap mogul who might or might not have cheated on his famous and influential power wife, Beyonce, as she seems to imply on her mega-hit visual album "Lemonade." The two got hitched April 4, 2008, in a private ceremony at their Tribeca apartment, and have a daughter, 4-year-old Blue Ivy. Her fan base is known as the Beehive. Jay's loyalists love to flash him the Roc Symbol, a diamond shape and reference to his Roc Nation company, which includes a record label, talent agency, touring and concert production, music, film and TV production and a music publishing house.

The Clooneys

She, a British international human rights lawyer, used to be an Alamuddin, until she married him, the dashing movie star, and became a Clooney. The two wed on Sept. 27, 2014, in Venice, Italy, sending the paparazzi into high gear, but there's more to this Hollywood royalty. They take meetings with the likes of German Chancellor Angela Merkel to talk about things like emergency refugee policy. On Monday, Amal pushed for the United Nations to investigate and prosecute Islamic State group commanders for genocide, saying on the "Today" show she discussed her effort to legally fight the IS group with her husband, and he understands "this is my work." George, once among the world's most sought-after bachelors, joked last year on late-night TV that he loved his gig as Amal's arm candy. "Shiny and pretty," he told Stephen Colbert on "The Late Show, "that's mostly what I do."

In this Feb 20, 2016 file photo, Beyonce and Jay Z attend the NBA basketball game between the Los Angeles Clippers and Golden State Warriors, in Los Angeles.

In this Aug 28, 2016 file photo, Kim Kardashian West, left, and Kanye West arrive at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York.

The Smiths

He's Will Smith, striking movie star, and she's Jada Pinkett Smith, striking TV star. Together they have a couple of striking teenagers, Willow and Jaden. In LA LA land terms, they've been married a mighty long time, sealing the deal on Dec 31, 1997. That's about how many years they've been battling break-up rumors. The divorce mill got so busy that Will took to Facebook in August 2015 to declare, in part: "NOT GETTING A DIVORCE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!:-) I promise you all - if I ever decide to divorce my Queen - I SWEAR I'll tell you myself! #Dumb People Should Have to Wear Scarlet D's" For her part, Jada took to Twitter: "My king has spoken."

The Beckhams

As in David and Victoria. The two Brits, he a soccer legend and she the former Spice Girl turned fashion designer, married July 4, 1999. They met at a charity soccer match and wed at Luttrellstown Castle in Ireland after a two-year romance. Their 4-month-old son, Brooklyn, was their ringbearer. And they matched in ivory - his hair was a golden blond then. Victoria donned a huge gown with a little royal crown on the top of her head. How did they celebrate their 17th anniversary? By gushing about each other on Instagram, natch, posting then and now photos. They, too, have been rocked by rumors, in this case an alleged affair between David and an assistant that got the tabloids going in 2004. Victoria later told W magazine in a joint interview with her husband: "I'm not going to lie. It was a really tough time. It was hard for our entire families."

The Bundchen Bradys

The Brazilian bombshell, supermodel Gisele Bundchen, and the New England Patriot, Tom Brady, have two kids together, 6-year-old Benjamin and 3-year-old Vivian. We know this because Bundchen and Brady guard their kids' privacy but she recently posted a rollicking 'gram of the good-looking little ones playing outside by a tree. Bundchen has been the world's highest paid model since 2002, earning roughly $44 million a year.

They married Feb. 26, 2009, after a couple years of dating. Bundchen said she fell in love with Brady because he's a "kind man," but she told Charlie Rose on "CBS This Morning" last November that she had considered leaving her "Deflategate" quarterback after learning his former girlfriend, actress Bridget Moynahan, was pregnant with Brady's child back in 2007. Trying times hit again with Brady's football-tampering scandal. He's two games into a four-game suspension, planning to return to the field Oct 9. "I think we've been through a few tough times together," Bundchen told Rose. "I think that's when you know who are your friends, who loves you. ... No matter how challenging it was, we've always been supportive of one another, and I think that's the most important thing you can have in life, a support system and love."— AP

Key moments in Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie's relationship

Actress Angelina Jolie has filed for a divorce from actor Brad Pitt after 12 years together including two years of marriage, the end for one of Hollywood's most glamorous and powerful couples. Below is a timeline of key moments in the A-list couple's relationship over the years:

January 2005: Brad Pitt and "Friends" star Jennifer Aniston separate amid rumors that he and Jolie had an affair while filming the upcoming spy action thriller "Mr and Mrs Smith." Neither party confirmed the rumors.

April 2005: Photos appear in media of Pitt with Jolie and her adopted Cambodian son Maddox, vacationing together in Kenya.

January 2006: Representatives for Jolie and Pitt confirm to People magazine the actress is pregnant with Pitt's child, the first time the couple acknowledge their relationship publicly. A Los Angeles judge grants Jolie's request for Pitt to become the adoptive father of Maddox and daughter Zahara, changing their last names to Jolie-Pitt.

May 2006: The couple's first biological child, a girl named Shiloh Nouvel, is born in Namibia.

July 2008: Jolie gives birth to the couple's twins Vivienne Marcheline and Knox Leon in southern France.

September 2011: Pitt appeared on Ellen DeGeneres' show while promoting "Moneyball" to discuss marriage plans with Jolie. "I've said that we would not be getting married until everyone in this country had the right to get married," he said.

April 2012: Jolie and Pitt announce their engagement after she is spotted wearing a large diamond ring designed by Pitt.

May 2013: Jolie reveals in a New York Times op-ed that she underwent a double mastectomy after learning she had inherited a high risk of breast cancer. She said she made the decision in part to reassure her children that she would not die young from cancer, as her own mother Marcheline Bertrand did at age 56 in 2007.

August 2014: Jolie and Pitt quietly marry in a small ceremony at their Chateau Miraval estate in France. All six children took part and Jolie wore an Atelier Versace white dress featuring colorful designs drawn by her children.

November 2015: Jolie and Pitt appear at the premiere of "By The Sea," a drama directed and written by Jolie in which they play a married couple drifting apart.

September 2016: Jolie files for divorce from Pitt in Los Angeles court, citing irreconcilable differences and requesting sole physical custody of the children. Pitt responded with a statement to People magazine saying he was "very saddened."— Reuters

In this Nov 12, 2006 file photo, American actress and UNHCR Ambassador Angelina Jolie, left, with her daughter Zahara, and Brad Pitt, right, with Jolie's son Maddox, walk near the Gateway of India in Mumbai, India. — AP

Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman

Javier Bardem and Penelope Cruz

Demi Moore and Bruce Willis

'Brangelina' split: Five other Hollywood power couples

As Angelina Jolie files for divorce from Brad Pitt, here's a look at some of the other off-screen Hollywood romances that have kept audiences enthralled:

Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart

The sultry Bacall made her debut aged just 19 opposite Bogart, 44, in "To Have and Have Not" in 1944. They got married a year later; the age gap did not stop them from becoming one of Hollywood's most mythical couples. Bacall cemented her status as a film noir icon with appearances alongside Bogart in "The Big Sleep" (1946), "Dark Passage" (1947), and "Key Largo" in 1948. They were married until Bogart's death from cancer in 1957.

Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton

Taylor and Burton's famously turbulent romance began in 1963 when the pair were filming "Cleopatra", she in the title role and he as her Mark Antony. Both were married to other people at the time but their instant chemistry was plain to see. They were married twice: for ten years from 1964, and another year from 1975-76.Both unions were marred by alcoholism and furious arguments, though they remained close into their later years. They starred in eleven films together, including "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966) and "The Taming of the Shrew" (1967).

Demi Moore and Bruce Willis

Married for more than a decade from 1987, Moore and Willis were one of the most prominent Hollywood power couples of the late 80s and early 90s. Both blamed the collapse of their relationship on not having enough time together as their careers took off, with Moore the best-paid actress in Hollywood by 1990 and Willis working on the "Die Hard" series. They remained friends after their split, even spending holidays together to give stability to their three daughters.

Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman

The pair met on the set of "Days of Thunder", a high-adrenaline racing movie starring Cruise as an ambitious young driver and Kidman as his neurosurgeon love interest. It was released in 1990; they were married by the end of the year. "I was a baby when I married Tom, but I don't regret any of it," Kidman later said. The couple adopted two children and starred in two other films together-"Far and Away" and "Eyes Wide Shut"-but divorced in 2001. Cruise later married actress Katie Holmes, gaining the celebrity moniker "TomKat". Their six-year relationship, ending in 2012, was heavily scrutinized by the press, largely because of Cruise's growing involvement in the Church of Scientology.

Javier Bardem and Penelope Cruz

Spanish actress Cruz-another former lover of Tom Cruise-began dating her Oscar-winning "Vicky Cristina Barcelona" co-star Bardem in 2007. Married in 2010, the couple have two children together and are fiercely private. They sparked a Hollywood row in 2014 when they signed an open letter blasting Israel's bombardment of Gaza. But both released follow-up statements clarifying their comments, amid rumors that Israel-supporting Hollywood executives were furious over the move. — AFP

This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Marion Cotillard, left, and Brad Pitt in a scene from, 'Allied,' in theaters on November 23. — AP photos

In this June 28, 2001 file photo, American actors Brad Pitt and his wife, Jennifer Aniston, arrive to attend Giorgio Armani Spring/Summer 2002 menswear collection presented in Milan, Italy.

In this March 14, 2000 file photo, actor Brad Pitt, left, and actress Jennifer Aniston, arrive at the premiere of the new film 'Erin Brockovich,' in the Westwood section of Los Angeles.

Jolie and Pitt's romance, divorce bookended by films

For Angelina Jolie Pitt and Brad Pitt, it started with tequila and dancing in the rain in Bogota and ended on the French seaside with white wine, pills and tears. Hollywood's most storied modern couple only appeared together twice in the movies. The first time, in 2005's "Mr & Mrs Smith," they fell in love. A decade later, "By the Sea" would come just a year before their relationship would come to an end with Jolie Pitt filing for divorce. Both times they played a childless husband and wife whose passion had turned to resentment.

Their real life together was full of public declarations and displays of love, children, philanthropy, humanitarian work and glamour. In the movies, though, their surface beauty was only a mask for the rot and boredom underneath. Still, even through tears and gunfire, they always smoldered. "You can absolutely madly love the same person you want to kill," Jolie Pitt said in 2015, seated on a silk-sheeted bed next to Pitt on the set of "By the Sea," filmed on their technical honeymoon, but it could have easily been about either. In "Mr & Mrs Smith," they are actually trying to kill each other after all.

Throwing flower petals

It was a strange story to fall in love to, but not uncommon in the entertainment business, even if Pitt was married at the time to Jennifer Aniston. Jolie had already been married twice, to Billy Bob Thornton and Jonny Lee Miller. "We just became kind of a pair. And it took until, really, the end of the shoot for us, I think, to realize that it might mean something more than we'd earlier allowed ourselves to believe," Jolie Pitt told Vogue in 2006.

Monday's divorce filing comes after 12 years together and two in marriage. The couple wed in August 2014, privately at their French chateau in the Provence hamlet of Correns with their children serving as ring bearers and throwing flower petals. An attorney for Jolie Pitt, Robert Offer, said Tuesday that her decision was made "for the health of the family." She is petitioning for physical custody of 15-year-old Maddox, 12-year-old Pax, 11-year-old Zahara, 10-year-old Shiloh, and 8-year-old twins Knox and Vivienne, with visitation rights for Pitt, who said in a statement to People how "saddened" he is.

"What matters most now is the wellbeing of our kids," Pitt said, requesting space for the children. The gossipy, tabloid origins would always at least partially define "Brangelina." But after the media upheaval, Jolie Pitt and Pitt eventually settled into their own unique kind of globe-trotting domesticity. They were seldom-seen Hollywood royalty, their image predicated more on parenting than partying.

Ambitious director

The pair adopted children from Cambodia, Vietnam and Ethiopia. In 2006, they formed the Jolie-Pitt Foundation, to which they funneled many of the millions they made selling personal pictures to celebrity magazines. Jolie Pitt, who became special envoy for the United Nations in 2012, was an outspoken voice for refugees, as well as for breast cancer treatment after undergoing a double mastectomy herself. Pitt built homes in New Orleans for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Both expanded creatively, too, but mostly separately, Jolie Pitt as a burgeoning and ambitious director of both war epics like "Unbroken," and languid melodramas like "By the Sea," and Pitt as a producer of socially relevant films through his Plan B production company, including the Academy Award-winning "12 Years a Slave," last year's "The Big Short" and the recently debuted festival hit "Moonlight."

"By the Sea," which Jolie Pitt wrote while grieving for her mother, who died in 2007, was sold nonetheless as the big on screen reunion of the couple who changed tabloid culture and our expectations of what exactly is possible on a movie set just 10 years earlier. But it fizzled with critics and audiences, making a mere $538,000 at the box office domestically. The "Mr. & Mrs. Smith" spark that enveloped its own stars and titillated audiences to the tune of $186.3 million domestically had given way to something infinitely more real.

"When we first worked together it was very different because we didn't really know each other and we were young and, it was really a fun film, so we thought, maybe 'By the Sea' was going to be that kind of fun, but realized very quickly that it wasn't," Jolie Pitt told The Telegraph in 2015. "Then we joked that this is what happens after 10 years of marriage." — AP

In this Jan 27, 2008 file photo, Angelina Jolie, left, and Brad Pitt sit together before the start of the 14th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards in Los Angeles.

In this May 28, 2014 file photo, Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt arrive at the world premiere of 'Maleficent' in Los Angeles.

This file photo provided by Universal Pictures shows, Brad Pitt, left, and Angelina Jolie Pitt in a scene from the film "By the Sea."

In this April 13, 2016 file photo, Jennifer Aniston arrives at the Los Angeles premiere of "Mother's Day."

After split, London's Madame Tussauds separates Jolie, Pitt wax figures

London's Madame Tussauds museum said yesterday it had separated its wax figure replicas of Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt after the Hollywood power couple announced their split. Jolie's attorney said on Tuesday the actress had filed for divorce from Pitt, her romantic partner since 2005 and husband of two years. "We reacted quickly to yesterday's news of the separation of Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt and their plans to divorce by mirroring the separation in the attraction," a Madame Tussauds spokesperson said. "The couple's wax figures, which were launched in 2013, have been split up and are now featured at a respectful distance from each other. Angelina is keeping Nicole Kidman company and Brad Pitt is with his several time co-star Morgan Freeman."— Reuters

A LOOK AT BRAD PITT AND ANGELINA JOLIE'S PROPERTY PORTFOLIO

In this May 21, 2007 file photo, American actor-producer Brad Pitt, left, and American actress Angelina Jolie arrive for a photo call for the film 'A Mighty Heart,' at the 60th International film festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

With the unexpected news that Angelina Jolie filed for divorce from Brad Pitt-legal documents cite irreconcilable differences but celebrity gossip juggernaut TMZ reports she became "fed up" with his pot smoking, concerned with his "anger problem," and unhappy with his parenting methods-we thought we'd have a quick poke around the couple's impressive international property portfolio. In three separate transactions during the mid- to late-1990s Mister Pitt paid a total of $2.55 million for three contiguous properties in an affluent and celeb-soaked pocket of Los Angeles's Los Feliz area. Giovanni Ribisi owns one of the neighboring properties and Rooney Mara owns a nearby home she scooped up in early 2015 for $2.9 million from Alexander Skarsgard. Subsequent to the Jolie-Pitt's coupling the almost freakishly attractive pair added two more adjoining properties that combined cost $2,387,500.

All together, according to property records and other online resources, the gated and, no doubt, heavily secured compound cost a total of $4,942,500 and encompasses 1.9 acres with at least four structures including a 1915 Craftsman that clocks in at 6,692-square-feet with six bedrooms and seven bathrooms. In the latter days of 2006, not too long after they hooked up but almost eight years before their August 2014 wedding, the Jolie-Pitts splashed out $3.5 million for a 1930s masonry mansion in New Orleans' famed French Quarter. In May 2015 they put the mansion up for sale at $6.5 million and the price plummeted to $5.65 million before it was taken off the market in mid-December. Listing details from the time show that in addition to a "Magnificently renovated" main house with elevator, Venetian plastered walls and a "gourmet kitchen" with "top of the line appliances," the property has a two-story guesthouse with one bedroom and 1.5 bathrooms, a private and spacious courtyard with swimming pool, and off-street parking for two cars.

Numerous structures

In 2008 the now erstwhile pair rented Chateau Miraval, a sprawling, multi-residence estate near the village of Correns in the south of France and they purchased the approximately 1,200-acre spread in 2012 from American businessman Tom Bove for a reported $60 million. Just over an hour by car north of Toulon and roughly 1.5 hours by car west of Cannes, the village-like compound has numerous structures, some of which date to the 18th-century. In addition to a main house that some reports say has 35 or more rooms there are several smaller cottages for guests and/or staff, a Romanesque chapel where the couple wed, and a recording studio.

The property, which they bought from American businessman was once owned by French jazz pianist Jacques Loussier-where Pink Floyd, AC/DC, Muse and Sting have all been reported to have recorded. The property is has pine forests, olive groves, a private pond, and extensive organic vineyards along with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, spa and gym facilities, a professional-grade screening room, a video game arcade, a dirt bike course, and a couple of helicopter landing pads. Miz Jolie, nominated for an Oscar in 2009 for "Changeling" and an Oscar winner in 2000 for "Girl Interrupted," has owned a 1,232-square-foot apartment on a high floor of the elegant and architecturally distinguished Ansonia building on New York City's Upper West Side since December of 1997 and in 2003 she bought a traditional home on almost 100 acres in Cambodia's Battambang Province where she later bought about 12,000 acres of land she turned into a wildlife preserve. And, finally, in late 2000, shortly after Mister Pitt married his first wife Jennifer Aniston, the six-time Oscar nominated and one-time Oscar-winning actor paid an unknown amount for an 11.5 acre ocean-front compound along a rugged and otherwise unspoiled stretch of beach just outside of Santa Barbara, California.

Of course, this property gossip doesn't know an apple from and apple cart so we really can't say what will come of the Jolie-Pitt's numerous properties but we assume without any inside intel that each will keep what they brought to their ten-plus year union and that Chateau Miraval and their New Orleans pied-a-terre will be sold off. We shall see, butter beans, we shall see. — Reuters

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Farewell, Brangelina, but wait: Celeb royalty abounds
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Visitors attend the media preview of Chinese artist Ai Weiwei Italy's first major retrospective "Libero" at the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence yesterday. The exhibition will start on September 23 and will run until January 22, 2017. — AFP

In this file photo, a model of the future Abu Dhabi branch of the Louvre museum by French architect Jean Nouvel is on display as part of a sample collection at the museum in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. — AP photos

ABU DHABI NAMES LOUVRE OUTPOST DIRECTOR, PLANS 2017 LAUNCH

Art lovers will have to wait a bit longer to visit a much-anticipated Mideast outpost of the Louvre, which will be headed by a Frenchman involved in the project for years. The Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority said Tuesday the branch in the United Arab Emirates capital won't host its first visitors until sometime in 2017. It's the latest in a series of delays for the project, which was originally slated to open in 2012. It most recently was expected to be finished by year's end.

The tourism authority named Paris museums veteran Manuel Rabate as the museum's first director. The 40-year-old has worked at the original Louvre and served as CEO of Agence France-Museums, which is charged with carrying out France's commitments in developing the UAE museum, since 2013. Designed by renowned architect Jean Nouvel, the sky-lit, domed museum is the centerpiece of an ambitious waterfront cultural district that will also include a branch of the Guggenheim museum. The district, known as Saadiyat Island, has for years been a focus of criticism over the treatment of thousands of low-paid migrant workers involved in its construction.

The Tourism Development and Investment Co, the project's government-backed developer, put in place policies designed to protect workers and monitor compliance at the site. Rights activists say the reforms were not enough to prevent exploitation and abuse. One worker died while working on the Louvre last year. Curators have acquired 600 pieces of art so far, and plan to display them alongside 300 others on loan from French museums. The collection includes works by French painters Paul Gauguin and Edouard Manet, as well as religious pieces, including a 6th-Century Chinese Buddha sculpture and a more than 500-year-old Torah from Yemen. — AP

Painting the town for peace in South Sudan

On bakery walls, buildings and roadside sheeting in South Sudan's capital, Juba, street artists fed up with war are painting for peace as young musicians, actors and artists campaign to end decades of conflict. A mural of a child in a singlet working at a sewing machine reads "the young who are tired are the ones who will sew the fabric of our nation back together." A white-washed bakery wall features stark silhouettes wielding axes while a container doubling up as a cultural center shows an AK-47 shooting doves instead of bullets.

The anti-war street art burgeoning on the roads of the hot, humid South Sudanese capital on the banks of the White Nile, the scene of heavy combat as recently as July, is the work of a newly-created movement called #AnaTaban. #AnaTaban tags itself on twitter as "a community of young South Sudanese creatives who are tired of seeing our people suffer." The world's newest nation won its independence only five years ago after decades of war. But the fighting continued, degenerating into a particularly brutal civil conflict that has driven more than one million people out of the country and displaced many more.

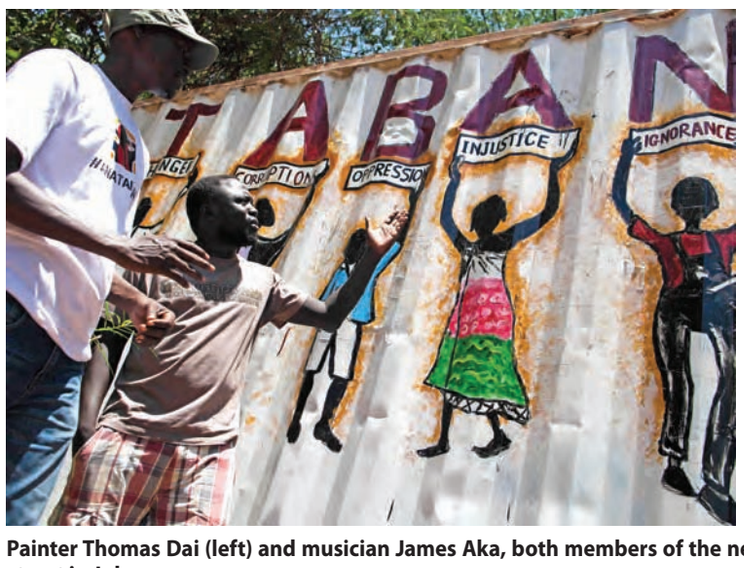
Villages have been burnt to the ground, almost half the population relies on food assistance to survive and women and girls are raped by government and rebel forces, according to rights groups. So with no end in sight, some 40 entertainers and artists in Juba set up #AnaTaban with the support of exiled compatriots also involved in the arts. They hope to spread to other cities such as Wau, Yei, Aweil and Yambio.

'I'm sorry'

"What #AnaTaban is doing is actually to create a platform for other young South Sudanese people to raise their voices, to speak out their mind, so we all have everlasting peace in this country," said co-founder Joyce Maker. Maker, an actress, brings theatre, playing out dire scenes of conflict, while #AnaTaban musicians have recorded a first song- and are preparing another under the theme #AnaMalesh-"I'm sorry" in Arabic. Over the coming weeks the group plans a series of public events, on streets, in hospitals, schools and even in prisons.

A member of the new activist movement #AnaTaban, paints a new mural at the Aggrey Jaden cultural centre in Juba.

"What is happening now in South Sudan is corruption, war, conflict," said painter and cartoonist Thomas Dai. Last week a report commissioned by actor-activist George Clooney alleged massive corruption and war profiteering by its leaders, saying the key factor in the fighting was "competition for the grand prize-control over state assets and the country's abundant natural resources," notably its oil. "Those things, we want to put them out, we want to throw them out," said Dai. "We want to say these things are not good. That's what we want to show to the people through art, painting, graffiti, on the street". Poet and rapper Asif Kafi described the group's work as "art-ivism", combining art and activism. "We have musicians, we have artists, people ... portraying a message of peace and reconciliation," he said. — AP



Painter Thomas Dai (left) and musician James Aka, both members of the new activist movement #AnaTaban, talk in front of Thomas' latest graffiti in a street in Juba.